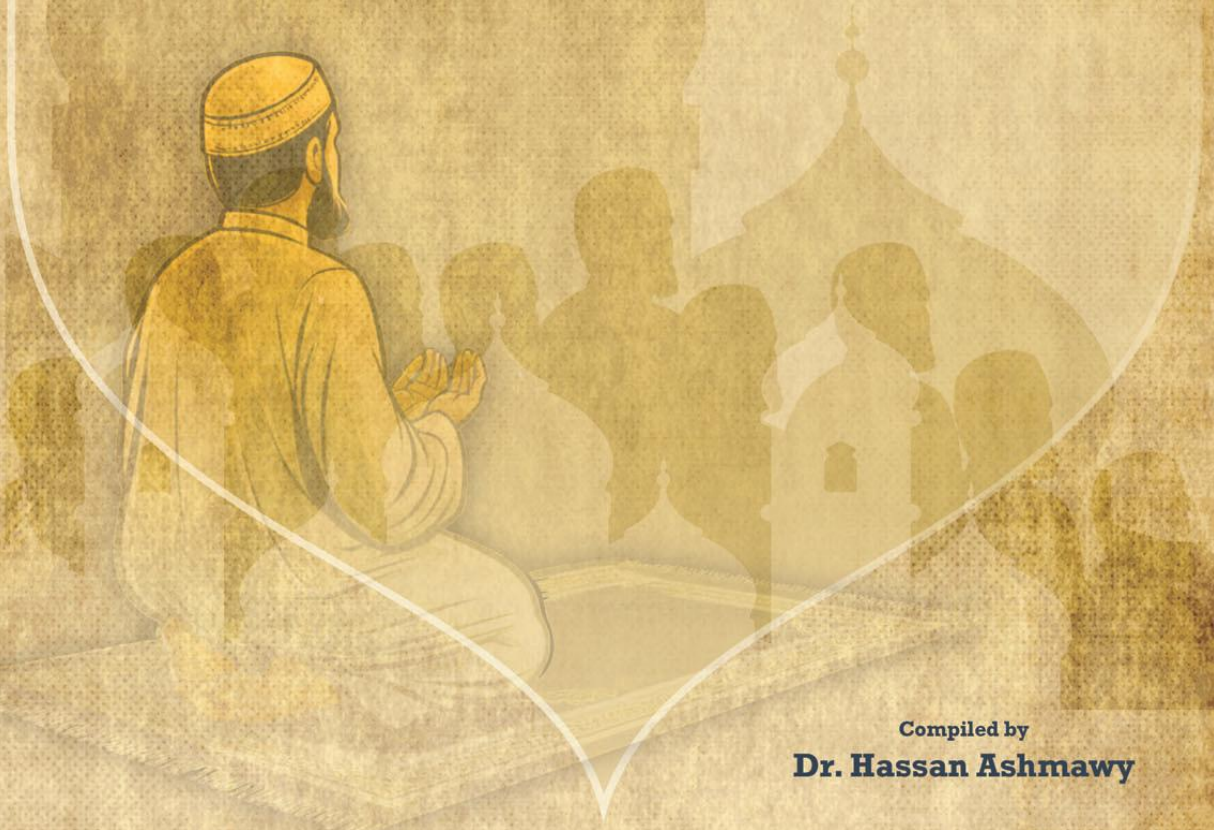
A Biography of the Best Man in Creation and the Lives of His Honorable Companions

The Honorable Companions

May Allah Be Pleased with Them

(Part Three)



Compiled by
Dr. Hassan Ashmawy

A Biography of the Honorable Companions of Prophet Muhammad (PBBUH)

May Allah Be Pleased with Them

By Dr. Hassan Ashmawy

Translated by Haya M. Eid
Edited by Um Abdullah

DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to my father, the one who taught me the love of giving and placing others before myself, even when I have only a little. May Allah's Mercy be upon his soul.

Next, this work is dedicated to my mother, who taught me the pillars of my faith and the way to fulfil my religious obligations sincerely for Allah alone and who encouraged me to love being His slave. May Allah's Mercy be upon her soul.

> ﴿My Lord, have mercy upon them, just as they [had mercy on me] when they raised me as a child﴾ (translated meaning of Al-Isra' 17:24).

Finally, I dedicate this effort to my dear wife, who has been a constant support in all my endeavors.

After seeking Allah's Help and Guidance, I have undertaken to serve my religion and to accomplish this modest piece of work.

Hassan Ashmawy

In the Name of Allah, the Most Merciful,
the Ever-Merciful

Introduction by His Eminence, the Mufti of the Republic of Zimbabwe

All praise be to Allah, and peace and blessings be upon the best of Allah's creation, our Prophet Muhammad (PBBUH), and upon his noble family and Companions.

It is a source of pleasure and happiness for me to see the fruits of the efforts exerted by our dear friend and elder brother, Dr. Hassan Ashmawy, now published in the form of a book: *The Best Man in Creation and His Honorable Companions*. The work comes after decades of sincere and diligent work to introduce Islamic history, starting with the fragrant biography of Prophet Muhammad (PBBUH).

Dr. Hassan Ashmawy has given many lectures in different mosques across the country, which he recorded and distributed at his own expense. These recordings have been met with great interest and approval from Muslims in Zimbabwe and the surrounding countries of Zambia, Botswana, South Africa, and others, and they continue to attract great interest.

Today, as we see this hard work culminating in this book, we feel it is a blessing and a favor from Almighty Allah and, by His Will, a sign of acceptance of his effort.

Side by side with his work as a doctor and surgeon, Dr. Hassan Ashmawy has made consistent efforts, sacrifices, and commendable contributions to help our people in Zimbabwe. In this regard, he founded the Islamic Medical Association of Zimbabwe, which assists the poor and needy and treats them for free. All thanks and praise be to Allah, the association has expanded and now has branches in most of the country's provinces.

We ask Allah Almighty to protect our brother, Dr. Hassan Ashmawy, and to reward him abundantly for the dedicated efforts and zealous work he has carried out to serve Islam and Muslims. I am certain that this book will be of great benefit and use to us all.

May Allah, the Most Exalted, accept this effort and make it a continuous success. Amen.

Sheikh Isma`il Musa Menk
Mufti of the Republic of Zimbabwe
Friday 26 Sha`ban 1434 A.H., 5 July 2013 A.C.

In the Name of Allah, the Most Merciful,
the Ever-Merciful

Introduction to Part Three by the Author

All praise be to Allah, the One, the Unique, the Self-Sufficient Master, with no partner or associate. All praise is due to Him alone, much blessed and pure praise, praise that befits the greatness of His Sovereignty and the splendor of His Majesty. May blessings and peace be upon the best of Allah's creation, our Prophet and Imam, Muhammad, and upon his family and Companions.

To continue…

By the grace and favor of Allah, following the publication of the first and second parts of this book series: *A Biography of the Best Man in Creation* and *A Biography of the Ten Given Glad Tidings of Paradise*, I present to you the third part: *A Biography of the Honorable Companions*. It has been published as a continuation of the success and the enthusiastic response from readers to the previous two parts. All three books resonated strongly with the audience and generated high interest and engagement.

Allah provided us with the opportunity to give lectures on the biographies of the 'Honorable Companions', as we did on the biography of the 'Best Man in Creation (PBBUH)' and the biographies of the 'Ten Given Glad Tidings of Paradise'. These lectures were delivered in all mosques in Bulawayo, Zimbabwe. They were also recorded and distributed in Zimbabwe and the surrounding countries. All praise be to Allah, they were well-received and greatly appreciated by the people.

To continue this blessed series, I will try, in the pages of this book, to bring you closer to these 'Honorable Companions' whom Allah Almighty selected to be in the company of the 'Best Man in Creation (PBBUH)'.

Since it was difficult to cover the lives of all prominent Muslim figures in this book, we had to choose a group of them among the Companions. Indeed, it was a difficult choice. With the Companions, you are amid a vast splendid garden teeming with flowers, basil, and sweet fruits, some with a bright color, others with a fragrant scent, and still others with a sweet taste; hence the difficulty of choosing one and leaving another.

In the endless gardens of flowers, I have tried as much as possible to pick a flower from each garden—as they say. If I am unable to cover all the Companions of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) in this book, all of them—those mentioned and those not mentioned—adhered to the same ethical principles, religious devotion, and virtuous conduct. They all reflect the light borrowed from the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH).

I ask Allah (Exalted be He) to accept this humble work from me, for indeed He is the Supporter, with Whom all things are possible.

Dr. Hassan Ashmawy

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The Objectives of Narrating the Biography of the Companions

This book has not been written as a collection of stories to entertain people, but important objectives have been set for this work, including the following:

1. Admiring the Companions and Following Them as Role Models

In this day and age, the *Ummah* (worldwide Muslim community) is living in a state of confusion and dispersion. How we need a role model and a good example to follow! If you want to learn swimming, medicine, engineering, drawing, or any aspect of life, you always search for the best in this or that field to be your teacher and guide. Who can be better teachers and guides for us than those who were raised and taught by our beloved Prophet Muhammad (PBBUH) himself and became the graduates of his noble school? Indeed, the Prophet's school is the highest and most advanced academic institution ever known to history and humanity.

The Companions are, as our beloved Prophet (PBBUH) described them: **"The best people are those from my generation (the *Sahabah* or the Companions), then those who follow them (the generation succeeding the Companions), then those who follow them. After that there will come people whose witness will precede their oath and their oath will precede their witness"**[1] (meaning, a time when people would readily give testimony, even if it was not truthful, before being required to swear an oath to validate their claims).

[1] Reported by Al-Bukhari, hadith no. 2652.

There is also the hadith on the authority of Abu Sa`id Al-Khudri, in which he narrated that the Prophet (PBBUH) said: **"A time will come when groups of people will set out fighting in Allah's Cause and it will be said to them, 'Is there anyone among you who has enjoyed the company of the Prophet (PBBUH)?' The answer will be, 'Yes.' Then they will be granted victory [by Allah]. Then a time will come when it will be asked, 'Is there anyone among you who has enjoyed the company of the Companions of the Prophet (PBBUH)?' It will be said, 'Yes,' and they will be granted victory [by Allah]. Then a time will come when it will be asked, 'Is there anyone among you who has enjoyed the company of the companions of the Companions of the Prophet (PBBUH)?' It will be said, 'Yes,' and they will be granted victory [by Allah]."**[1]

The Companions are the role models that we must follow and emulate in all aspects of life, which is the only way to achieve prosperity and advancement for this *Ummah* and spread the true Islam.

2. Inspiring Love for the Companions

This work aims to create a state of love and admiration for all Companions, with the hope that Allah (Exalted be He) may gather us with them in the Gardens of Paradise. Our beloved Prophet (PBBUH) said: **"A person will be with those he loves."**[2]

I ask Allah Almighty to put love in our hearts for all Companions and for those who love them, to make us follow in their footsteps, and to gather us with them, by Allah's Will.

[1] Reported by Al-Bukhari, hadith no. 2897.
[2] Reported by Abu Dawud, hadith no. 5127.

Who Is a Companion?

Scholars have agreed that a Companion is defined as anyone who met the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH), that is, personally met him (PBBUH), while believing in him, and lived and died as a Muslim.

Many people met the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) during his lifetime, but they did not embrace Islam. Some of them embraced Islam but then apostatized from it. Therefore such people cannot be called 'Companions.'

It should be noted that this definition applies to male and female Muslims.

Virtues of the Companions

The virtues of the Companions of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) are countless. They can be summarized, to the best of my ability, as follows:

First: The Special Honor That Allah Bestowed upon the Companions

Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) mentioned the Companions and praised them in many places in the Noble Qur'an. Reference to them takes three forms:

1. Ayahs that refer to all the Companions and highlight their outstanding status, as in the Almighty's Saying:

﴿Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah, and those who are with him are severe against disbelievers and merciful among themselves. You see them bowing and falling down prostrate [in prayer], seeking bounty from Allah and [His] Good Pleasure. The mark of them (i.e., of their faith) is on their faces (foreheads) from the traces of [their] prostration [during prayers]. This is their description in the *Tawrah* (Torah). But their description in the *Injil* (Gospel) is like a [sown] seed which sends forth its shoot and then makes it strong. It then becomes thick, and it stands straight on its stem, delighting the sowers, so that He may enrage the disbelievers with them. Allah has promised those among them who believe and do righteous good deeds forgiveness and a mighty reward (i.e., Paradise)﴾ (translated meaning of Al-Fath 48:29).

﴿But the Messenger (Muhammad) and those who believed with him strove hard and fought with their wealth and their lives [in Allah's Cause]. It is they

who shall have all [kinds of] good, and it is they who will be successful. Allah has prepared for them gardens beneath which rivers flow, wherein they will abide eternally. That is the supreme success﴾ (translated meaning of Al-Tawbah 9:88-89).

Numerous ayahs praise the Companions and recognize their superb merit and distinguished achievements, but the scope of this book does not allow mentioning them all.

2. Ayahs that refer to a specific group of the Companions, as in the Almighty's Saying:

﴿Indeed, Allah was pleased with the believers when they gave their pledge to you (O Muhammad) under the tree. He knew what was in their hearts, and He sent down tranquility upon them, and He rewarded them with a near victory﴾ (translated meaning of Al-Fath 48:18).

The previous ayah refers to the sincere Companions who took the Ridwan Pledge[1].

﴿And when the believers saw the Confederates, they said: "This is what Allah and His Messenger (Muhammad) had promised us, and Allah and His Messenger (Muhammad) have spoken the truth," and it only added to their faith and to their submissiveness [to Allah]. Among the believers are men who have been true to their covenant with Allah. Of them, some have fulfilled their obligations (i.e., have been martyred), and some of them are still waiting, but

[1] A pledge that was sworn under a tree to the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) by his Companions after the rumored death of `Uthman. All the Companions pledged that they would not flee the battlefield, if a battle broke out with Quraysh, and they would keep on fighting firmly and steadfastly to the last man.

they have never changed [their commitment] in the least ﴾ (translated meaning of Al-Ahzab 33:22-23).

The previous ayahs refer to the Companions who fought in the Battle of the Trench, also known as the Battle of the Confederates. There are other ayahs that refer to the Companions who fought in the Battles of Badr, Hunayn, and other major events.

3. Ayahs that refer to a specific Companion:

a. Without mentioning the Companion's name, as in the Almighty's saying:

﴿[It does not matter] if you do not help him (Muhammad), for Allah did indeed help him when the disbelievers drove him out, [only] one of two. When they (Prophet Muhammad and Abu Bakr) were in the cave, and he said to his companion (Abu Bakr): "Be not sad [or afraid], surely Allah is with us." Then Allah sent down upon him His tranquility and strengthened him with forces (angels) which you could not see. And He made the word of those who disbelieved the lowermost while it is the Word of Allah that is the uppermost, and Allah is All-Mighty, All-Wise﴾ (translated meaning of Al-Tawbah 9:40).

The previous ayah refers to Abu Bakr (may Allah be pleased with him).

b. Mentioning the Companion's name. This occurred once in the Almighty's Saying:

﴿And [remember, O Muhammad] when you said to the one on whom Allah had bestowed favor and you had bestowed favor, "Keep your wife and fear Allah," while you concealed within yourself that which Allah was to disclose. And you feared the people, while Allah has more right that you fear Him. When Zayd had no longer any need for her, We (Allah) married her to you in order

that there should not be any blame upon the believers concerning the wives of their adopted sons when they no longer have need of them. And ever is the Command of Allah accomplished﴾ (translated meaning of Al-Ahzab 33:37).

The previous ayah refers to Zayd ibn Harithah (may Allah be pleased with him).

Which words can be truer than those of Allah (Exalted be He)? What honor is higher than having one's name in a Holy Book that is recited and turned to as a means of worship and will continue to be recited like this until the Day of Judgment?

Second: The Special Honor That the Prophet (PBBUH) Bestowed upon His Companions

In several hadiths, the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) emphasized the special honorable place that his Companions held and will continue to hold for all Muslims. These hadiths include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) said: **"The best of my followers are those of my generation, then those who will come after them (the next generation), and then those who will come after them (the next generation)."**[1]

2. The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) said: **"Do not revile my Companions. For by the One in Whose Hand is my soul, if any one of you were to spend the equivalent of Mount Uhud in gold, it**

[1] Reported by Al-Bukhari, hadith no. 6429.

would not equal a *mudd* spent by anyone of them nor even half a *mudd*."[1]

A *mudd* is a type of dry measure of half a bushel, 543 grams; it is a quarter of a *sa`* (1 *sa`* = 3 kg. approx.).

This previous hadith signifies that spending [in charity] the equivalent of Uhud in gold will not bring a Muslim [nowadays] the same reward and merit as that attained by one of the Companions spending [in charity] a *mudd* of food or half of it.

3. The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) said: **"Fear Allah! Fear Allah regarding my Companions! Do not make them targets (of criticism, slander, insults, false allegations, and so on) after me. Whoever loves them, it is out of love of me that he loves them. And whoever hates them, it is out of hatred for me that he hates them."**[2]

These hadiths are some among many others that show the superb merit of all the Companions, in general. These are in addition to numerous hadiths in which the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) specifically praised many of his Companions. They shall be cited when shedding light on the life of each Companion.

Third: The Statement That Ibn Mas`ud Made Regarding the Companions

`Abdullah ibn Mas`ud (may Allah be pleased with him) said: "Verily, Allah looked into the hearts of His slaves and found the heart of Muhammad (PBBUH) to be the best among His slaves' hearts. He chose him for Himself and

[1] Reported by Ibn Majah, hadith no. 161.
[2] Reported by Al-Tirmidhi, hadith no. 3862.

sent him with His Message. Then He looked into the hearts of His slaves, after the heart of Muhammad (PBBUH), and found the hearts of his Companions to be the best among the slaves' hearts after him. He made them the supporters of His Prophet, fighting for His religion. Therefore, whatever the Muslims see as good is good in Allah's Sight, and whatever the Muslims see as bad is bad in Allah's Sight."[1]

Fourth: The Characteristics of the Companions

The question that arises in this context is: Why is this immense honor bestowed upon the Companions in the Glorious Qur'an and Sunnah?

Briefly, the answer is as follows:

The Companions were distinguished by many more noble characteristics than the followers of previous Messengers and from the Muslims who came after them as well. They rose to the highest heights in these characteristics, which mainly included the following aspects:

1. Piety

The Companions were connected to Allah (Exalted be He), their hearts were attached to Him alone. Allah loved them, and they loved Him. They longed for Him, and He longed for them. They called upon Him with words coming from their hearts. When He was mentioned before them, they felt humble and peaceful. And when they stood before Him in prayer, they stood submissive and fearful of Him.

2. Ideal Devotion

[1] Reported by Ahmad, hadith no. 3600.

The Companions reached the zenith in their performance of worship, in their dealings with people, and in the morals with which they lived.

a. They showed humility to the point of excellence and reached the pinnacle of sincerity; they were truly as Allah the Almighty described them: ﴿And when they listen to what has been sent down to the Messenger (Muhammad), you see their eyes overflowing with tears because of the truth they have recognized. They say: "Our Lord, we believe! So write us down among the witnesses"﴾ (translated meaning of Al-Ma'idah 5:83).

b. Their hearts softened, their skins shivered in awe, and their eyes shed tears when they recited the Noble Qur'an. Here are some examples:

- The man of the nation who adhered to the truth most, Abu Bakr (may Allah be pleased with him), wept often. When he wept, you could hardly hear his recitation because of his deep, emotional weeping.

- When `Umar Al-Faruq read Allah's Saying: ﴿Verily, the torment of your Lord will surely come to pass. There is none that can avert it﴾ (translated meaning of Al-Tur 52:7-8), he kept weeping and was overcome by fear for twenty days.

- When this ayah was revealed: ﴿Then at this statement do you wonder? And you laugh and do not weep?﴾ (translated meaning of Al-Najm 53:59-60), the People of the *Suffah*[1] wept until their tears ran down their cheeks. The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) wept too upon hearing their weeping.

[1] *Al-Suffah*: Literally, the shaded place. It was a roofed section in the back portion of the Prophet's Mosque in which the poor homeless Emigrants could find shelter and live. The inhabitants of it became known as the People of the *Suffah*. All needy emigrants stayed there and were kindly provided for by the Muslim community.

c. As soon as an ayah was revealed, the Companions would act upon it and start applying its law on their lives immediately. The examples of this are plentiful. They will be presented in detail in this book, Allah willing.

3. Striking the Perfect Balance Between Life and Religion

The Companions achieved this balance, without exceeding or falling short of it.

This is something that we need now more than ever. Some people are so immersed in religious matters that they forget their share of worldly life. The opposite is true as well. Many people are so immersed in worldly matters that they forget their share of the Afterlife.

As for the Companions, they achieved the prefect balance between what the body needs for replenishment and what the soul needs.

There are abundant examples of this, including the following:

- The eagerness of the Companions to learn what would benefit them and help them accomplish a better life for themselves and others. Ibn Al-Zubair spoke more than one language (it was said to be a hundred languages). And Zayd ibn Thabit was dispatched by the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) to learn Hebrew and Syriac.

- The Companions were concerned with both obtaining knowledge (learning their religious matters) and earning their livelihood.

– `Umar ibn Al-Khattab said: "My neighbor from the Ansar and I used to take turns in visiting the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH). He would go one day, and I would go another day. When I went, I would bring him

the news of that day regarding divine revelation and other issues. When he went, he would do the same for me."[1]

That is, one of them would go to the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) to listen to him and learn from him, and the other would go to work to earn a living, and so on.

– Al-Bara' (may Allah be pleased with him) said: "Not all of us heard the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) personally. We had properties and jobs to look after, but people did not lie at that time. Those present would convey knowledge to those who were absent."[2]

- Many Companions, such as `Abdul-Rahman ibn `Awf and `Uthman ibn `Affan, achieved great success in their trading business and gained great wealth. However, they made this world a means and not an end. They took from it what would benefit their physical wellbeing and made the Hereafter their top concern and goal.

4. Bravery

The Companions were distinguished by sacrificing their lives and wealth to an amazing level. Their biographies testify to their unparalleled bravery, which always manifested itself at times of hardship and need. The abundant examples of the Companions' bravery will be explained in detail when narrating the biography of each Companion.

5. Fairness

Fairness was an essential part of the makeup of the Companions' character. They were known for their fairness, which was acknowledged by foes before

[1] Reported by Al-Bukhari, hadith no. 89.
[2] Reported by Ahmad, hadith no. 18493.

friends. That is why they attained supremacy and sovereignty. "Justice is the foundation of kingship," as people say. There are many examples, which will be explored in detail in the biography of each Companion.

6. Openhandedness and Generosity with What the Lord Had Given Them

The Companions loved lofty manners and noble morals; they gave away the best of what they had and spent on others the best of what they could find. They spent on others from those things which they loved most to attain righteousness, in accordance with the Almighty's Saying: ﴿You will never attain righteousness until you spend [in charity] from what you love. And whatever you spend [of good], Allah knows it well﴾ (translated meaning of Al `Imran 3:92). One of them might give away everything he had without fear of poverty or need, knowing that the Lord of the Throne would never forsake them.

Examples of their generous nature will be provided in detail with the discussion of each Companion.

7. Selflessness

History has not recorded anyone dying of hunger during the time of the Companions. How could it be otherwise when Allah, the Almighty, praised them, saying: ﴿And those who, before them, had homes (in Madinah) and had adopted the faith love those who emigrate to them and have no jealousy in their breasts for that which they have been given, and [they] give them (the emigrants) preference over themselves, even though they were in need of that. And whoever is protected from the stinginess of his soul—it is those who will be the successful﴾ (translated meaning of Al-Hashr 59:9).

The Companions' lives are rich with valuable examples and instances of compassionate acts of selfless giving, which will be explored in detail, Allah willing.

8. Genuine Love for the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH)

Above and beyond all that has just been mentioned was the Companions' love for the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH). Their love for him (PBUH) was immense, exceeding their love for their children, their wealth, and themselves. They did not hesitate to sacrifice their most precious possessions for the sake of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH).

Examples of the overwhelming love and concern of the Companions toward the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) were included in part one: "*A Biography of the Best Man in Creation*", in confirmation of the Almighty's Saying: ﴿The Prophet is closer to the believers than their own selves…﴾ (translated meaning of Al-Ahzab 33:6).

More examples will be given while presenting the life of each Companion, Allah willing.

This, my dear ones, was a small part of the many qualities and characteristics of the Companions. Entire books and volumes have been devoted to them, and it is difficult to list all these qualities here.

The Companions were truly worthy of Allah's praise and worthy of the praise of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH). They were worthy of being chosen by Allah to become the Prophet's Companions and to attain the great honor of enjoying the company of the best man of Allah's creation, our Prophet Muhammad (PBBUH).

A question may come to mind at this point: Can we reach this lofty level of nobleness and closeness to Allah (Exalted be He)? Or is it not only difficult but impossible to catch up with the Companions, who lived in the time of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) and learned Islam directly from him (PBBUH)?

The answer to that is found in the Prophet's (PBBUH) words: **"The likeness of my *Ummah* is that of rain, knowing not whether the beginning of it is better or the end."**[1] Hope is always there. The path to Allah has been made clear. The guidance and good examples that illuminate the path for us are near and available. We must sincerely seek Allah's Help and beg Him, the Almighty, to enlighten our vision and insights to be able to follow the guidance and light that Allah has bestowed upon us and enjoy the company of *The Best Man in Creation and His Honorable Companions*.

Now let us, my dear readers, within the following pages of this book, enjoy the company of this group of 'Noble Companions'.

[1] Reported by Al-Tirmidhi, hadith no. 2869.

1. Khalid ibn Al-Walid

May Allah Be Pleased with Him

1. Khalid ibn Al-Walid

Dear readers, we are introduced in the first garden to a man through whom Allah (Exalted be He) raised the stature of Muslims and made the banners of Islam fly high due to his contribution to the expansion and prominence of Islam. He was the leader of the strivers in Allah's Path, Allah's unsheathed sword—as the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) described him. He was Khalid ibn Al-Walid (may Allah be pleased with him), about whom Abu Bakr Al-Siddiq (may Allah be pleased with him) said: "Women will no longer be able to give birth to the likes of Khalid!"[1]

Khalid's Lineage

His full name was Khalid ibn Al-Walid ibn Al-Mughirah ibn `Abdullah Al-Makhzumi, better known by the nickname of Abu Sulayman.

Quraysh and Banu Makhzum

Authority within Quraysh was divided into three sections:

- Spiritual authority, which belonged to the Banu Hashim clan.
- Political authority, which belonged to the Banu Umayyah clan.
- Military authority, which belonged to the Banu Makhzum clan.

From the Banu Makhzum clan came our hero, Khalid ibn Al-Walid. He was raised in one of the most noble, distinguished, and wealthy clans of Quraysh. His father and paternal uncles were none other than prominent leaders,

[1] It signifies the belief that Khalid was a unique individual and that women would no longer be able to bear sons with his exceptional qualities and military prowess.

descendants of prominent leaders, of high status and excellence, where no other pre-Islamic leader was considered better or higher.

Khalid's grandfather, Al-Mughirah ibn `Abdullah: Any man from the Banu Makhzum clan craved to be related to Al-Mughirah because of his venerable status.

Khalid's father, Al-Walid ibn Al-Mughirah: Al-Walid was nicknamed 'the Just' and 'the Unique One' because one year he alone draped the Ka`bah, and it took the entire Quraysh to drape the Ka`bah with a similar covering the next year.[1]

Khalid's paternal uncle, Hisham ibn Al-Mughirah: Hisham was the commander of the Banu Makhzum clan in the Fijar War.[2] Upon his death, Quraysh mourned him deeply and did not hold a market in Makkah for three days out of grief over him.

Khalid's paternal uncle, Al-Fakih ibn Al-Mughirah: Al-Fakih was one of the most generous Arabs of his time. He had a guest house where anyone could stay without asking permission.

Khalid's paternal uncle, Abu Umayyah ibn Al-Mughirah: Abu Umayyah was nicknamed '*Zad Al-Rakib*' (Provisions of the Traveler). This was because he used to provide his traveling companions with provisions during their journeys, so they did not need any other provisions. He was the one who settled the dispute between the various clans over who would place the Black Stone[3] in its

[1] Draping the Ka`abh refers to the tradition of annually replacing the cloth of the Ka`bah.
[2] It was a series of battles fought in the late 6th century between the Quraysh and Hawazin tribes in Arabia.
[3] The Black Stone is a stone from Paradise that was set into one corner of the Ka'bah by Prophet Ibrahim (PBBUH), and Muslims honor it for that reason. Muslims follow the example of Prophet Muhammad (PBBUH), who kissed it during his Farewell Hajj. Muslims neither attach divine power to nor worship the Back Stone.

place in the Ka`bah after its re-construction was completed. He advised them that the first person to enter the Sacred Mosque should decide who would carry the Black Stone to its position. They accepted his advice, and the soundness of his advice was confirmed when the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) entered upon them. The Messenger (PBBUH) advised that the Black Stone be placed in his cloak and that each clan should choose a representative to assist in lifting the cloak with the Black Stone inside it. All the clans agreed to this.

Khalid's paternal uncle, Abu Hanifah ibn Al-Mughirah: Abu Hanifah was one of the four clan chiefs who, as previously mentioned, took hold of one of the edges of the cloak and carried the Black Stone back to its position in the Ka`bah.

The Banu Makhzum clan demonstrated great virtue and sagacity in numerous situations. They alone undertook to build the quarter of the Ka`bah between the Black and Yemeni corners, while the entire Quraysh participated in building the remaining corners. They were in constant competition with Banu Hashim and Banu Umayyah. Therefore, they responded in a haughty and superior manner when prophethood appeared among Banu Hashim but not among them.

Khalid's Upbringing

Al-Walid ibn Al-Mughirah

Khalid ibn Al-Walid came from a highborn family, as mentioned earlier. He had seven brothers and two sisters. His father, Al-Walid ibn Al-Mughirah, was one of the richest men of his time, as also mentioned earlier. His wealth was estimated at one million dinars.

Al-Walid ibn Al-Mughirah was a man of resourcefulness and bravery; he found clever solutions to problems and faced challenges head-on. Khalid's father showed himself to be brilliant before the world recognized Khalid's brilliance; on the day the Ka`bah collapsed, when people were confused and hesitant, the brilliance of Khalid's father became clear. People feared to demolish and rebuild the Ka`bah, out of respect for its sanctity and fear of the consequences of its demolition. Many of them had seen what happened to Abraha when he tried to destroy the Ka`bah.

When Al-Walid observed the people's trepidation and fear about what would happen, he took up a pickaxe and struck the first blow, saying: "O Allah, we only want good." The people followed suit to complete what he had begun.

Khalid was raised by this kind of father, imbibing from him the arts of fighting, horsemanship, and bravery. Khalid displayed chivalry from an early age, which was why his father nominated him to lead his horses and their riders, even though he was not his eldest son. This indicates Khalid's readiness for leadership and a supervisory role from a young age.

His mother was Lubabah bint Al-Harith Al-Hilaliyyah, the sister of the Mother of the Believers, Maymunah bint Al-Harith, the wife of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH).

Khalid's Coarse and Austere Style of Living

Despite the wealth and affluence in which Khalid grew up, he was accustomed to a style of living that was tough and austere. Because of this, he was prepared for difficult and challenging circumstances, such as enduring the hardships of war and the rigors of hunger and thirst when provisions ran out in a battle or conflict. This taught him resilience and resourcefulness in the face of

adversity. He was ready for rough and tough situations. He had become used to the harsh life of the Bedouins as well as everything a fighter had to endure in the fiercest of wars.

Khalid had broad knowledge of the Arabian desert and its surroundings due to his extensive travels before Islam and the routes he took from Iraq to the Hijaz, from the Hijaz to Yemen, and from Najd to the Levant during those journeys. Perhaps the experience he gained on such travels helped him when he became the Commander of the Muslim armies.

Khalid's Physical Appearance

Khalid ibn Al-Walid was tall. His body and head were large. He had an imposing appearance, and his complexion was inclined to be fair.

Khalid Embraces Islam

Khalid ibn Al-Walid was a young man when the Call to Islam emerged. The prevailing sentiment within his community was to reject Islam, and he rejected it as most of his people rejected it. Before his conversion to Islam, he participated in all the battles fought against the Muslims except for Badr, as he was outside Madinah at the time of the battle.

Lessons from the Battle of Badr

However, despite not participating in the fighting at Badr, a significant event occurred as a result of the battle that had a profound emotional impact on him.

His brother, Al-Walid ibn Al-Walid, was fighting in the ranks of the *Mushrikin* (those who associate others with Allah in His divinity or worship). The Muslims captured him and demanded four thousand dirhams as ransom for him. When his ransom was paid and he returned to his family, he announced among them his conversion to Islam. They were strongly averse to his decision and asked him: "Why did you not become a Muslim before you were ransomed?" He replied: "I disliked that people would think that I was afraid of captivity (i.e., I was using Islam as a cover to escape captivity)."

Al-Walid endured the torture and abuse of his people until, after much effort and skillfulness, he escaped on foot and joined the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH). This incident left a deep impression on Khalid, and he began to ask himself: "What was the secret of this religion that made his brother sacrifice everything precious and dear?" Although the answer did not come to him at the time, it would come to him later.

The Day of Uhud

On the Day of Uhud, Khalid was the commander of the right flank of the polytheist army, and he led the attack that tipped the balance of victory from the Muslims to the polytheists. This took place when the archers disobeyed the command of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) and abandoned their posts as soon as the signs of victory for the Muslims began to appear. When Khalid spotted this gap, he seized it. The initial complete defeat of his people did not stun him as it had stunned others. He directed his attention on the Muslim horsemen and `Ikrimah ibn Abu Jahl followed him, soon resulting in the tides turning against the Muslims.[1]

The Day of the Trench

During the Battle of the Trench, Khalid was circling the trench with his cavalry, searching for a narrow passage where he could break through. He became exhausted but would have nearly achieved his goal had it not been for the vigilance and strength of the Muslims, which deterred the polytheists, who then took to their heels in defeat.

The Day of Al-Hudaibiyah: Wafts of Faith Gently Knock at Khalid's Heart

It was the Day of Al-Hudaibiyah; the Muslims peacefully set out for `Umrah (minor pilgrimage), carrying no weapons other than those of travelers (swords in scabbards). The *Mushrikin* feared that they had come to the Sacred House to fight and not to perform `Umrah. They dispatched Khalid with two

[1] For more information on the story of the Battle of Uhud, please refer to the first part of the book series: *A Biography of the Best Man in Creation*, by the author.

hundred horsemen to encounter the Muslims before they reached Makkah. Khalid approached until he could see the Companions of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH). When the time for the *Zuhr* (Noon) Prayer arrived, the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) led his Companions in congregational prayer. After that, when the time for the *`Asr* (Afternoon) prayer arrived, the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) performed the Prayer of *Khawf* (Fear).[1] Khalid and his soldiers were watching and waiting. At this point, something occurred to Khalid. It was as if the gentle breezes of faith had begun to blow on the knight's mind and soul and spark a spiritual awakening in him. Just as he was about to attack them while they were engaged in prayer, something occurred to him. He said: "This man is divinely protected."

The Turning Point: The Triumph of Reason over Fanaticism

When the year had passed and the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) and his Companions returned to the Sacred House to perform the compensatory `Umrah, as had been approved and stipulated in the Treaty of Al-Hudaibiyyah, Khalid clearly saw the manifestations of Allah's assistance and victory for His Prophet (PBBUH) and the defeat sustained by the *Mushrikin* in every battle and situation. Khalid, alone, by himself, felt drawn to the true religion, saying: "By Allah, this man is truly the Messenger of Allah." This was the turning point in which reason triumphed over fanatical attachments within him, marking the end of a period of darkness and the beginning of a period of light and faith. Khalid ibn Al-Walid embraced Islam.

[1] A special form of prayer in Islam performed during times of intense danger, such as during warfare.

The Journey of Faith: From Misguidance to Light

Now, my dear readers, let us listen to the eminent knight Khalid ibn Al-Walid as he narrates his blessed journey to the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) and his transition from a state of error, confusion, and deviation to a state of clarity, truth, and adherence to the straight path.

Khalid ibn Al-Walid (may Allah be pleased with him) said: "When Allah willed good for me, He cast into my heart the love of Islam and I discerned the right path."

He continued: "I fought all those battles against Muhammad (PBBUH). In every battle, I felt that all my efforts were to no avail and I was certain that Muhammad would triumph. When the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) set out to Al-Hudaybiyah, I left (Makkah) with a group of *Mushrikin* horsemen until I encountered the Messenger of Allah and his Companions at `Usfan.

I drew close to him to provoke him. He led his companions in the *Zuhr* Prayer in front of us. We thought of attacking them, but we refrained. He must have known what we were thinking when the next prayer, the `*Asr* Prayer, was due. He therefore led his Companions in what is known as 'the Prayer of *Khawf* (fear)'. It affected us all profoundly. I realized that this man was divinely protected [from our attack]. Consequently, we drew back.

After he (PBBUH) made peace with Quraysh at Al-Hudaybiyah and Quraysh demanded him to leave, I said to myself: 'What is left? Where should I go? Should I join Negus?' But then I remembered that the Negus had already become a follower of Muhammad and that Muhammad's Companions were safe under his protection. 'Should I go and join Heraclius? Should I abandon my religion and become a Christian or a Jew and live among non-Arabs as a

follower. Or should I stay in my homeland among those who remained [waiting for the eventual triumph of Islam, which was only a matter of time]?'

While in such a confused state, the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) and his Companions came to Makkah for their compensatory `Umrah. I intentionally absented myself [until the Prophet and his Companions departed] and did not witness his entry into Makkah.

My brother Al-Walid ibn Al-Walid had entered Makkah with the Prophet (PBBUH) to perform the `Umrah.

He looked for me but could not find me, so he wrote a letter to me in which he said: 'In the Name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful. To proceed, I have never seen anything more amazing than your indecisiveness about Islam and your good judgment failing you! How could anyone be ignorant of the truth of Islam! The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) asked me about you and said: 'Where is Khalid?' I replied: 'Allah will bring him.' He (PBBUH) said: 'Someone like him should not remain ignorant of Islam. If he had devoted his strength and courage on the side of the Muslims [instead of on the side of their enemies], it would have been better for him. We would have preferred him over others.' It is high time, brother, for you to make amends for the great benefits you have missed.'

I read my brother's letter and became motivated to leave [walk away from my current situation]. It increased my desire for Islam. I was pleased that the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) had asked about me.

When I resolved to go out to the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH), I said: 'Who should I accompany to the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH)?' I met Safwan ibn Umayyah, and when I proposed the matter to him, he refused vehemently. I then met `Ikrimah ibn Abu Jahl. He said to me the same as Safwan had said to

me. I went to my house and ordered two camels to be prepared. I went out with them until I met `Uthman ibn Talhah and told him what had happened. I said to him something similar to what I had said to my two previous companions. He hastily accepted to go with me. We set out at dawn. Before dawn broke, we reached Ya'jaj (eight miles away from Makkah), where we found `Amr ibn Al-`As.

He asked: 'Where are you going?' We replied: 'What brought you out?' He said: 'What brought you both out?' We replied: 'We want to enter Islam and follow Muhammad.' He said: 'That is what brought me here.' He accompanied us all until we arrived in Madinah.'"

Meeting with the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH)

Khalid ibn Al-Walid continued, saying: "The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) was informed of our arrival and was pleased to see us. I put on my best clothes and then walked briskly to the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH). I saw him at a distance, smiling. He (PBBUH) kept smiling until I reached him and greeted him as Allah's Prophet and Messenger. He (PBBUH) returned my greeting with a face beaming with joy. I said, 'I bear witness that there is no god but Allah and that you are the Messenger of Allah.' He (PBBUH) exclaimed, **'All praise be to Allah Who guided you. I have always seen you as an astute person, and I have always hoped that your astuteness will lead you only to what is good.'"**

Entering Islam Erases All Previous Sins

Khalid ibn Al-Walid continued: "I said, 'O Messenger of Allah, I keep thinking of those battles in which I used to oppose the truth. Ask Allah to

forgive that for me.' He (PBBUH) said, **'Islam erases all past sins.'**[1] I said: 'O Messenger of Allah, please ask more for me.' He (PBBUH) said: **'O Allah, forgive Khalid ibn Al-Walid every effort he exerted to turn people away from Your Path.'"**

And that was the beginning. Khalid ibn Al-Walid began his journey on the path of light, from darkness, ignorance, and negativity toward enlightenment, understanding, and positivity.

[1] Embracing Islam brings about forgiveness of past sins, signifying a fresh start for those who convert to Islam.

The Beginning of a Life of Enlightenment and Faith

Now, my dear readers, let us see the knight of Quraysh turning his back on the gods of his ancestors and the vainglory of his people. He welcomed a new world with the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) and the Muslims. Perhaps I am not exaggerating when I say that the life of Khalid ibn Al-Walid (may Allah be pleased with him) began the day his soul was illuminated by the light of his Lord and the day his right hand touched the hand of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) to pledge allegiance to Islam.

Our hero began a life of light and faith, a life of *Jihad* (fighting or striving in Allah's Cause), sacrifice, and giving for Allah's Sake and in support of His religion.

The Remarkable Missions That Khalid Undertook with the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH)

Khalid ibn Al-Walid accompanied the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) for three years. The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) appreciated the capabilities and potential of men, appointing them to important positions and placing the right man in the right post. Known for his exceptional chivalry and bravery, Khalid was always at the forefront of any battle. During his lifetime, the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) entrusted him with more than twenty important missions, which implies the high level of trust and confidence that he (PBBUH) had in his abilities and judgment. After his conversion to Islam, Khalid participated in every battle with the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH).

Here are some of these important missions and battles:

1. The Battle of Mu'tah

The first battle in which Khalid ibn Al-Walid participated came one or three months after his embracing Islam. The heroes of this battle were four of the best of the Companions: Zayd ibn Harithah, Ja`far ibn Abu Talib, `Abdullah ibn Rawahah, and our hero Khalid ibn Al-Walid. The events of this battle will be briefly outlined. A detailed elaboration of the role of each of these heroes will be provided in the appropriate location of his biography.

The Causes of the Battle

The key contributing factors that culminated in the battle of Mu'tah was that the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) had sent Al-Harith ibn `Umair Al-Azdi as an envoy to the Byzantine Emperor, Heraclius. Shurahbil ibn `Amr Al-Ghassani, who was the leader of the Ghassanids and a governor under Heraclius, killed Al-Harith. The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) foresaw the drastic consequences of remaining silent about this heinous act and not taking prompt action. If the Ghassanids and their neighbors slighted the power of the Muslims and escaped punishment for their crime, this would embolden them to commit further aggression. This might also embolden neighboring tribes, and the Byzantine Empire might provide them with money and weapons for any attack.

The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) saw no alternative but to seek revenge to preserve the image and prestige of the Muslims and maintain their respectability and influence in the region.

The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) Appoints the Commanders of the Battle

The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) prepared a small army of three thousand men to discipline these aggressors. He appointed Zayd ibn Harithah as their commander, saying: **"If Zayd is killed, then Ja`far ibn Abu Talib (should assume the leadership of the army). If Ja`far is killed, then `Abdullah ibn Rawahah. If `Abdullah is killed, then let the Muslims agree upon a man from among them and appoint him as their commander."**

Despite his well-known combat experience, Khalid ibn Al-Walid served as an ordinary soldier in this army, under the command of these three commanders, due to his recent conversion to Islam. Such was a model of prophetic education that molded Muslims into the great figures they became.

The Course of the Battle

The Muslim army marched forth. The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) ordered them to go to the place where his envoy [to the Byzantine Emperor] had been martyred and to invite the people there to Islam. He (PBBUH) instructed them: **"Do not act treacherously. Do not steal from the booty. Do not kill a child, a woman, an elderly person, or someone secluded in his hermitage [i.e., civilians]. Do not approach palm trees, do not cut down trees, and do not demolish a house."**

In modern terms, this army was a 'punitive campaign.'

The Muslim army advanced until it reached Ma`an (a city in southern Jordan) and stayed there for two nights. The Muslims there heard that Heraclius had encamped at Ma'ab with a force of one hundred thousand Byzantine

warriors, in addition to one hundred thousand fighters from allied Arab tribes. These increased the size of Heraclius' army to two hundred thousand men. How could three thousand Muslims possibly fight a force of two hundred thousand men?

The Muslims advanced from Ma`an to Mu'tah—a village containing a Ghassanid fortress. The battle began, in which the Muslims performed admirably, killing a large number of the Byzantine soldiers. The battle lasted for six days, during which Zayd ibn Harithah was martyred. Ja`far ibn Abu Talib then took over the leadership and was martyred. `Abdullah ibn Rawahah then took over and was martyred as well. After the last of the commanders was martyred, Thabit ibn Aqram rushed to the banner, carried it in his right hand, and raised it high amid the Muslim army to prevent chaos from dispersing its ranks.

No sooner had Thabit carried the banner than he turned to Khalid ibn Al-Walid and said: "Take the banner, O Abu Sulayman." Khalid, a new convert to Islam, did not believe it was his right to lead a people that included both the Ansar (the Supporters of the Prophet from the local inhabitants of Madinah) and the Muhajirun (the Emigrants from Makkah), who had preceded him to Islam. Such politeness, humility, and gratitude from this great hero! Khalid was not only capable of great acts of courage but also demonstrated respect, modesty, and a recognition of others' sacrifices.

At that moment, Khalid said to Thabit: "No, I will not take the banner. You are more deserving of it." Thabit replied: "Take it, for you know better about fighting than I do." Then he called out to the Muslims: "Do you accept Khalid as your commander?" They said: "Yes."

The genius knight mounted his horse and pushed the banner forward with his right hand. It was as if he was knocking on closed doors that were about to

be opened on a long road that the hero would travel, leaping forward during the life of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) and after his death until a term ordained by Allah (Exalted be He).

Allah's Sword

Back in Madinah, the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) announced the death of the three leaders he had assigned to run the battle. While standing on the pulpit, as if he (PBBUH) had been watching the progress of the battle closely on a big screen, he (PBBUH) said: **"Shall I tell you about this army of yours that set out for the battle?"** He (PBBUH) continued: **"Zayd ibn Harithah took the banner and fought holding it until he was martyred. Then Ja`far ibn Abu Talib took it and fought holding it until he was martyred. Then `Abdullah ibn Rawahah took it and fought holding it until he was martyred. Then a sword of Allah, Khalid ibn Al-Walid, took the banner, and Allah granted victory through his hands."**

Indeed, this honorary title was the highest decoration that the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) placed on Khalid's chest, and he became known from that day as 'Allah's Unsheathed Sword.'

Khalid's Exceptional Leadership and Superior Tactics

Khalid assumed command of the army after the fate of the battle had been decided. The Muslims had suffered many casualties, despite having killed many Byzantine warriors, and no amount of military prowess could have changed the ultimate outcome of this military engagement. In this situation, the only immediate action possible for a genius commander to accomplish was to halt casualties and ensure the safe withdrawal of the remaining forces. In some critical confrontations, this can be even more challenging than achieving

victory. Victory is possible when the person has the necessary resources and can endure adversity.

However, achieving a safe withdrawal is not possible for anyone who needs it, especially when they are weak and defeated. This is only possible in the presence of a commander with extensive leadership experience and a genius for planning. Abu Sulayman, Allah's sword, was truly that commander.

A Brilliant Plan for a Safe Withdrawal

The first action Khalid needed to take to ensure a safe withdrawal of his troops was to convince his enemy that he did not intend to withdraw, but rather to attack. Despite the challenges and dangers of the battlefield, Khalid and his soldiers remained fighting steadfastly until evening, on the sixth day of the battle. In the evening, under the cover of darkness, Khalid devised his plan for removing all his forces from the conflict zone without causing casualties or harm. The plan centered on these key components:

1. Lifting the morale of his soldiers to maintain a strong and effective fighting force.

2. Effecting a complete change in the army's positions using a maneuver where the left and right sides of the formation switched places. The troops on the right side moved to the left, and those on the left moved to the right. He also replaced the troops on the center flank with others. He replaced the vanguard with the rearguard, and the rearguard with the vanguard.

3. He deployed a group of cavalrymen to occupy a vast area behind the troops. He ordered them to make loud noises with the horns they had and stir up dust with their horses. They were to circle in tight circles to

instill fear in the hearts of the Byzantine commanders, giving them the impression that a new army and large reinforcements had arrived for the Muslim army.

Panic among the Byzantine Forces and the Success of Khalid's Plan

On the morning of the seventh day of the battle, the Byzantines found themselves facing leaders, soldiers, formations, and banners different from those they had faced in the front lines during the previous six days of fighting. The Byzantine right flank found new men and faces on the Muslim left flank, and the Byzantine left flank found new men and faces on the Muslim right flank. The Byzantines also saw, coming from behind the Muslims, massive dust obscuring the horizon from a far distance, toward the Arabian Peninsula. The sounds of *Tahlil* (saying: '*La ilaha illa Allah* [There is no god except Allah]') and *Takbir* (saying: '*Allahu Akbar* [Allah is the Greatest]') echoed strongly and persistently.

The clouds of dust then split apart, and the Muslim cavalry battalions emerged, each following the other in perfect coordination and precision. Panic spread among the Byzantine forces and chaos and confusion reigned. They thought that new reinforcements had approached the Muslim army. For the past six days, they engaged in intense and difficult battles with the Muslims, without reinforcements. With reinforcements present, Muslims now had increased strength and support. Confrontations would be much fiercer, and casualties would be massive.

Khalid, with the keen sense of a veteran commander, sensed the terror and alarm that had struck the Byzantines and their allies as a result of his clever tactics. He seized the opportunity and immediately ordered a sweeping and forceful attack against them. What Khalid planned happened as he had

planned; terror among the Byzantine forces increased, and they were about to flee. A fierce battle then ensued. The Byzantines, fighting fiercely, began retreating from Khalid's attack.

Khalid performed this attack with unparalleled skill, so much so that he said of himself: "On the day of Mu'tah, nine swords broke in my hand and only a Yemenite sword of mine remained in my hand."

Since the goal of these combat maneuvers was to secure the army's withdrawal, Khalid seized the opportunity of confusion and disruption within the Byzantine ranks and ordered his commanders to retreat southward with the army in an orderly fashion. Khalid personally oversaw the withdrawal. With the courage of desperation, fighting and retreating in this manner provided adequate cover for the small army against the large one.

The withdrawal from Mu'tah was executed just as our hero had planned—with precision and without any losses among the Muslim ranks. The Byzantines were so stunned by this ingenious tactic that they were unable to track the Muslim army during its retreat. They feared that the withdrawal was just a new plot by Khalid to trap the Byzantine army in unpredictable ambushes, and so they refrained from pursuing the Muslims.

"They Have Not Run Away—They Retreated Only to Advance Again"

The Muslim army arrived safely in Madinah, but they were viewed by the people who came out to meet them as having run away from the battle. They began to shout at the army: "You have fled from fighting!" and tossed dust in the faces of the soldiers and commanders. When the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) learned of this, he (PBBUH) said: **"They have not run away (from**

the battle); they are those who have retreated only to advance again (i.e., resume fighting later on), by Allah's Will."

Khalid Fully Deserved the Title of 'Allah's Sword'

When the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) bestowed upon Khalid ibn Al-Walid the title 'Allah's Sword' at a time when people were pelting him and his army with stones and throwing dust in their faces, he (PBBUH) alone knew that Khalid truly deserved this title. Had Khalid (may Allah be pleased with him) met his end in the tenth year of the *Hijrah* (the Prophet's emigration to Madinah) or shortly thereafter, people would have wondered how he was called 'Allah's Sword' and how he earned this title, which is second to none.

But the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) knew that he truly deserved this title. He (PBBUH) named him so before Khalid defeated the Persians and the Byzantines and before he preserved the Arabian Peninsula for Islam and annexed Iraq and the Levant to it, which are the great deeds for which he is called today 'Allah's Sword.'

2. The Victorious Entry into Makkah

When Quraysh broke their covenant with the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH), the Muslims, under his leadership, marched into Makkah in four divisions. The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) appointed Khalid as commander of the Muslim right flank. The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) ordered his commanders: **"Do not fight unless you are forced to do so."** He (PBBUH) wanted his entry into Makkah to be peaceful and without bloodshed. Fighting should be a last resort, engaged in only when there was no other option and they were compelled to defend themselves or their values.

The four divisions entered Makkah without significant resistance, except for the division led by Khalid ibn Al-Walid. He encountered fierce resistance and fighting from a large host of men led by his friends of yesterday and enemies of today, `Ikrimah ibn Abu Jahl and Safwan ibn Umayyah. Khalid's allegiance shifted from paganism to Islam; based on changing circumstances and perspectives and interests, what was once a friendly relationship turned into animosity, and vice versa.

Allah's Sword fought them with the men who were with him, showering them with arrows. `Ikrimah and Safwan fled. Khalid explained: "They began fighting us, shooting arrows at us and pointing weapons at us. I held back as much as I could. I called them to Islam, but they refused. I had no choice but to fight them. Then Allah granted us victory over them, and they fled in every direction."

Khalid ibn Al-Walid in Makkah

Khalid entered Makkah with the victorious Muslim army, along with the oppressed who had been driven from their homes. They returned on their horses, their whispers in the house of Al-Arqam [the established gathering place for early Muslims] having turned into thunderous, resounding chants of '*Allahu Akbar* (Allah is Greatest)', shaking all of Makkah.

Khalid raised his head and gazed with awe and delight at the banners of Islam filling the horizon. He bowed his head in gratitude for Allah's Favor upon him. Allah (Exalted be He) guided him to Islam and made him, on the day of the great entry into Makkah, one of those who carried Islam to Makkah, not one of those who would convert to Islam as a consequence of that victory.

3. The Destruction of the Chief Idol of Quraysh—Al-`Uzza

As soon as the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) finished cleansing the Ka`bah of all idols and images, he (PBBUH) sent small expeditions to areas around Makkah to invite its people to Islam and destroy the idols worshipped there. He (PBBUH) sent Khalid ibn Al-Walid with thirty horsemen to destroy `Al-Uzza. It was the largest idol of Quraysh, located in Hawazin, and its custodians were Banu Sulaym.

Al-Walid ibn Al-Mughirah, Khalid's father, used to rub his body against Al-`Uzza [seeking its protection] and slaughter camels and sheep for it [seeking its blessings], although it is merely an object that is itself vulnerable and in need of safeguarding. Khalid came close to it and destroyed it, saying: "`Al-Uzza is gone. There will be no more `Uzza (i.e., idols) after today."

When Khalid returned to the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH), he said: "All praise be to Allah Who has honored us through you and saved us from perdition. I used to see my father bringing his best camels and sheep to `Al-Uzza, slaughtering them for it, staying there for three days, and then departing happily. I saw how he was deceived to the extent that he began to sacrifice to things that could not hear, harm, or benefit." The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) said to him: **"This matter is up to Allah[1]. Whoever Allah wills to be guided, He makes the means easy for him to be guided [prepares the conditions that lead him to guidance]. But whoever Allah wills to be misguided, He abandons him, leaving him in his misguidance."**

[1] Everything in this universe, including guidance and misguidance, is ultimately decided by Allah's Will, not human control.

4. The Battle of Hunayn

In the Battle of Hunayn, the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) had such staunch trust in Khalid ibn Al-Walid (may Allah be pleased with him) that he (PBBUH) entrusted him with commanding the cavalry at the forefront of the Muslim army, with a force of one hundred horsemen. Even though Khalid fought a fierce battle, the Muslims were initially defeated. He continued to fight until he fell, burdened with wounds and unable to persist. There, the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) found him when he went out to inspect the wounded after the battle. He (PBBUH) examined his wounds, blew his blessed breath on them, supplicated Allah for him, and consoled him.

This was trust and appreciation from the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) earned by Khalid's actions that showed competence, with him often taking the initiative and consistently delivering high-quality results.[1]

5. The Battle of Ta'if

During the Battle of Ta'if, which was an extension of the Battle of Hunayn, the tribes took refuge in the city of Ta'if after fleeing and fortified themselves behind its walls. They had gathered enough food to last them until the following year. The Muslims surrounded the walls, and the polytheists shot arrows at them. Here, Khalid ibn Al-Walid stood, calling the polytheists to fight, but no one responded. Abd Ya-Layl ibn `Amr, the chief of Thaqif, shouted back: "None of us shall come down. We shall remain in our fortress, for there is enough food in it to last us for years. If you stay until the food runs out, we will all come out against you with our swords until we die, one by one." The

[1] For more information on the events of Hunayn, please refer to the first part of the book series: *A Biography of the Best Man in Creation* by the author.

Muslims' repeated attempts to conquer the fortress were futile and the siege remained in vain. When the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) saw that Allah did not permit that the fortress be conquered, he consulted Nawfal ibn Mu`awiyah Al-Dayli, who said: "They are like a fox (hiding) in its den. If you stand in wait for it (i.e., persist in your siege), you will capture it. And if you leave it alone, it will not harm you." The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) ordered the siege to be lifted and the Muslims to depart.

6. The Battle of Tabuk

This was the last battle the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) undertook. It took place toward the borders of the Levant in the year 9 A.H. It was the largest Muslim army that was assembled during Prophet Muhammad's lifetime and was aimed at confronting a potential Byzantine invasion of Madinah. But when the Byzantines learned of this massive advance, they were seized with terror and chose to withdraw. The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) stayed in the area and sent his envoys to secure a treaty with the border tribes.

The Dumat Al-Jandal Expedition

The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) established security and made a treaty with the border tribes. However, the Messenger (PBBUH) then felt that an uprising might be expected from Ukaidir ibn `Abdul-Malik, the Christian governor of Dumat Al-Jandal (a fortress near Tabuk), and that the Byzantines could assist him in such a move against the Muslims.

In order to forestall such a threat, the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) dispatched Khalid ibn Al-Walid to Dumat Al-Jandal. He (PBBUH) informed him that he would find Ukaidir out hunting wild cows. Khalid set out at the head of four hundred and twenty horsemen until he positioned his force at a

location that overlooked the fortress of Dumat Al-Jandal. It was a moonlit night, and Khalid saw Ukaidir on the roof of the fortress. There were some cows rubbing their horns against the fortress gate, which prompted Ukaidir to rush out of the fortress to hunt them, accompanied only by his brother and a few guards.

As soon as they left, Khalid ambushed them. He surrounded them, captured Ukaidir and the guards, and brought them to Madinah. The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) made peace with Ukaidir and pledged him security after Ukaidir agreed to pay the *Jizyah* (poll tax required from non-Muslims living in an Islamic state), and he became an ally of the Muslims.

The Remarkable Deeds of Khalid during the Caliphate of Abu Bakr

The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) passed away while he was pleased with Khalid ibn Al-Walid. Through his actions and behavior, he earned the trust and confidence of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH), who valued his rare military capabilities, loyalty, reliability, and sincere love toward him (PBBUH).

After Abu Bakr Al-Siddiq (may Allah be pleased with him) assumed the caliphate, he started facing enormous challenges, in which Abu Sulayman showed himself to be the hero of the situation, no matter the situation or the odds he faced. He truly was, as the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) had predicted, one of Allah's swords through whose hands Allah would grant victory.

The Wars of Apostasy

The first danger that faced the Caliph of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) was the hurricanes of apostasy that blew treacherously and cunningly from every direction. Makkah, Madinah, and the neighboring regions stood alone against the entire Arabian Peninsula, which was backed up by powerful states.

The apostasy uprisings were extremely dangerous, even though they began as a contingent rebellion. The fires of sedition erupted among the tribes of Asad, Ghatafan, Tayy', and Dhubyan, followed by the tribes of `Amir, Hawazin, Sulaym, and Banu Tamim.

No sooner had the skirmishes begun than they transformed into massive armies numbering tens of thousands of fighters, posing a grave threat to Islam.

The Role of Khalid ibn Al-Walid in the Wars of Apostasy

Khalid ibn Al-Walid (may Allah be pleased with him) participated in the Wars of Apostasy from the beginning to the end. He played a major role during their most important and critical moments, especially the Battle of Yamamah, which is considered one of the decisive wars of Islam in its early history.

The Wars of Apostasy proceeded through two phases:

The First Phase: Led by Caliph Abu Bakr Al-Siddiq

When the military advance of the apostates began, the great Caliph Abu Bakr Al-Siddiq (may Allah be pleased with him) decided to lead the Muslim army himself. The leaders of the Companions made desperate attempts to dissuade him from this decision, but Caliph Abu Bakr only grew more determined. Abu Bakr mobilized the Muslims and led them to the location where the Banu `Abs, Banu Murrah, and Banu Dhubyan tribes had assembled in a large army. The Caliph did not give them respite. He set out with his men in the dead of night and attacked them at dawn. They dispersed and fled.

No sooner had the victorious army returned and settled in Madinah than the Caliph dispatched it for a second battle. There were reports of the rebels gathering, resulting in an increasingly dangerous situation. Abu Bakr marched out at the head of the second army and was able to defeat them before they could move.

This marked the end of the phase in which all Muslims, under the Caliph's leadership, united to confront the perceived threat posed by the apostates.

Khalid's role in this phase was similar to that of other prominent fighters and senior Companions.[1]

The Second Phase: Delegation of Military Tasks to Commanders

Faced with the consensus of the Companions, the Caliph agreed to remain in Madinah. He divided the army into eleven groups, assigning each group its role. Khalid ibn Al-Walid was the commander of one of the larger groups.

When the Caliph gave each commander his banner, he turned to Khalid and said to him: "I heard the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) say: '**What an excellent servant and tribesman Khalid ibn Al-Walid is. He is one of Allah's swords that He unleashed against the disbelievers and the hypocrites.**'"

Khalid's Mission

Each of the eleven armies had an assignment to fulfill. Khalid's specific mission was to head to Buzakha to confront Tulayha ibn Khuwaylid (a tribal leader who had declared himself a prophet) and from there to Al-Butah to face Malik ibn Nuwayrah (who withheld the collected *Zakah* [obligatory charity], refusing to send it to Madinah under the new Caliph). Then Khalid was to head to Al-Yamamah to deal with Musaylimah the Liar (who claimed prophethood during the time of Prophet Muhammad, PBBUH).

[1] For more information on the Wars of Apostasy, please refer to the author's second volume, *A Biography of the Ten Given Glad Tidings of Paradise*.

Khalid Confronts Tulayha in Buzakha

Khalid ibn Al-Walid marched with an army of four thousand men, made up of many from the loyal tribes and a small number from the Muhajirun (the Emigrants from Makkah) and the Ansar (the Supporters of the Prophet, PBBUH, from the local inhabitants of Madinah). He headed to Buzakha, where Tulayha ibn Khuwaylid had claimed prophethood and alleged that he received revelation from heaven through Angel Jibril (Gabriel, PBUH).

Khalid completed the mobilization of his army for battle, placing the tribes on the right flank, the Muhajirun and the Ansar on the left flank, and he stood firm in the center with a group from both. As for Tulayha, when he learned of the Muslims' advance and before they reached Buzakha, he prepared for two scenarios: defeat and flight. He moved the women to a secure place and stationed around him forty of the strongest young men of Banu Asad.

"I Seek Refuge with None but Allah"

Tulayha and his supporters held firm when the two armies first clashed, and intense fighting began. They attacked the Muslims so violently that it made the Muslims think they were overwhelmed. Some advised Khalid to seek refuge in the mountains of Tayy and draw the apostates to that mountainous terrain, but he rejected the notion of retreating to the mountains for safety or protection, saying: "I seek refuge in none but Allah."

Khalid then stopped his horse and dismounted to fight on foot to gain agility, control, and quick movement and to set an example in the hearts of his companions through his actions and character. The fighting intensified until all the guards surrounding Tulayha were killed. Tulayha fled to his so-called

prophetic house, where he hid, deluding his supporters into thinking he was receiving revelation and awaiting reinforcements from the heavens.

Liar... Liar!

As the battle escalated, becoming more dangerous and severe, Tulayha's supporters desired to know the outcome of this fighting and how long they would have to wait for reinforcements from the heavens. One of them asked Tulayha: "Did Jibril (Angel Gabriel) come to you?" He replied: "No." He asked him a second time: "Did your companion come?" He replied: "No." On the third day, Tulayha prepared his provisions, mounted his horse, placed his wife behind him on his mount, and called out to his followers: "Yes, revelation has come to me." He added: "Whoever can do likewise (i.e., escape), let him do it." He continued fleeing until he reached Syria. People came out, throwing stones at him and shouting: "Liar... liar!"

After the cessation of fighting, Khalid sat with the people and brought them to their senses. Thus, he put an end to the sedition that Tulayha initiated and restored Islam to Buzakha. Khalid's victory shattered the morale of Asad, Ghatafan, and other tribes, so they pledged allegiance to him and returned to Islam.

Khalid Heads To Malik ibn Nuwayrah in Al-Butah

After the Battle of Buzakha, Khalid headed with his army—as he had been ordered—to Banu Tamim in Al-Butah, where their leader, Malik ibn Nuwayrah, resided. He had been one of those who withheld the collected *Zakah*. Khalid defeated them, killed their leader, and Banu Tamim returned to Islam.

The Battle of Yamamah

The Battle of Yamamah was the most dangerous battle fought in the Wars of Apostasy, and indeed the most dangerous war in early Islam. This danger emanated from the strength of Banu Hanifah, the 'people of Yamamah,' and the cunning of their leader, Musaylimah ibn Thumamah or Musaylimah the Liar (a self-proclaimed prophet who arose during the time of Prophet Muhammad, PBBUH, and his immediate successor). They posed a threat to the nascent Muslim community.

Allah's sword, Khalid ibn Al-Walid, played a major role in quelling the sedition of Musaylimah.

The Story of Musaylimah

Musaylimah had claimed prophethood during the time of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH), saying that he was given a share in prophethood with the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH), and his people followed him. He wrote to the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH): "From Musaylimah, the Messenger of Allah, to Muhammad, the Messenger of Allah. Peace be upon you. I have been made a partner with you in this matter. Half the earth belongs to us and half to the Quraysh. But the Quraysh are people who transgress." The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) wrote back: **"From Muhammad, the Messenger of Allah, to Musaylimah, the Liar. To proceed. The earth belongs to Allah. He gives it as an inheritance to whomever He wills of His servants, and the (blessed) end is for the pious."** After the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) died, Musaylimah's position grew stronger. He was one of those cunning men who hid their lack of prestige and dignity behind deceit.

Allah's Sword Marches to Confront the False Messenger

Abu Bakr dispatched `Ikrimah ibn Abu Jahl to Musaylimah, and then dispatched Shurahbil ibn Hasanah to reinforce him. `Ikrimah advanced without waiting for reinforcements. He encountered Musaylimah's army and was defeated. When Abu Bakr learned of this, he sent a message to Khalid ordering him to march against Musaylimah. He reinforced him with a large army consisting of Muhajirun and Ansar. He sent a message to Shurahbil ordering him to wait for Khalid until they, united together, meet Musaylimah's forces, which numbered forty thousand.

The Beginning of the Battle and the Temporary Defeat of the Muslims

Khalid arrived with his army at the battlefield and gave the banner to Shurahbil ibn Hasanah. The two armies met at Aqraba'. The Muslim army, which numbered thirteen thousand, was less than half the size of the Yamamah army. A terrible battle ensued, and victory appeared to be in favor of the Yamamah army, due to their superior numbers and available resources. Banu Hanifah succeeded to penetrate the Muslim ranks until they entered Khalid's tent.

Allah's Sword Turns Defeat into Clear Victory

Khalid saw that the enemy was currently winning the battle and gaining the upper hand. He mounted his horse to a nearby hill and took a quick, profound look at the battlefield. He immediately recognized and identified the weak points in his army.

Here, Khalid's brilliant talent manifested itself. When he saw that the motivation to fight and overcome challenges among the Muslims had weakened under the violent attacks of Musaylimah's army, he decided to strengthen the Muslims' hearts and reorganize their positions on the ground.

Khalid, in a victorious voice, shouted: "Separate yourselves into your tribes so that we may see the performance of each tribe and know from where we are being attacked."[1] They all organized themselves into distinct groups: the Muhajirun marched under their banner, the Ansar under their banner, and each tribe under its own banner. Thus, it became clear from where defeat originated. Souls were ignited with enthusiasm and filled with strong determination, driving them to action. Khalid, from time to time, would rekindle enthusiasm through his shouts of *Takbir* or *Tahlil*. He rapidly and powerfully transmitted his enthusiasm to his soldiers, like an electric current, and his brave spirit pervaded the entire army.

Within a few hours, the course of the battle shifted, and Musaylimah's soldiers began to fall like butterflies. When Khalid saw the millstone of war grinding Musaylimah, he summoned him to a duel. Musaylimah stepped forward, but when the situation became too difficult for him, he retreated and fortified himself in his orchard. Banu Hanifah were defeated, and their false leader was killed. The banner of 'Musaylimah the Liar' was buried forever.

And so the Wars of Apostasy, which had lasted a year or less, ended. Khalid ibn Al-Walid executed his role in the best way this duty could be accomplished. He alone contributed the greatest share and impact to the Wars of Apostasy by

[1] Khalid was strengthening focus on individual responsibility and how each member contributed to the overall effort.

suppressing the seditions from one end of the Arabian Peninsula to the other. May Allah bless you, O Abu Sulayman.

Muslim Conquest of Persia (Iraq)

After Abu Bakr (may Allah be pleased with him) triumphed in the Wars of Apostasy, successfully unified the Arab tribes under the banner of Islam, and, by Allah's Grace, brought them all together, he discerned the dangerous role played by the evil [external] forces lurking beyond his country's borders and posing a threat to the continuity of Islam and its people. These forces were the Persians in Iraq and the Byzantines in the Levant. Therefore, the Caliph channeled his will and energy to spread the justice and equality of Islam to these lands.

He sent instructions to Khalid ibn Al-Walid to advance with his army to Iraq. Our hero performed admirably in all the battles he fought against the Persians in Iraq and the Byzantines in the Levant. I wish the pages of this book were wide enough to accommodate all the victories and successes he achieved. Volumes have been devoted to them. However, it is sufficient for me to shed light on a few of them. Perhaps these few brief examples can provide a sense of the breadth of his accomplishments.

In short, Khalid (may Allah be pleased with him) confronted the Persians and their allies in fifteen battles; he was victorious in every single one. He did not lose any of these confrontations. He was always and forever, as `Amr ibn Al-`As described him: "As cautious as a cat and as decisive as a lion's leap". He had the desired combination of carefulness and decisive action. He did not neglect caution and did not rely solely on courage without other crucial elements, such as firmness and resourcefulness. He, therefore, possessed courage as well as vigilance, experience, and speed, knowing what needed to be done at the right time to effectively address a situation.

An Army Bolstered by the Presence and Tactical Brilliance of Al-Qa`qa` Will Be Unbeatable

Caliph Abu Bakr Al-Siddiq (may Allah be pleased with him) was keen to protect the Muslim armies from the fears, hesitation, and setbacks of those who had previously apostatized. So he advised that none of them be accepted into the ranks of the Muslim armies. When Khalid looked around and saw that he was rejecting many and accepting few, he sent to the Caliph for reinforcements. He was given a single knight, Al-Qa`qa` ibn `Amr. Amazed at the Caliph's decision, his companions exclaimed: "Are you reinforcing his army with only one man?" He replied: "Yes, one man who is worth a thousand men[1]. An army that includes Al-Qa`qa` will not be defeated." Events demonstrated the truthfulness of the Caliph's keen insight, as will be mentioned shortly.

Letters of Peace

Khalid began his mission in Iraq by sending letters of peace to Hormuz, the Persian commander, saying: "Peace be upon those who follow guidance. To continue, embrace Islam and be safe, or obtain for yourself and your people a protected status and accept to pay the *Jizyah* (poll tax required from non-Muslims living in an Islamic state). Otherwise, blame only yourself, for I have brought you people who love death as ardently as you love life."

Khalid (may Allah be pleased with him) advanced with an army of eighteen thousand soldiers to face the large Persian army, whose size was more than forty thousand. Khalid began his advance by issuing orders to all his

[1] A single person can possess exceptional qualities, skills, or influencing abilities that make them equivalent to a much larger group.

troops: "Do not harm the peasants. Leave them to do their work in peace, unless some of them come out to fight you, in which case fight the combatants."

The Battle of Kazima—Dhat Al-Salasil (the Battle of Chains)

Allah's sword, Khalid, demonstrated exceptional military prowess, an exceptional ability to maneuver, and an exceptional ability to deceive the enemy, inflicting defeat on them with the least possible losses among his soldiers.

Hormuz expected to encounter Khalid at Kazima, so he directed his entire force to that specific area. They concentrated their forces there, prepared for the encounter, and dug trenches. Allah's sword divided his forces into three groups that headed in different directions to distract Hormuz and his soldiers. Instead of heading to Kazima, as Hormuz had expected, Khalid, with his soldiers, headed toward Al-Hafir, north of Kazima and west of Al-Ubulla. When Hormuz realized that Khalid was heading to Al-Hafir and not Kazima, he ordered his soldiers to head to Al-Hafir and hasten their pace to arrive there ahead of Khalid.

This was Khalid's goal: to exhaust his enemy psychologically and physically before the battle began. Khalid deliberately slowed down the march of his army toward Al-Hafir so that Hormuz would arrive there before him. Hormuz arrived at Al-Hafir before Khalid and ordered his soldiers to dig trenches in preparation for the confrontation. Not only that, but he also ordered them to chain each other while marching and while working, so that they would not flee from the battle, hence the name of the battle: 'The Battle of the Chains.'

When Khalid learned from his intelligence that Hormuz had exhausted his soldiers by mobilizing them and digging trenches, he ordered his soldiers to

head to Kazima. Hormuz was furious and ordered his exhausted army to head to Kazima, only to find Khalid waiting for him, mobilized for battle.

By depleting the enemy's strength before the main battle, Khalid aimed to increase his chances of victory.

Treacherous Intentions Thwarted by Al-Qa`qa`s Vigilance

Before the battle began, Hormuz challenged Khalid to a duel, while harboring treachery. He waited for Khalid to emerge alone between the two lines. He had assigned ten of his cavalry soldiers to attack Khalid while he was engaged in the duel and kill him. The organized structure of the Muslim army would thus break down with the death of their leader, and so the Persians would then attack them, ending the battle in their favor.

The treacherous plan would have succeeded had it not been for the vigilance and alertness of Al-Qa`qa` ibn `Amr, who rushed to them in the blink of an eye and killed them all before they could reach Khalid. He was truly, as Abu Bakr said of him: "A man worth a thousand men".

Khalid, however, was able to defeat Hormuz, and the Persians fled after their leader was killed. Khalid gathered the goods, including the chains, estimated at a thousand tons, and Hormuz's skullcap, worth one hundred thousand dirhams. He sent this booty to Abu Bakr in Madinah, who presented Khalid with Hormuz's skullcap. However, Khalid refused it, being content with an old skullcap that the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) had given him.

The Battle of Al-Ubulla: Fear and Awe of Khalid's Name

Allah's sword continued his blessed march through Iraq, leading his army to Al-Ubulla, where a large Persian army was stationed. One of his commanders, Suwayd ibn Qutbah, had preceded him there. He had dispatched him to Al-Ubulla with a group of his troops. He encamped around it, waiting for its forces to come out of their fortified city. When Khalid arrived and found Suwayd in this state, he asked him what was happening. Suwayd replied: "The people of Al-Ubulla have gathered a great army against me and were about to come out, but they refrained from coming out when they learned of your presence, fearing you and your high status (as a military leader)."

Khalid's Ingenious Plan

Khalid devised his ingenious plan to deceive the Persians so that they would feel safe and come out to encounter Suwayd. He decided to leave the camp during the day and return at night. The Persians believed that Khalid, who had terrified them by killing Hormuz, had left Suwayd's camp and that only Suwayd remained in the field. This encouraged them to march out to meet him.

Khalid carried out his plan to mislead the Ubulla garrison. He headed with most of his forces in broad daylight toward Al-Hira. The Persians were reassured that Khalid had left the area, but at night Khalid returned to the camp with his forces. In the morning, the Persian armies marched out from Ubulla intending to attack Suwayd. No sooner had they reached him than they were overwhelmed by the Muslim soldiers, including Khalid, ready to meet them. They wanted to flee and return to the fortified Ubulla, but Khalid hindered them. Soon the Ubulla army became disrupted and was thrown into chaos.

Khalid entered Ubulla without any fight, as the city was devoid of fighters. He collected all the weapons and booty left by the enemy.

The Battle of Al-Madhar: The Killing of the Persian Commanders

After the Persians suffered successive defeats, their king, Shiruya (Sheroe, also known as Kavad II), mobilized a massive army of eighty thousand men and entrusted its command to his most senior commander, Qarin ibn Qirbas. He was assisted by two other prominent commanders: Anushjan and Qubaz. This massive Persian army reached Al-Madhar, where Khalid was stationed with his army of eighteen thousand soldiers. Qarin demanded a duel before the start of the battle. Khalid and Ma`qal ibn Al-A`shi rose to confront him, both competing to reach him first; Ma`qal wanted to protect Khalid from a similar plot by Hormuz. He outran him to the duel and killed Qarin instantly.

`Adiy ibn Hatim then advanced to the commander, Qubaz, and killed him. Next, `Asim ibn `Amr attacked Anushjan and killed him. After the three Persian commanders had been killed, the two sides clashed in a fierce battle, which the Muslim army won. The Persian casualties amounted to thirty thousand, not including those who drowned in the Tigris while attempting to flee.

The Battle of Walaja

Khalid led the Muslims from victory to victory. As usual, he was cautious and proactive, leaving a section of his army in the lands he had liberated to protect his rear. He advanced to Walaja. He separated two sections of the army along the way for them to lie in wait in a concealed position near Walaja and, at the critical moment, surround the Persian army from behind.

The battle began, and the Persians thought they were close to victory. But one of the two ambushes appeared and then the second, before the Persians could recover from the shock of the first ambush. They turned back in flight, suffering many casualties and captives.

With this brilliant plan, Allah's sword triumphed at the Battle of Walaja.

The Battle of Ullais

After the Battle of Walaja came the Battle of Ullais, one of the most amazing events of the Iraq War due to the various types of stratagems employed.

The Persian king, Shiruya, was greatly alarmed by the successive defeats suffered by his armies. His loyal Arabs were also enraged by their becoming subordinates, losing power, status, and control to the Muslim Arabs. All his loyal Arabs met at Ullais, the central spot between their lands, and awaited the reinforcements from the Persians and the hordes which were promised by the Persian king.

Jaban, the Persian commander, arrived at Ullais at the head of a large army, who, along with their loyal Arab allies, brought the total number of their combatants to one hundred and fifty thousand men. Khalid arrived with his army, which did not exceed eighteen thousand men.[1]

When Allah's sword arrived, he found the enemy eating their food, not expecting him to arrive at this hour. They continued eating their food and paid no attention to Khalid, perhaps out of arrogance and pride in their strength and superior numbers compared to Khalid's strength. However, Allah's sword did

[1] Khalid's army had not decreased significantly since the beginning of the Iraq War (18,000) due to his caution, intelligence, and keenness to accomplish his goal with the least possible losses.

not give them respite and struck his first blow, scattering them. It was only one day of fighting before the Persians turned their backs in flight after a great number of them had been killed.

Khalid divided the spoils and sent news of the victory and a one-fifth share of the booty to Caliph Abu Bakr.

"Women Will No longer Be Able to Give Birth to the Likes of Khalid!"

Events of the blessed advance of the Muslims continued day after day and the good news of victory and expansion reached Madinah, which kept experiencing a continuous state of achievement and celebration of wins; people would not finish talking about one victory until another followed. After the Battle of Ullais, Caliph Abu Bakr stood up to inform the people of the news of the victory so they could spread it throughout the Arabian Peninsula. He said: "Your lion has attacked another lion and defeated him. Women will no longer be able to give birth to the likes of Khalid!"

Moving on from One Victory to the Next

The blessed march from victory to victory continued, either by defeating the enemy through combat or by compelling them to surrender, until the grand victory was achieved. Khalid, with Allah's Help, was able to conquer Al-Hira, the capital of the Lakhmids, bringing it under Muslim control. This was followed by the conquest of Al-Anbar, Dumat Al-Jandal, and other provinces.

Giving Thanks to Allah

With two weeks left until the Hajj season, after these victories in which Allah (Exalted be He) had provided Khalid with His help and support, would Khalid ibn Al-Walid miss out on the chance of thanking Allah and performing the Hajj pilgrimage?

Like the rush of a violent wind, Khalid left the highest parts of Iraq for the farthest reaches of Hejaz. He performed the Hajj pilgrimage and returned to his camp without any of his enemies or close associates knowing.

Muslim Conquest of the Levant

At the same time that the Persian conquests were underway under the leadership of Khalid ibn Al-Walid in Iraq, Caliph Abu Bakr had dispatched four armies to confront the Byzantines in the Levant. He selected a group of skilled commanders from among the most prominent Companions to lead these armies:

- Abu `Ubaidah ibn Al-Jarrah, whom Abu Bakr sent to Homs.
- `Amr ibn Al-`As, whom he sent to Palestine.
- Shurahbil ibn Hasanah, whom he sent to Jordan.
- Yazid ibn Mu`awiyah, whom he sent to Balqa.

"By Allah, I Will Make the Byzantines Forget the Whispers of Satan Through Khalid"

When news of these Muslim armies reached the Byzantine Emperor, he mobilized a massive army of two hundred and forty thousand soldiers—nearly a quarter of a million—to fight the Muslim army, which did not exceed thirty thousand soldiers. The Muslim leaders sent messages to the Caliph about this dire situation and asked for reinforcements. Abu Bakr responded with: "Khalid is the man for it. By Allah, I will make the Byzantines forget the whispers of Satan through Khalid ibn Al-Walid."[1]

[1] This quote by Caliph Abu Bakr regarding Khalid's military prowess expresses his confidence that Khalid's military actions would be so impactful that the Byzantines would be distracted by their fears during the battle and that the Muslims would emerge victorious under the leadership of Khalid.

Khalid was ordered to head to the Levant. Khalid fulfilled the orders of the Caliph and left Al-Muthanna ibn Harithah in charge of Iraq, with half of his forces, so that he could march to the Levant with the other half.

Covering the Distance of Two Days in a Single Day

Khalid ibn Al-Walid was the type of man who wasted no time—however much or little it may have been. Whenever asked to do something, he would do it promptly. He received the Caliph's orders to move to the Levant. At that time, the distance between him and the Levant was approximately six hundred miles. He covered this distance in five days—a task that would normally take approximately two weeks. He traveled the land with speed, choosing the shortest routes, even if they were not the easiest. It was said that he and his soldiers traveled a distance in one day that would typically take two days.

In the Levant: The Exemplary Conduct of the Companions

Caliph Abu Bakr (may Allah be pleased with him) had sent word to Abu `Ubaidah ibn Al-Jarrah informing him of Khalid's arrival and his appointing Khalid supreme commander of the Muslim armies.

When Khalid arrived with his army in Syria, he met Abu `Ubaidah and said: "I received a letter from the Caliph ordering me to march to Syria and command its army. By Allah, I never asked for that. You will remain as you are, and you are the master of the Muslims. Your merit is undeniable, and your opinion is indispensable." Abu `Ubaidah replied: "But you know the art of war better than I do."[1]

[1] You are more experienced, insightful, and capable in that field.

Although the Caliph had placed Khalid at the head of the Muslim army along with all its commanders, Khalid did not want to be a helper to Satan against his companions. Therefore, he relinquished his right to leadership and settled on taking it in turns among them all to be the leader: taken on by each of them, one after the other. Everyone agreed that Khalid should be their first commander. What a wonderful example of noble morals, altruism, and self-denial by these noble Companions who were raised and educated by the beloved Chosen Prophet (PBBUH).

The Battle of Yarmuk

Now, dear readers, I invite you to engage in this decisive battle and turning point in the conflict with the Byzantine Empire. Reading the following pages, you will find many events, lessons, and sublime interactions between the Companions of the Teacher of Humanity (PBBUH).

Getting Ready for the Battle and the Unequal Encounter

Khalid began organizing the ranks of his soldiers, whose number, after adding the Iraqi soldiers, had reached thirty-six thousand who would confront this massive army of a quarter of a million. How could this small group defeat this enormous force?

You will shortly learn, dear readers, the answer to this question.

The Night Before the Battle

Allah's sword organized the ranks, laid out plans, and divided the army into thirty-six divisions, each with a thousand soldiers, who were arranged into right,

left and center formations. Then in the evening, after this military preparation, Khalid began the spiritual and psychological preparation of his soldiers.

- He ordered them to recite Surat Al-Anfal (the eighth chapter of the Qur'an) for the lessons and major events it contains, especially what happened on the Day of Badr.
- He called on each group leader to preach to his soldiers.
- He called on prominent Companions, such as Mu`adh ibn Jabal, Al-Qa`qa` ibn `Amr, and others, to preach to the people.
- He advised his soldiers to spend their night standing in prayer, remembering Allah, glorifying Him, and supplicating Him.

Scenes from the Heart of the Battle

In the morning, the two armies clashed and the fierce battle began—a battle that left history in awe. Volumes have been devoted to this battle, describing the heroism and extraordinary actions that occurred when this small group of believers faced these massive forces of evil, who approached in mountain-like hordes. However, what they had not anticipated happened, through the firm steadfastness of the Muslims.

Here are some scenes from deep inside this battle:

Khalid Undertakes a High-Risk Maneuver That Ignites the Battle

Khalid gripped the reins of his horse with strong determination and raised the banner high, announcing the start of battle. To boost the morale of his soldiers, he launched a sudden, intrepid attack in the center of the battlefield,

with a force of only one hundred men. This force was carefully selected to attack the Byzantine left flank, which was made up of forty thousand men. He killed many of the enemy. This was the spark that triggered the battle and shattered the strength of the Byzantines.

"Do You Have Something You Need Me to Convey to the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH)?"

While the fighting was raging, one of the Companions approached Abu `Ubaidah ibn Al-Jarrah and said to him: "I have resolved to be martyred. Do you have something you need me to convey to the Messenger of Allah when I meet him?" Abu `Ubaidah replied: "Yes. Tell him, 'O Messenger of Allah, we have found what our Lord promised to be true.'" The man then rushed forward like an arrow and continued fighting with his sword until he died as a martyr.

"Who Will Pledge to Fight to the Death?"

Prominent among the Muslim fighters who showed exceptional dedication was `Ikrimah ibn Abu Jahl, the son of Abu Jahl, the fiercest enemy of Islam. `Ikrimah became a staunch supporter and shield for Islam and the Muslims.

`Ikrimah called out to the Muslims, who were facing escalating hardship and stronger control by the Byzantines, saying to them: "I have often fought the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) before Allah guided me to Islam. Am I going to flee from Allah's enemies today?!" Then he shouted: "Who will pledge to fight to the death?" A group of Muslims pledged with him to fight to the death. Together, they set out into the heart of the battle, seeking martyrdom. Allah fulfilled their oath and they were martyred, after having killed many Byzantines.

Although Intensely Thirsty, They Give Preference to Others over Themselves

Another instance of self-sacrifice and altruism was evident when a small amount of water was brought to a group of Muslim soldiers who were suffering from painful wounds in order for them to drink. When the water was brought to the first of them, he said to the person offering him water: "Give it to my brother next to me, as his wound is more serious and his thirst more intense than mine." When he offered the water to his neighbor, the neighbor pointed to his other brother for him to take the water first. This continued until the souls of most of them departed, thirsty but overflowing with compassion and kindness.

"Why Was the Name 'Allah's Sword' Bestowed Upon You?"

The fighting continued, and Khalid's strategic brilliance astounded the Byzantine leaders and commanders. One of them, named 'Jurjah (Georgios)', asked to meet Khalid during one of the breaks between the battles. When they met, the Byzantine commander addressed Khalid, saying: "O Khalid, tell me the truth and do not lie, for a free man does not lie. Did Allah send down a sword from heaven to your Prophet which he gave to you, and if you draw it against anyone, you will defeat him?"

Khalid: "No."

Jurjah: "Then why are you called Allah's sword?"

Khalid: "Allah sent among us the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH). Some of us believed him and some of us disbelieved him. I was among those who disbelieved him until Allah directed our hearts to Islam and guided us, so we

pledged allegiance to him. The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) supplicated Allah for me, saying: **'You are one of Allah's swords,'** and thus I was named Allah's sword."

Jurjah: "And what central belief do you call to?"

Khalid: "To believe in Allah's Oneness and Islam (i.e., literally submission to Allah's Will alone, where a Muslim's actions, thoughts, and entire being are aligned with Allah's commands as revealed in the Noble Qur'an and the teachings of Prophet Muhammad, PBBUH)."

Jurjah: "Will those who enter Islam today have the same reward as you have?"

Khalid: "Yes, and better."

Jurjah: "Teach me Islam, O Khalid."

Jurjah, the Byzantine commander, converted to Islam and then prayed two *Rak`ah*s (units of prayer), only these two *Rak`ah*s, before engaging in fighting. This time, he fought in the ranks of the Muslims against the Byzantines. He fought persistently until he attained martyrdom.

Victory, a Divine Gift

Allah (Exalted be He) granted the believers a clear victory, despite their small numbers and equipment (thirty-six thousand against two hundred and forty thousand soldiers—nearly a quarter of a million). This was only due to Allah's Grace, which He grants to whomever He wills among His servants.

Sheikh Al-Sha`rawy, may Allah have mercy on him, said in this regard: "Allah's gifts to His servants are of two types: First, gifts through causes, which

He grants to all His creation, believers and disbelievers alike, each according to their effort and ability to use the means to achieve success and their goals. Second, gifts through grace, which Allah reserves for His devotees. They are the gifts that Allah bestows freely and abundantly out of His bounty and vast generosity, not according to the effort and strength of the believers."

Sheikh Al-Sha`rawy cites Allah's Words to Maryam (Mary, PBUH) as evidence for this: ﴿And shake the trunk of the date-palm toward you, it will drop fresh ripe-dates upon you﴾ (translated meaning of Maryam 19:25). What strength did this weak woman have, in her labor pains, that could enable her to shake the trunk of the palm tree to let fresh dates fall upon her? It was only the gift of grace.

Indeed, victory in the Yarmuk Battle was divine; a gift of grace from Allah bestowed upon these 'Honorable Companions', enabling and facilitating their success and victory through His Favor.

The Death of Abu Bakr and the Deposition of Khalid[1]

Here, Allah's sword went through another battle, but this time, it was not against the Persian commanders or the Byzantines hordes. Rather, it was against his own self and desires. It was harder and fiercer than any other battle.

However our hero, Allah's unsheathed sword, also triumphed in this battle, as he had always done in every battle he fought.

A Letter From the Commander of the Believers, `Umar ibn Al-Khattab

At the same time Khalid was leading the Muslim army in a fierce battle, extracting victory from the jaws of the Byzantines, a letter arrived from the Commander of the Believers, `Umar ibn Al-Khattab, announcing the death of Caliph Abu Bakr Al-Siddiq. He also ordered the dismissal of Khalid from top command of the Muslim armies and appointed Abu `Ubaidah ibn Al-Jarrah in his place.

The Clock Advances 1,400 Years

Now, dear readers, let us pause for a moment at this momentous event. Let us move the clock forward 1,400 years to bring us to the present day.

[1] The deposition of Khalid ibn Al-Walid refers to his removal from the position of supreme military commander of the Muslim forces by Caliph `Umar, shortly after `Umar assumed the Caliphate. This decision, while not implying any wrongdoing on Khalid's part, aimed to address concerns about potential over-reliance on Khalid's military prowess and to establish a more centralized command structure.

Let us apply this same situation and consider the possible reactions to such a situation if it happens today:

- A victorious commander-in-chief of the armies, with no reproaches against him or his reputation, receives an order from the ruler dismissing him from command and transferring him to an ordinary soldier.

- The ruler appoints another commander to lead the armies in his place.

Let us see what could happen:

First: The leader who has assumed the new position will want to assume it yesterday rather than today, especially since the battle is nearing its end and victory is imminent.

He wants his role and responsibilities to start immediately so that this victory can be attributed to him and history records that, under the leadership of the inspiring, motivating or influential commander (as well as other titles), victory has been achieved.

Second: This disposed leader, in the best of circumstances, is an educated and refined man. He will say: My brothers, I have exerted my maximum effort and applied my full capabilities to each task and situation. Now you have no need of me! Show me how you will operate without me? I am waiting to see!

This, of course, is accompanied by his hopes for the failure and decline of the succeeding leader, not to mention the formation of militias and armed groups supporting him and opposing the ruler as well as other conflicts and tensions that we see nowadays.

Third: The ruler who issued this order likely had some personal disputes and issues with this deposed leader, which prompted him to make this sudden decision against him.

Do you not agree with me? Would this not be the case if such a situation occurred today?

Now, my dear readers, let us return to the company of those who were raised and educated by the best teacher known to humanity, the Companions of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH). Let us see how the Companions reacted to this momentous decision.

Detachment from Worldly Authority

When the man in the nation worthy of trust, Abu `Ubaidah ibn Al-Jarrah, received this letter, he asked Umar's envoy to keep the news secret. Abu `Ubaidah kept the news to himself with an ascetic, intelligent, and trustworthy heart until the time was appropriate to announce it. Victory was at hand, and he did not want confusion among the ranks of the army due to a change in leadership at this critical time.

After the battle ended and Commander Khalid ibn Al-Walid accomplished his great conquest, Abu `Ubaidah presented Umar's letter to him, doing so with extreme politeness and sincerity.

When Khalid read the letter, he said to Abu `Ubaidah: "May Allah have mercy on you, O Abu `Ubaidah. The letter from the Commander of the Believers reached you, and you did not inform me. You pray behind me (i.e., you leave me to act as the Imam) and obey my orders, even though the authority is yours?"

Our hero then approached Abu `Ubaidah, saluting him as a soldier salutes his commander, and said: "We will liberate Syria. We liberate it for Allah, not for `Umar ibn Al-Khattab."

Khalid continued to serve as a soldier under Abu `Ubaidah until his final days.

Perhaps this situation, dear readers, provides the answer to the question we posed earlier: How could this small group defeat this enormous group?

Perhaps you now understand how an army of 36,000 could defeat an army of nearly a quarter of a million. Everyone worked sincerely for Allah and diligently, not for position, prestige, or fame. Rather, all efforts were done purely for Allah's Sake.

For the Companions of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH), leadership was like military service. Both were a means by which they fulfilled their duty to Allah, in Whom they believed, to His Messenger, to whom they had pledged allegiance, and to Islam, the religion which they had embraced and under whose banner they marched.

Perhaps, my dear ones, if we were to practice such morals, follow these ideals, put aside self-centeredness and the lust for authority, and work sincerely for Allah in all aspects of life, this nation would have a different destiny.

"I Did Not Dismiss Khalid out of Dissatisfaction or Betrayal"

The Commander of the Believers, `Umar ibn Al-Khattab (may Allah be pleased with him), exemplified both deep religious faith and a commitment to

fairness and righteousness in all aspects of life. His piety and dedication to Islam were so profound that they impacted everything around him. His primary concern was the issue of monotheism and pure belief in Allah alone, with no partner. After Khalid's dismissal, he sent word to the provinces ordering their governors to announce in his name: "I did not dismiss Khalid out of dissatisfaction or betrayal, but people became infatuated by him (i.e., his military prowess). I feared that they would rely on him (for victory, rather than Allah). I wanted them to know that Allah is the true Arranger and to prevent them from falling into temptation."

Not only that, but the Commander of the Believers, `Umar ibn Al-Khattab, mentioned Khalid as he was taking his last breaths, saying: "If Khalid were alive, I would appoint him as your ruler. If my Lord were to ask me, I would tell Him that I heard the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) say, 'One of Allah's swords is Khalid ibn Al-Walid.'"

May Allah's Mercy and Blessings be upon you, O Companions of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH), for each of you is a fragrance decant taken from the original bottle of perfume.

The Final Chapter of Khalid's Life

The Liberation of Damascus and Homs

Khalid continued to serve under the command of Abu `Ubaidah ibn Al-Jarrah, and Damascus was liberated, followed by Homs. Khalid performed admirably, remaining true to his word and his innate character of courage, boldness, and cleverness, as acknowledged by his enemies before his friends.

When he was a commander, he displayed the toughness and humility of a soldier (i.e., he possessed both physical and mental fortitude, while also being modest and respectful of others). And when he was a soldier, he demonstrated the ability to handle the duties and skills of a commander.

Homs... the Final Stop

Our hero, Khalid, spent his final days in Homs, leaving it only briefly before returning, especially when the plague had spread throughout the country. He spent the last four years of his life there.

With the Hero in His Final Days

After a long life filled with struggle, sacrifice, and devotion, it was time for this body, burdened with pain and wounds, to rest. He was a man described by his friends and enemies alike as: "A sleepless (constantly active) man who would not let anyone sleep."

"May the Eyes of Cowards Never Sleep"

Illness did not spare our hero, Khalid, who lay on his deathbed. There, with tears streaming down his cheeks, he said: "I have witnessed such-and-such battles, and there is not a single spot on my body that does not bear [an injury from] the blow of a sword, the stab of a spear, or the shot of an arrow. Here I am, dying on my bed, a natural death, like a camel! May the eyes of cowards never sleep."[1]

His Last Will and Testament

As our hero was about to depart, he began dictating his will. Do you know what his legacy was? It was his horse and his weapons!

He bequeathed them to be dedicated to *Jihad* (fighting or striving in Allah's Cause). If his body would be absent from battlefields, his horse and weapons would remain to be used in struggling and striving for Allah's Sake.

Our hero breathed his last, at the age of sixty-five, in the year 22 A.H.

`Umar Grieves over Khalid

When news of Khalid's death was brought to `Umar, and he learned of his bequest regarding his horse and weapons after his death, he wept intensely and said: "May Allah have mercy on Abu Sulayman. He fulfilled the hopes we

[1] Khalid here expressed his sorrow that despite having faced countless battles and near-death experiences on the field, he was dying a peaceful, natural death in bed, not as a martyr in battle. Then he uttered an invocation that cowards be constantly vigilant and never experience the peace of restful sleep, highlighting the contrast between the courage of a warrior and the anxiety of a coward.

placed upon him." He added: "By Allah, he bravely confronted and defeated his enemies. His character was praiseworthy, and his actions were blessed."

When Khalid's paternal cousins gathered to weep over him, `Umar was told that he should summon them and stop them, but he said: "Let the women of Banu Makhzum weep over Abu Sulayman, for they do not lie. For someone like Abu Sulayman, mourners weep."

Now, let us turn over this bright page of our history. This page filled with the accomplishments and successes of a hero who held a vanguard position in military history among the greatest commanders and notable figures renowned for their skill and genius.

May Allah's Mercy and Blessings be upon you, O Abu Sulayman.

May Allah have mercy on you, O Allah's sword.

May Allah be pleased with you and make you content O Khalid ibn Al-Walid.

2. Salman the Persian

May Allah Be Pleased with Him

2. Salman the Persian

Now, dear readers, let us move to another garden and enjoy a generous supply of this fragrant companionship. This time our hero came from Persia. He is renowned for his long search for the true religion, diligently striving after this goal. He sacrificed everything cherished and valuable for its sake. His relentless pursuit of the truth earned him the title of 'The Seeker of the Truth.' He won the company of the 'Best of Allah's Creation' (PBBUH) and attained the honor of belonging to his pure family.

Our hero is Salman the Persian (may Allah be pleased with him).

Salman's Upbringing

Salman (may Allah be pleased with him) grew up in the city of Isfahan—a city in central Iran between Tehran and Shiraz—in a village called Jayan. His father was the chief of this village, its richest and most prominent figure. Like Salman, his father had become deeply entrenched in Magianism (Zoroastrianism; the worship of fire), to the point that he was responsible for lighting the fire and keeping it burning day and night for people to worship. This only increased his honor among his people.

Salman grew up in a luxurious lifestyle amid this honorable and esteemed family.

The Start of Salman's Quest for Truth

Salman's journey of seeking Allah began early, when he was a young boy. His mind and heart were not at ease with the concept of fire and idol worship by his people, even though his father was a leader of this practice.

The Breezes of Faith Knock at Salman's Heart

Salman's father loved him so dearly that he would lock him up out of [excessive] concern for his well-being. He isolated him from any social interaction and did not allow him to go out. His father had a large estate outside the city, which he personally managed and harvested. One day, something distracted him from going to it. He said to Salman: "O my son, I was occupied with other matters and could not go to the estate. Go to it and take care of its affairs instead of me." Salman set out for the estate. While on the way, he passed by a Christian church and heard their voices praying. He entered to see what was happening. When he observed them, he was impressed by their prayers and desired their religion. It was as if the subtle and gentle influence of faith began to impact his heart. He said to himself: "By Allah, this is better than what we are following."

"Where Can I Find the Origins of This Religion?"

Salman stayed with these Christian people all day, until the sun set. He was so fascinated by what he had seen and heard that he did not go to his father's estate. Salman asked them: "Where did this religion originate?" They replied: "In the Levant."

When Salman returned home and told his father what he had seen and heard, his father feared that he might abandon his faith. He imprisoned him and put shackles on his leg.

Salman Embarks on His Faith Journey

From his prison, Salman sent a message to the Christians, saying: "If a caravan comes to you heading to the Levant, inform me." Shortly after, a caravan heading for the Levant arrived, and the Christians informed him. Salman successfully broke free from his shackles and travelled with them in disguise until he reached the Levant.

In the Levant

When Salman arrived in the Levant, he asked: "Who is the best man among the followers of this religion?" They replied: "The bishop, the pastor of the church." Salman went to him and asked him to allow him to stay with him and serve him, to learn from him and pray with him. The bishop agreed and Salman spent some time with him. But Salman soon discovered that he was a wicked man. He enjoined his followers to give alms and urged them to hope for reward from Allah. But when they gave him any alms, he hoarded them for himself and gave nothing to the poor. Salman hated him intensely. The bishop soon died.

When the Christians gathered to bury him, Salman said to them: "Your companion was a wicked man. He exhorted you to give alms and hoarded them all for himself, not giving any to the poor." They asked him: "What is your proof of this?" He said: "I will lead you to his treasure." Salman showed them where the treasure was, and they brought out seven jars full of gold and silver. After seeing these jars, they bound his dead body and pelted him with stones. They said: "By Allah, we will not bury him." They appointed another man in his place.

This incident did not diminish Salman's faith and determination. He remained committed to his Christianity, even though some of its adherents had deviated.

Salman remained close to the new bishop. He found him to be a man detached from this worldly life, attached to the Hereafter, and devoted to worship. Salman loved him deeply and stayed with him for some time. When death approached him, Salman asked him: "To whom do you advise me to go and follow after you?" He replied: "I do not know anyone who follows the same path that I follow except a man in Mosul." He gave him his name and Salman left to join him.

In Mosul

Salman recounted his story to the bishop of Mosul. He stayed with him and found him to be a righteous man. When death approached, Salman asked him: "Allah's Decree has come to you, and you are aware of my situation (i.e. the specific challenges Salman faced). To whom do you advise I should go? Whom do you command me to join?" He said to him: "O my son, by Allah, I do not know anyone who follows the same path that I follow except a man in Nusaybin (a city on the caravan route between Mosul and Syria)." He gave him his name and Salman left to join him.

In Nusaybin and Amorium

Salman continued his active pursuit of the truth and went, as his companion had instructed him, to Nusaybin, where he spent some time. When the man he was staying with was about to die, he asked him as he had asked those who had preceded him, and he advised him to go to Amorium. Salman went to Amorium, and when the death of the Bishop of Amorium was

imminent, Salman asked him: "To whom do you advise me to go, and what do you command me to do?"

"The Time Has Approached When a Prophet Shall be Sent by Allah to Preach the Religion of Ibrahim (Abraham, PBBUH)"

The man replied: "O my son, by Allah, I do not know of anyone remaining on the face of the earth who adheres to what we have followed. But a time is coming when a prophet will emerge in the land of the Arabs, sent with the religion of Ibrahim (PBBUH). He will emigrate to a land of palm trees between two lava fields.[1] He will have three obvious signs [attesting to his prophethood]: he will accept what is given as a gift but will not accept charity [for himself], and between his shoulders is the Seal of Prophethood. If you can go to that land, do so."

It was not long before the Bishop of Amorium passed away. Salman remained in Amorium for a while until a group of Arab merchants came to it [for trade purposes].

The Journey Is Nearing Its End

Salman asked the group of Arab merchants to take him with them to the land of the Arabs, saying: "If you take me with you, I will give you these cows and sheep of mine." They took him with them. But when they reached Al-Qura Valley (located between Madinah and Syria), they betrayed him and sold him as a slave to a Jewish man.

[1] This description refers to the natural landscape of Madinah, which was known for its fertile date palm groves situated between two volcanic rock formations called *Harrah*s.

Thus, the once pampered youth, who previously enjoyed a life of luxury and ease, was reduced to a slave, bought and sold. But attaining the truth and obtaining the light of certainty must come at a price.

Salman did not stop caring about the truth and persisted in his quest. He joined the Jew and remained in his service until the Jew's paternal cousin from Banu Qurayzah (one of the three main Jewish tribes that resided in Madinah—formerly Yathrib) visited him. He was impressed by Salman, seeing him as a strong slave. He bought him and took him with him to Yathrib.

In Madinah

Salman (may Allah be pleased with him) continued to seek the truth in the face of challenges and despite obstacles, sacrificing and suffering much, until fate led him to his long-sought goal.

Salman entered Yathrib, and once he saw the palm trees between the two lava fields, he remembered the description that the Bishop of Amorium had given him. He realized that he was finally approaching his desired goal. At that time, the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) was still in Makkah, but soon after, he (PBBUH) emigrated to Yathrib.

One day, Salman was working for the Jew at the top of a palm tree, with his master sitting beneath it, when one of the Jew's friends came and said: "The people [inhabitants of Madinah] have gathered in Quba' to receive a man who has come to them from Makkah and claims to be a prophet!"

Once Salman heard this, he felt like a fever had overcome him and almost fell from the palm tree. He quickly descended and asked the Jewish man: "What are you saying? Repeat this news to me." His master became angry and rebuked him, saying: "What business do you have with this? Go back to your work."

Finally Meeting the Beloved Prophet (PBBUH)

The culmination of Salman's quest was realized; the time for the meeting which Salman (may Allah be pleased with him) had been longing and looking forward to for years arrived.

In the evening, Salman took some dates and headed to Quba', where the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) was staying. He entered upon him and said: "I have heard that you are a righteous man, and that you have companions with you who are strangers and needy. This is something intended for charity, and I see that you are more deserving of it than others." The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) took it and said to his Companions: **"Eat."** But he (PBBUH) refrained from eating himself. Salman said to himself: "This is the first (sign)."

When the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) moved from Quba' to Madinah, Salman took some dates and went again to the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) and said: "I noticed that you do not eat what is given in charity. This is a gift with which I wish to honor you." The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) ate some of it and told his Companions to eat with him. Salman said to himself: "And this is the second (sign)." Salman continued to visit the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH), hoping to see the third sign (the Seal of Prophethood).

One day, Salman came to the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) when he was at Al-Baqi` (cemetery in Madinah) burying one of his Companions. He (PBBUH) was sitting among his Companions wearing two cloaks, one wrapped around his waist and the other draped over his shoulders. Salman greeted him, then turned to look at his back, hoping to see the seal that his companion at Amorium had described to him. When the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) saw Salman looking at his back, he (PBBUH) knew he was trying to confirm

something that had been described to him. He (PBBUH) threw his cloak off his back, and there was the sign (the Seal of Prophethood) between his shoulders.

Immediately Salman embraced the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH), kissing him and weeping. He said to him: "I bear witness that there is no god but Allah and that you are the Messenger of Allah."

"Salman Is One of Us, the People of My Household"

After Salman finished telling his story to the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH), the Messenger (PBBUH) was impressed and wanted his Companions to hear the story as well. They were greatly amazed at his quest. The Ansar said: "Salman is one of us," because he was in Madinah when the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) arrived there. The Muhajirun said: "Salman is one of us," because he emigrated from Persia to Syria and then to Iraq until he reached Madinah. Here, Salman attained the greatest honor and the highest medal. When the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) saw this competition between the Ansar and Muhajirun with respect to Salman, he (PBBUH) said: **"Salman is one of us, the people of my household."**[1]

This was Salman's quest for Allah's true path. We do not know for certain the time Salman spent searching for the truth, from the time he left his village in Isfahan until his arrival in Madinah. Some historians say it was ten years, while others say it was twenty. Whatever the time he spent searching for the truth, what matters to us were his persistent efforts, sincere intention, unwavering commitment, and sacrifice of possessions and comforts to obtain the true religion. We thank Allah for guiding us to this true path, even though

[1] The Prophet's statement signifies Salman's close relationship and elevated status within the Muslim community, even to the point of being considered part of the Prophet's household. This recognition was not based on lineage but on Salman's proactive and dedicated pursuit of truth.

we did not exhibit the same level of determination, persistence, and commitment as him. Indeed, all blessings and good things in life, both past and future, originate from and belong to Allah (Glorified be He).

Salman Attains Freedom from Slavery

Salman was so intensely immersed in the work demanded by slavery that he did not attend the Battles of Badr or Uhud. The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) said to him: **"Draw up a contract of manumission, O Salman"**—meaning, agree with you master to free you in exchange for a certain sum of money.[1] Salman drew up a contract of manumission with his master, the Jew, in return for three hundred palm trees, which he should plant for him, and forty ounces of gold. The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) said to his Companions: **"Help your brother."** They helped him with the palm trees. One man brought thirty seedlings, another twenty, and so on until he had collected the three hundred palm seedlings. The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) said to him: **"Go, O Salman, and dig the holes where they are to be planted. When you have finished, come to me so that I may plant them with my own hand."**

Salman dug the proper holes for planting the palm seedlings, and his companions helped him. When he had finished, he went to the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) and informed him [that the task of collecting the seedlings and digging holes for them had been successfully accomplished]. The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) went out with him and planted each palm shoot with his blessed hand. Salman said: "By the One in Whose Hand is Salman's soul, not one single tree among them died." Salman had given the palm trees, but there remained the money—forty ounces of gold. The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) brought a golden offering the size of a chicken's egg and said to Salman: **"Take**

[1] *Mukatabah* (contract of manumission) agreement in Islamic Law allows the slaves to earn their freedom by fulfilling the financial obligation during a specific time period.

this, O Salman, and pay off what you owe." Salman took it, paid the Jew's his due, and was emancipated. He became a free man.[1]

The Remarkable Deeds That Salman Accomplished during the Time of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH)

After Salman was freed, he fought alongside the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) in every battle. He did not miss a single one and displayed great heroism, courage, and cleverness. History recorded all these events and brave deeds in luminous and vibrant letters.

The Creative Idea of Digging the Trench

Then came the Battle of the Trench—also known as the Battle of the Confederates—in which Salman played a leading role that contributed positively to the overall result. He performed a great deed that will be remembered throughout history, transcending time.

Parties from the tribes of Quraysh, Ghatafan, Banu Sulaym, Banu Asad, and others allied and assembled their forces for the common purpose of invading Madinah. Their army numbered ten thousand men and was commanded by Abu Sufyan. This number was big enough to devastate the city and all its inhabitants. The situation was highly difficult for the Muslims, and they found themselves in a dangerous position. The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) gathered his Companions to consult with them on the matter. Naturally, they agreed to defend themselves and fight, but how could they defend themselves against this enormous number, the likes of which the Arabs had never known before? They needed a strategy beyond simply fighting back.

[1] Reported by Ahmad, hadith no. 23737.

Here, our hero, Salman the Persian, advanced and took an examining look at the city from a high plateau. He found it fortified by the surrounding mountains and rocks. However, there was a wide, vulnerable gap through which the enemy army could easily storm.

Salman had learned many of the methods of war and the art of battlefield deception from his country, Persia. He approached the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) and said: "O Messenger of Allah, when we were besieged in Persia, we would dig a trench around us." His brilliant proposal was to dig a trench to cover the exposed area around the city. This tactic was something the Arabs had never used before in their wars.

"*Allahu Akbar*...I Have Been Given the Keys to Persia"

The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) approved Salman's plan, and the Muslims set out, accompanied by Salman, who was a man of strong character and powerfully built. A single blow from his powerful arm could split a rock and shatter it to pieces. But Salman stood helpless before a stubborn rock that blocked their progress. He and his companions tried hard but were unable to break it. So he went to the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) asking his permission to alter the course of the excavation to avoid this hard, unyielding rock.

The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) went with Salman to examine the rock. He (PBBUH) called for a pickaxe, raised his blessed hands, and struck the rock. It broke, and a bright, radiant glow emerged from its great crack illuminating all the surroundings. Salman said: "I saw the glow illuminating the sides of the city."

At this, the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) exclaimed: **"*Allahu Akbar* (Allah is the Greatest)! I have been given the keys to Persia!"**[1] The phenomenon was repeated. With the second strike by the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH), the cracked rock flashed with a bright, strong spark, and the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) exclaimed: "***Allahu Akbar*! I have been given the keys to the Byzantine Empire"** Then he (PBBUH) struck a third time, and the rock crumbled and its intense, dazzling light flashed. The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) and the Muslims glorified Allah as an expression of their deep joy and contentment. The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) informed them that he could see the palaces of Syria and the palace of Khosrau. Indeed, Allah and His Messenger spoke the truth, and all those lands were liberated.

Salman (may Allah be pleased with him) was the one who advised the digging of the trench. He was also the one who came across this rock from which some of the secrets of the future were revealed when he sought the help of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH). Salman stood beside the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH), witnessing the light and hearing the good news. He lived until he saw the good news transformed into a reality. It suggests that Salman's life was meaningful and purposeful, culminating in the realization of this vision.

Only Allah (Glorified be He) knows what fate would have awaited the Muslims in that battle had they not dug the trench. The Quraysh and their allies were overwhelmed once their eyes saw that trench. Their feelings of shock were soon replaced by frustration, anxiety, and even anger. Their forces remained confined in their tents for a month, unable to storm the city, until Allah sent a violent, furious wind that tore their tents apart and scattered them. Abu Sufyan then called out to his soldiers, ordering them to depart. They chaotically abandoned their camp and departed in defeat.

[1] This prophetic statement is interpreted as a prophecy of the future Islamic liberation of the lands of Persia.

The Notable Achievements of Salman during the Era of the Caliphs

Salman (may Allah be pleased with him) remained with the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) from the time he met him and believed in him. He lived as a free Muslim, a fighter, and a devout worshiper. He persisted at this high standard until the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) died while he was pleased with him.

Salman continued at the same intensity and level of devotion during the eras of Caliph Abu Bakr, Caliph `Umar, and then Caliph `Uthman, without any change or decline, until he met his Lord. He participated with the Rightly Guided Caliphs in the liberation of the lands of the powerful empires of Persia and Byzantium, and he performed admirably. He played important parts in all the battles that he fought and always showed himself as an exemplary soldier and an eminent Muslim figure.

Salman's Outstanding Morals and Virtues

Salman (may Allah be pleased with him) possessed many virtues and noble traits whose powerful influence can inspire positive change in our own behavior, personal development, and moral growth.

Let us present some of these virtues:

1. The Love That the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) Had for Salman

The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) loved Salman (may Allah be pleased with him) dearly from the day he told him the story of him seeking the truth. Salman was very moved by his first encounter with the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH). He kissed him, wept, and immediately embraced Islam once he recognized him as the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH).

Good Tidings of Paradise

The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) gave good tidings of Paradise to Salman, saying: **"Paradise longs for three: `Ali, `Ammar, and Salman."**[1] What joyful news! What a superb privilege and distinction!

2. Salman's Vast Knowledge Combined with His Compassionate Approach

Allah Almighty bestowed upon Salman (may Allah be pleased with him) abundant knowledge and wisdom.

[1] Reported by Al-Tirmidhi, hadith no. 3797.

Here are some examples of his vast knowledge:

"Indeed, Salman Has Been Filled with Knowledge!"

The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) had established the bonds of brotherhood between Salman and Abul Darda'.[1] One day, Salman visited Abul Darda' who used to pray all night and fast during the day for most of the year. Salman criticized him for engaging in excessive worship.

Salman tried to dissuade Abul Darda' from doing too many acts of worship, but Abul Darda' rebuked him, saying: "Are you preventing me from fasting for my Lord and praying to Him?" Salman replied: "Your Lord has a right over you. Your soul has a right over you. And your family has a right over you. So give each one their due." Salman's statement was conveyed to the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH), who said: **"Indeed, Salman has been filled with knowledge."**[2]

Luqman, the Wise

When Imam `Ali (may Allah be pleased with him) was asked about Salman, he replied: "Who can be compared to Luqman the Wise[3]? This is a man from us and who belongs to us, *Ahl-ul-Bayt* (members of the Prophet's extended Muslim family). He attained the first knowledge and the last knowledge (the beginning and the culmination of knowledge), and he is an inexhaustible sea."

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[1] Prophet Muhammad (PBBUH) established brotherhood by instituting a formal bond between the Muhajirun (Emigrants from Makkah) and the Ansar (Supporters; natives of Madinah) after his emigration to Madinah. This brotherhood bond was a crucial step in unifying the disparate groups and fostering a strong sense of solidarity, support, and community among the Muslims, which became a foundational principle of Muslim society.

[2] Reported by Al-Tabarani in *Al-Mu`jam Al-Awsat*, hadith no. 7637.

[3] Luqman is a figure mentioned in the Qur'an, specifically in Surat Luqman (the 31st chapter of the Glorious Qur'an). He is revered as a wise and righteous man, though not a prophet, who was granted wisdom by Allah Almighty.

A Collection of Salman's Wise Sayings

The following is a collection of some wise sayings by Salman (may Allah be pleased with him). His words emanated from a pure heart that reflected his lofty character and feelings. They are insightful words that indicate his vast knowledge and profound wisdom.

Salman said:

- "There are three things that I find too amazing, to the point of making me laugh:
  - One who hopes for this world while death seeks him (i.e., he prioritizes worldly affairs while ignoring the inevitability of death).
  - One who is heedless of Allah, while Allah is vigilant (i.e., a state where a person does not pay attention to or is not concerned with Allah (Exalted be He), although Allah is actively aware and observing).
  - One who laughs with a full mouth, not knowing whether the Lord of the Worlds is displeased or pleased with him (i.e., someone who laughs boisterously or excessively, perhaps even carelessly, without thought for the implications of their actions and the consequences of their laughter in the Afterlife before Allah).
- "There are three things that sadden me to the point of making me cry:
  - Parting with Muhammad (PBBUH) and his party.
  - The terror of the Day of Resurrection.

- Standing before my Lord, not knowing whether I will go to Paradise or Hell.

– "O brother of Banu `Abs, knowledge is abundant, and life is short. Acquire the knowledge that you need for your religious affairs [to understand and fulfill religious obligations and guide your life according to faith]. Leave everything else that is unbeneficial."

– Salman visited a friend of his while he was ill. He said to him: "Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) tests His believing servant with afflictions as expiation for his past sins, and then heals him so that he may strive well (to obey Allah and please Him) for the rest of his life [after his slate has been wiped clean]. Allah, the Almighty, tests the wicked and then heals him. Such a person is like a camel that has been tied up by its people and then set free, but he does not know why they tied it up or why they set it free."

– Salman also said: "If you commit a bad deed in private, [quickly] do a good deed in private, and if you commit a bad deed in public, [quickly] do a good deed in public, so that this one may wipe away that one." (This indicates that good and positive actions have a cleansing effect on past mistakes or bad actions).

– A man came to Salman and said to him: "Advise me." Salman replied: "Do not speak to people." The man exclaimed: "One who lives among people cannot refrain from speaking to them." Salman replied: "If you speak, speak the truth or remain silent." The man said: "Tell me more." Salman said: "Do not become angry." The man said: "I cannot stop myself from becoming overwhelmed with anger." He said: "If you become angry, hold your tongue and your hand." The man said: "Tell me more." Salman said: "Do not associate with people." The man

replied: "One who lives among people cannot avoid associating with them." Salman said: "If you associate with them, speak truthfully and fulfill your trusts."

– Salman was once asked: "What makes you hate leadership?" He replied: "Because of the sweetness of receiving its milk and the bitterness of being weaned off it." (It means that leadership is initially pleasant and enjoyable, but it is followed by the bitterness of its end or loss).

3. Salman's Renunciation of Worldly Pleasures

Years passed and the banners of Islam filled the horizon. Money was brought to Madinah as booty and *Jizyah* (poll tax required from non-Muslims living in an Islamic state). It was distributed among the people in the form of regular stipends and fixed salaries.

Work and positions increased. But where was Salman in this life of ease? Where would you find him in times of abundance and wealth? He remained an ascetic, devout, and obedient soldier. Neither time, wealth, nor positions changed him.

Here are some instances of his asceticism:

Salman, the Wickerworker

Salman (may Allah be pleased with him) continued to work, palm frond weaving, braiding, and making vessels and jugs from them. He continued to practice this craft after Caliph `Umar ibn Al-Khattab appointed him governor of Al-Mada'in.

The Salary That Salman Received as Governor of Al-Mada'in

Salman's stipend—that is, his salary—was between four thousand and six thousand dirhams a year. What did he do with this money? He would distribute it all without keeping a single dirham of it for himself or his dependents. He said: "I buy palm fronds for one dirham, work on them (transform them into useful items through labor), and then sell them (the finished products) for three dirhams. I put (invest) one dirham back into my business, spend one dirham on my family, and give the third in charity. Even if `Umar ibn Al-Khattab had forbidden me from doing this, I would not have stopped it."

Salman's Reluctance to Take on Leadership Roles

Despite his leadership potential, Salman (may Allah be pleased with him) used to avoid leadership positions due to a preference for more behind-the-scenes work and a tendency to prioritize the Hereafter. He said: "Eat dirt rather than be a leader of two." When the governor position was imposed on him because no one else was fit for it, he took on the responsibility and duty unwillingly, weeping and fearful. He refused to accept the lawful salary offered for his work as governor, as was mentioned earlier.

Hisham ibn Hassan narrated on the authority of Al-Hasan that Salman's salary as governor was five thousand dirhams. He was the ruler over thirty thousand people. He would deliver sermons wearing a cloak, half of which he would spread out to sit on and half of which he would wear.

Salman's Small, Modest House

Salman (may Allah be pleased with him) did not used to have a house and would take shelter in the shade. When he decided to build a house for himself, he asked the builder: "How will you build it?" The builder was smart and knew Salman's ascetic lifestyle and piety. He replied: "Do not be afraid. It will be a building where you can find shade from the heat and shelter from the cold. When you stand up, it will hit your head. And when you lie down, it will hit your foot (i.e., it will be a low-ceiling room with limited space)." Salman said: "Yes, if so, construct it."

Why did Salman abstain from all luxuries and comforts and observe such simple living while he was a wealthy Persian man, born into luxury, enjoying a lifestyle of comfort, ease, and abundance from his birth? It was the blessing of faith, which is unparalleled, and the closeness to Allah (Exalted be He), which no wealth can be compared to and is more meaningful, fulfilling, and lasting than all riches.

4. Salman's Humility

Salman (may Allah be pleased with him) was the epitome of humility. He remained humble and even showed a greater degree of humility after becoming the governor of Al-Mada'in, without any change in his disposition. As mentioned earlier, he refused to accept a single dirham from his salary and continued to earn his livelihood from palm-leaf weaving. His attire was very simple and consisted only of a cloak that matched his old garment in its modesty. The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) said**: "Anyone who humbles himself before Allah, Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) will exalt him in**

status."[1] Indeed, Allah honored Salman (may Allah be pleased with him) and elevated his status in this world and the Hereafter.

Here are some instances of Salman's humility:

"Peace Be Upon You, O Emir"

One day, while Salman was walking along the road, he encountered a man coming from Syria and carrying a heavy load that was difficult for him to carry. No sooner had the man seen Salman, who appeared to him to be a commoner or a poor person, than he called out to him, saying: "Carry this for me, and I will give you something in return."

Salman carried the load, and they set off together. On the way, they came across a group of people. He greeted them and they responded, standing up: "Peace be upon you too, O Emir." "Which Emir do they mean?" the Syrian asked himself. His astonishment increased when he saw some of them rushing towards Salman to carry the load for him, saying: "Allow us to carry it for you, O Emir."

The Syrian realized that the man he had hired to carry his load was no one else than the eminent Companion of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH), Salman the Persian. The man was highly embarrassed, apologized to Salman, and approached to lift the load from him, but Salman refused, saying: "Not until I bring you to your dwelling."

[1] Reported by Muslim, hadith no. 2588.

"I Hated to Ask Him (My Servant) to Do Multiple Tasks"

One day, his companion entered his house and found Salman kneading dough although he was the governor of Al-Mada'in. His companion asked him: "Where is your servant?" Salman (may Allah be pleased with him) replied: "I sent him on an errand, and I hated to ask him to do the two tasks."

"Salman Disliked Eating Alone"

Salman (may Allah be pleased with him) earned his livelihood from the work of his hands. If he sold an item and gained profit, he would buy meat or fish with it and then invite the poor and all the needy to eat with him.

These instances, my dear readers, were just a few of many examples of his humility; the scope of this book cannot give more.

5. Salman's Lightheartedness

Now, dear readers, before we bid farewell to this great hero, let us touch on another aspect of his personality: his lightheartedness.

Salman (may Allah be pleased with him) possessed a lighthearted nature. Although he was a devout, pious worshiper who often cried out of fear of Allah, he would look for opportunities to bring smiles and joy to the hearts of his companions.

Here are some instances of these:

"If You Had Been Content, My Waterpot Would Not Have Been Pawned"

Some companions of Salman visited him, and he said to them: "If the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) had not forbidden us from extravagance, I would have been extravagant with you." Then he brought them bread and salt. One of them said: "If there had only been thyme in the salt." Consequently, Salman (may Allah be pleased with him) sent his waterpot to pawn it and brought back some thyme. When his companions had eaten, the one who had asked for the thyme said: "Praise be to Allah Who made us content with what He has provided us." Salman teased him: "If you had been content, my waterpot would not have been pawned."

"Where Is My Gift?"

Al-Ash`ath and Jarir came and entered upon Salman in his private palm-weaved shelter. They greeted him and then said: "Are you a Companion of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH)?" He said: "I do not know." They were suspicious. He added: "His Companion is the one who enters Paradise with him." They said: "We came from Abul Darda'." He said: "Where is the gift he sent me?" They said: "We do not have any gift." He said: "Fear Allah and fulfill the trust. No one has come to me from him without a gift." They said: "By Allah, he did not send anything with us except that he said, 'There is a man among you who, when the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) was alone with, desired no one else. So when you visit him, give him my greetings.'" Salman said: "What gift could I have wanted from you other than this? What gift could be better than this?"

The Final Chapter of Salman's Life

During the reign of `Uthman, the ascetic worshiper and the seeker of truth returned to the City of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) to spend the last days of his life near the Beloved Prophet (PBBUH).

"We Have Failed to Live Up to the Commitment That We Made to the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH)"

It was time for this hero to rest and depart this world to a better place. While on his deathbed, preparing himself to meet his Lord, Sa`d ibn Abu Waqqas and `Abdullah ibn Mas`ud entered upon him. They found him weeping. Sa`d asked him: "What makes you weep, O Abu `Abdullah? The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) died while he was pleased with you." Salman replied: "By Allah, I am not weeping because I fear death or desire this world. Rather, the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) entrusted us with an obligation which we did not keep. He (PBBUH) said, **'Let each of you have a share of this world like the provisions of a traveler.'** Here I am, dying, surrounded by all these many items."

Sa`d said: "I looked and saw nothing around him except a vessel and a waterpot." Sa`d looked with compassion and wept. He said to him: "O Abu `Abdullah, entrust us with an obligation that we may learn from you." He said, "O Sa`d, remember Allah when you are in hardship. Remember Him when you are going to judge [recognizing Allah's ultimate authority and omniscience ensures the person makes righteous judgments]. Remember Him when you are going to distribute [being mindful of Allah's presence and guidance when distributing resources ensures fairness, compassion, and a sense of responsibility to others]."

Although Salman (may Allah be pleased with him) had fulfilled the commitment, yet his eyes welled up with tears, fearing that he had overstepped the limit. He had no possessions around him except a vessel that held his food and a waterpot for both consuming water and for ablution. Yet, he considered he was indulging in luxury! What kind of human beings were you, O disciples of the Teacher of Humanity and Guide for all of creation, our Prophet Muhammad (PBBUH)? Indeed, you are the honorable representatives of humanity across all cultures and throughout history.

"Open the Doors to the Visitors"

On the morning of the day Salman passed away, he (may Allah be pleased with him) said to his wife, Buqayrah: "Open the doors, for today I have visitors, a creation of Allah who neither eats nor drinks but loves perfume (i.e., angels)." Then he called for musk and said to her: "Sprinkle it around me." As soon as she did what he asked her, his pure soul departed. He was elevated to a place of honor among the righteous—Paradise that had yearned a long time for him, as the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) informed us.

May the peace and blessings of Allah be upon you, O Abu `Abdullah.

Peace be upon you, O 'The Seeker of Truth.'

May Allah be pleased with you and please you, O Salman the Persian.

3. Bilal ibn Rabah

May Allah Be Pleased with Him

3. Bilal ibn Rabah

We continue our splendid journey with these 'Noble Companions,' whom Allah Almighty chose to be in the company of the 'Best of His Creation' (PBBUH). Our hero this time is the one who taught humanity the values of pride, dignity, and steadfastness in the truth. He embraced the message that individuals must recognize their own worth, treat others with respect, and live committed to seeking and upholding the truth.

He was Islam's first voice, the muezzin of the Messenger of Allah (PBBU), Bilal ibn Rabah (may Allah be pleased with him).

From the beginning of Islam to today and forevermore, you will find at least seven out of every ten Muslims who are familiar with Bilal's name and his significant role in early Islam. So, who was Bilal? What is the secret behind his enduring legacy and lasting impact in the memory of people and history?

Bilal's Upbringing

Bilal was born in Makkah to a father named Rabah and a mother named Hamamah, both of whom were Abyssinian slaves. Bilal grew up in Makkah as he was owned by orphans from the Banu `Abdul-Dar sub-clan [of the larger Quraysh tribe]. Their father had entrusted them to the care of Umayyah ibn Khalaf, of the Banu Jumah clan. When their father died, his sons, along with Bilal, moved to live with Umayyah ibn Khalaf. His mother, Hamamah, was one of their slaves and maidservants.

Bilal lived the life of a slave, his days passing in much the same way—barren and dull. He had no right to the basic human experience of living his

day freely nor had he any hope for a better tomorrow. His actions and movements were dictated by his master's will.

Bilal Embraces Islam

Let us now, my dear readers, delve into the story of Bilal's conversion to Islam. Let us explore the adversities and challenges he encountered and how he surpassed them, and let us learn about his unwavering perseverance in the pursuit of truth. The account of his life is so remarkable and impressive that it continues to inspire awe and amazement long after it has passed.

One of the Foremost Believers

Makkah was illuminated by the light of Islam, and news of Muhammad (PBBUH) being the Messenger of Allah began to spread among the Makkans, leading to both acceptance and opposition. It became the focus of people's attention and the subject of their conversations, especially between the nobles among them, who saw Islam as a threat to them, their authority, and their prestige.

Through the conversations exchanged between Bilal's masters and their guests, Bilal kept receiving news and information about Islam, especially through his master, Umayyah ibn Khalaf. Although their conversations were filled with anger, hostility, and resentment toward the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH), they always acknowledged his honor, truthfulness, and trustworthiness. Their conversations only increased Bilal's love and reverence for the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH).

One day, Bilal's heart became fully willing to follow Allah's light, so he went to the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) and pronounced *Shahadah* (the Testimony of Faith in Islam) in front of him (PBBUH). Despite his slavery and

the hardships he faced, Bilal openly and boldly declared his Islamic belief. His masters were overwhelmed by the deafening sound of his faith.

Thus, Bilal became the first slave to embrace Islam. He was among the first seven to declare their Islam, namely the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH), Abu Bakr, `Ammar, his mother Sumayyah, Suhayb, Bilal, and Al-Miqdad. He was truly one of the first believers.

The Persecution Bilal Endured Because of His Faith

No sooner had news of Bilal's conversion to Islam emerged than his master, Umayyah ibn Khalaf, became furious. The conversion of one of his slaves to Islam placed Umayyah in a very difficult position, and he became the subject of people's mockery and talk.

The noble Muslims, such as Abu Bakr and `Ali, had closely connected kindred that provided a strong defense and support for one another, but what about these weak slaves? Who could protect them from the brutality and cruelty of these arrogant tyrants?

Diabolic Methods of Torture

Torture became too intense for this weak category of Muslims—the slaves. When they felt so overwhelmed by suffering, they complied with their tormentors' wishes, but their hearts remained securely attached to Allah and His Messenger. But the case was different for Bilal (may Allah be pleased with him), who viewed his soul as insignificant compared to the deep love, reverence, and prioritization of Allah in his life. In every attempt, he refused to yield and renounce his beliefs, even only outwardly [while still holding onto his beliefs internally].

His torture was carried out by the notorious leader, Umayyah ibn Khalaf, who said to those mocking him for his slave's conversion to Islam: "The sun will not set today unless this slave's conversion to Islam sets (ends) with it."

Umayyah first began by threatening Bilal that if he did not abandon Islam, he would suffer various types of severe torture. But these threats and words of intimidation did not influence Bilal (may Allah be pleased with him). The sun set while Bilal maintained his position and remained steadfast in his faith. As Umayyah's foolishness and rage intensified, he resorted to the second method, which was to tie Bilal with a rope around his neck and drag him through the streets of Makkah, with children and knaves pelting him with stones. This plan also failed to turn Bilal away from his faith.

"One and Only [God]! One and Only [God]!"

Having exhausted all methods, Umayyah used the last and severest method. They would wait until noon, when the desert turned into a deadly hell, and then throw Bilal naked onto its scorching rocks. Next, they would bring a huge rock, which they place on his chest, and flog him. His torturers would shout at him. They would even beg him to say something good about their gods, if only just one word; this would preserve their pride and prevent the Quraysh from saying that they had been defeated and humbled by the steadfastness and determination of their slave. Bilal would look at them with eyes full of defiance and a heart full of faith, answering them by saying: "One and Only [God]! One and Only [God]!"

This brutal torture was repeated every day, and every day they begged him, saying: "Praise Al-Lat and Al-`Uzza." But every day Bilal answered: "One and Only [God]! One and Only [God]!"

They would say: "Say as we say [about our gods]." He would respond sarcastically: "I have difficulty in saying that."

Bilal remained in this state, patiently enduring torture for Allah's Sake, constantly repeating his lofty anthem: "One and Only [God]! One and Only [God]!"

Bilal never tired of repeating his belief in the One God and his rejection of idolatry, nor did he lose determination in advocating this Islamic principle. Rather, his tormentors grew weary and bored of inflicting torture upon him.

The Flames of the Desert Become Cool and Peaceful for Bilal

Bilal was later asked: "How did you endure all this torture without losing heart or abandoning your faith?" He replied: "The sweetness of saying, 'One and Only [God]! One and Only [God]' made me forget all torture." It was as though Allah Almighty made the burning flames of the desert cool and peaceful for Bilal just as He had made the fire cool and peaceful for Prophet Ibrahim (Abraham PBBUH) when his people threw him into it. Indeed, Allah (Glory be to Him) is the All-Capable Protector Who shields from harm those who put their trust in Him.

"Our Master Freed Our Master"

Abu Bakr (may Allah be pleased with him) was passing by when he found Bilal (may Allah be pleased with him) remaining incredibly patient and steadfast, although he was being tortured in the burning heat of Makkah. Abu Bakr shouted to Umayyah ibn Khalaf: "Just take whatever money you want and set him free." Umayyah was in a desperate situation and had run out of options because of Bilal's great fortitude. As soon as he heard Abu Bakr's offer, he was

pleased and seized the chance, saying: "Will you buy him for nine ounces of gold?" Abu Bakr agreed without hesitation, paid Umayyah the price, and freed Bilal.

When Abu Bakr and Bilal were walking away, Umayyah said to Abu Bakr: "Take him. By Allah, if you insisted on buying him for only one ounce, I would have sold him to you." Abu Bakr recognized feelings of resentment, frustration, and bitterness in Umayyah's words and tone, as well as an attack on Bilal's dignity to make him feel worthless. Abu Bakr replied: "By Allah, if you refused to accept anything less than a hundred, I would have paid it."

Whenever `Umar ibn Al-Khattab saw Bilal and Abu Bakr together, he would say: "Abu Bakr is our master, and he freed Bilal, our master."

Incredible Steadfastness and a Timeless Lesson for Humanity

Through Bilal's endurance in the face of torment, he (may Allah be pleased with him) gave a lesson that will continue to resonate with people across time and cultures. Allah (Exalted be He) set him as an example of the inherent worth and immense strength of the human soul. The darkness of his skin and the horrors of slavery did not diminish the sublimity of his soul once it found true faith and clung to its Lord and to the right to live in alignment with one's own values and beliefs. Freedom and full sovereignty of conscience cannot be exchanged for an earth full of gold, or even an earth full of torment. That is the main idea of this supreme lesson.

Through his resolute stance, our master Bilal achieved glory and immortality. His masters—categorized as the elite, the powerful, and the wealthy—could not achieve one tenth of his success and legacy. His dark complexion, his humble lineage, and his inferior position among people as a

slave did not prevent him from embracing Islam as a religion and attaining the lofty position for which his truthfulness, purity, and devotion qualified him. He was truly, as `Umar ibn Al-Khattab described him: "Our master Bilal."

Bilal in Madinah

Bilal (may Allah be pleased with him) set out to claim his place among the free people. He emigrated to Madinah where he joined the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) and the noble Companions. Bilal devoted himself to the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH), consistently accompanying him, regardless of the destination, until Bilal became attached to him like his own shadow.

The Azan (Call to Prayer)

The Muslims settled in Madinah and directly built *Al-Masjid Al-Nabawy* (the Prophet's Mosque). The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) and the Muslims with him would pray the prayers on time. People would know the times for prayer and go out to perform them. However, some Muslims would miss the congregational prayer due to their preoccupation with their work. The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) and his Companions began to consult about how to gather people for prayer.

Some suggested raising a banner when the time for prayer arrived. Others said a fire should be lit on a high hill. Some suggested using a horn to sound the time for prayer. None of these suggestions were accepted, and the final decision was that particular men would stand and call out to the people when the time for each prayer arrived.

One of these callers was `Abdullah ibn Zayd Al-Ansari. While he was sleeping, he saw in a dream a man teaching him the formula for the Azan: *Allahu Akbar! Allahu Akbar*!... *Allahu Akbar! Allahu Akbar*! Come to Prayer! Come to Prayer! Come to Success! Come to Success!...until the end of the Azan.

"Teach Bilal the Azan, for He Has a Stronger Voice Than Yours"

`Abdullah ibn Zayd hurried to the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) to inform him of what he had seen. The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) said to him**: "It is a true vision, by Allah's Will. Stand up with Bilal and teach him what (words) you heard [in your dream]. Let him use it to call people to prayer, for he has a stronger voice than yours."**[1] When the time for prayer came, `Abdullah ibn Zayd began to teach Bilal the words of the Azan, and Bilal made the call to prayer with them.

Thus, Bilal became the first muezzin of Islam. Upon finishing reciting the Azan, Bilal would stand at the door of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) and say: "Come to Prayer! Come to Success." Once the Messenger of Allah (PBBU) left his room and Bilal saw him approaching, he would recite the *Iqamah* (call to start the prayer).

The Virtues and Rewards Associated with the Role of the Muezzin in Islam

The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) said: **"The muezzin will be forgiven to the extent to which his voice reaches, and everything wet or dry will testify on his behalf [on the Day of Resurrection]. He will have a reward like that of those who pray with him."**[2] He (PBBUH) also said: **"The muezzins will have the longest necks on the Day of Resurrection."**[3] May all joy be to Bilal and to all who followed and will follow his example in making the call to prayer. How many muezzins followed in Bilal's footsteps? How many

[1] Reported by Abu Dawud, hadith no. 499.
[2] Reported by Al-Nasa'i, hadith no. 646.
[3] This is a sign of their distinction and virtue for their service in calling people to prayer. Reported by Muslim, hadith no. 387.

worshipers prayed after hearing Bilal's call to prayer? That is divine grace! Allah bestows it as a gift from Him upon whomever He wills of His servants.

The Ethics of the Companions

We need to pause a little and contemplate the reaction of the noble Companion, `Abdullah ibn Zayd, who saw the vision and told the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) about it. The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) ordered him to teach the words of the Azan to Bilal. `Abdullah was not disturbed, irritated, or distressed by the fact that he was the one who saw the vision and told the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH), but then another man would make the call to prayer. On the contrary, he taught Bilal the Azan with full contentment and wholeheartedly.

I wonder how one of us would react if they were put in a similar situation? Do you agree with me that the Companions, who had the distinction of meeting and interacting with the Prophet (PBBUH) during his lifetime, were a unique group of individuals? It is hard to find people like them in today's world, except those individuals on whom Allah has shown mercy or favor (those specifically chosen by divine grace). May Allah be pleased with them all.

The Battle of Badr: Bilal Obtains Retribution Upon His Enslaver

The Great Battle of Badr took place, and Bilal fought alongside the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) against the aggressive *Mushrikin* (those who associate others with Allah in His divinity or worship) who targeted Madinah.

Fate Leads Umayyah ibn Khalaf to His Death

The dignitaries and elite of the Quraysh set out to attack the Muslims. Umayyah ibn Khalaf—who had been Bilal's master and who had brutally tortured him—decided to stay behind and not to participate. However, his friend, `Uqbah ibn Abu Mu`ayt, approached him with an incense burner, saying, to deliberately infuriate him: "Use incense, for you are only a woman!" This gesture provoked Umayyah, who saw no alternative but to join the invaders.

It was as if fate led Umayyah to his death. Allah accomplished His Plan. Umayyah must participate, for there was an old, unsettled score [grievance] between him and one of Allah's servants. The time had come to settle it and put it to rest. By whom? By the wronged party—Bilal himself.

Swords clashed, and the fighting raged. As the battle drew to a close, Bilal spotted Umayyah ibn Khalaf, a captive in the hands of `Abdul-Rahman ibn `Awf.

"May I Not Be Saved If He (Umayyah) Is Saved!"

As soon as Bilal caught sight of Umayyah, all the painful memories flashed back into his mind. He shouted: "The chief of disbelief, Umayyah ibn Khalaf. May I not be saved if he is saved." Bilal pounced on him, wanting to kill him, but `Abdul-Rahman ibn `Awf prevented him, saying: "He is my captive."

Bilal shouted at the top of his voice: "O supporters of Allah! Here is the chief of disbelief, Umayyah ibn Khalaf! May I not be saved if he is saved." The people gathered, and Bilal did not leave the spot until he had killed his tormentor, Umayyah ibn Khalaf. Umayyah was killed by the hands of Bilal. The same hands that Umayyah had mercilessly chained, beaten, and tortured.

Bilal's hands rescued the people from the tyrant of Quraysh, who had long humiliated and oppressed the believers.

The judge never dies; as you judge, you will be judged [i.e., an unfair verdict is never forgotten; as you have done, it will be done to you.[1]

[1] A well-known saying that emphasizes the principle of reciprocity in judgment and treatment. It suggests that the way you treat others and the standards you apply to them will be the same standards used to judge you.

The Triumphant Entry into Makkah

The day of the great victory of Makkah came. The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) entered Makkah, thanking and glorifying Allah, at the head of ten thousand Muslims. They headed directly toward the Ka`bah (Allah's Sacred House).

Bilal Gives the Call to Prayer from the Roof of the Ka`bah

The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) entered the Ka`bah to destroy the idols inside, after destroying the idols surrounding it. Only three men accompanied him: `Uthman ibn Talhah (the keeper of the key to the Ka`bah), `Usamah ibn Zayd, and Bilal ibn Rabah.

The time for the *Zuhr* (Noon) Prayer came. Thousands of Muslims surrounded the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH). At that moment, the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) summoned Bilal to order him to ascend the roof of the Ka`bah and proclaim the belief in one God from above by calling the Azan. What a magnificent scene and what a grand occasion! Here was Bilal calling the Azan while thousands of Muslims eagerly stretched their necks to catch a look at this awe-inspiring sight, quietly chanting and repeating the words of the Azan in humility behind him.

"We Bear Witness That You Are the Messenger of Allah"

As for the *Mushrikin*, they were stunned, hardly believing what was happening. Is this truly Muhammad and his poor followers who were expelled from their homes yesterday? Is this truly the one who addressed us only

moments ago, holding our lives in his hands but saying to us: **"Go, you are free"**? Is this Bilal, who yesterday was a slave, rising above everyone else while thousands of people looked on with eyes wide in expectation and astonishment?

In particular, three dignitaries of the Quraysh, sitting together in the courtyard of the Ka`bah, were vexed by the sight of Bilal trampling their idols and raising his voice [declaring the Oneness of Allah] from above the rubble of the broken statues to resonate throughout the horizon of Makkah. These three dignitaries were Abu Sufyan ibn Harb, who had just shortly embraced Islam, `Attab ibn Usayd and Al-Harith ibn Hisham, both of whom had not yet converted to Islam.

`Attab ibn Usayd said: "Surely, Allah honored Usayd (his dead father) by not letting him hear this (Bilal), otherwise he would have been enraged."

Al-Harith ibn Hisham said: "By Allah, if I knew that Muhammad was truthful, I would have followed him."

Abu Sufyan commented on their conversation, saying: "I will not say anything. If I spoke, these pebbles would report what I say."

The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) then emerged from the Ka`bah and addressed them, saying: **"I have learned what you have said."** He (PBBUH) continued to tell them exactly what they had said, in the way they had said it, and then added: **"You are all from Adam, and Adam was (created) from dust."** Al-Harith and `Attab shouted in one breath: "We bear witness that you are the Messenger of Allah. By Allah, no one who could have told you heard us say that!"

From that moment on, they received the Azan from Bilal with new hearts and minds, after the light of faith had erased their misguidance.

Bilal Receives Glad Tidings of Paradise

Bilal remained in the company of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH), and the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) was pleased with his company. He (PBBUH) found solace in his pleasant voice reciting the call to prayer. Whenever circumstances or events escalated to a heightened level of difficulty or stress, the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) would say to Bilal: **"O Bilal, proclaim the *Iqamah* (call for starting prayer). Give us comfort by it."**[1] It signifies the comfort and relief that the Prophet (PBBUH) found in prayer, indicating that the arrival of prayer itself was a source of solace.

One day, after the *Fajr* (Dawn) Prayer, the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) said to Bilal: **"O Bilal, tell me about the deed you did in Islam for which you most hope to earn reward, for truly I heard the rustle of your sandals before me in Paradise."** Bilal replied: "I have not done a deed for which I am more hopeful of reward than never performing ablution at any hour of the night or day without praying with that ablution as much as Allah wills I should pray."[2]

Despite his lofty status and this noble promise of Paradise, Bilal was always humble. Whenever people complimented him, he would deflect the compliment by humbly saying: "I am just an Abyssinian who used to be a slave."

[1] Reported by Abu Dawud hadith no. 4985.
[2] Reported by Al-Bukhari, hadith no. 1149.

The Profound Impact of the Prophet's (PBBUH) Death on Bilal

Bilal continued to stay in the company of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH), finding joy, enlightenment, and peace, until the day came that shook Bilal and brought him deep sadness and pain. The feelings brought by this new experience were not only severe but also fundamentally different and more profound than his past experiences of pain. This most difficult experience was the death of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH), which was a severe ordeal for all the Companions, especially Bilal.

Bilal Overwhelmed with Tears While Giving the Azan

The time for prayer arrived, and Bilal stood up to give the call to prayer. The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) had not yet been buried. As soon as Bilal reached the words: "I bear witness that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah," he could no longer control his emotions. His tears choked him, impeding him from saying anything further. The Muslims burst into tears and nothing else could be heard but the sound of their sobbing.

For three days, Bilal tried to call the Azan. Every time he reached the words: "I bear witness that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah," his voice broke with emotion at the mention of the Prophet (PBBUH). Unable to finish the sentence, he wept intensely, causing all those present to weep.

"I Cannot Do This Duty Anymore"

Bilal went to Abu Bakr, the Caliph of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH), and told him: "I cannot give the call to prayer for anyone other than the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH)." He asked the Caliph to exempt him from reciting the call to prayer. He could no longer perform this duty. He would come to the prayer only to find that the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) was not among them. Not only that, but he could no longer live in Madinah, which was now devoid of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH). He asked the Caliph to allow him to leave and join the *Mujahid*s (strivers; fighters in Allah's Cause) in some other place.

Bilal Leaves Madinah

Abu Bakr tried to dissuade Bilal from his decision, but the situation was too much for Bilal to bear or cope with. It was more than he could withstand. When Abu Bakr insistently urged him to stay, Bilal replied: "If you freed me for yourself, hold on to me. But if you freed me for Allah's Sake, leave me for the One for Whom you freed me." Abu Bakr replied: "I only freed you for Allah's Sake."

Bilal departed from the Prophet's (PBBUH) city with the first Muslim expedition to Syria, where he remained, striving in Allah's Cause, until his death.

The Final Chapter of Bilal's Life

Bilal continued to refrain from calling the Azan until Caliph `Umar ibn Al-Khattab arrived in Syria and met him, after being apart for a long time. `Umar was very anxious to see Bilal. He always held him in high esteem.

There, the Companions resolved to ask Bilal to recite the Azan in the presence of `Umar. Bilal agreed and climbed up to a high place to recite the Azan. But as soon as he raised his voice with the first words of the Azan, `Umar wept and so did the Companions until their beards became wet with tears. His pleasant voice announcing the call to prayer stirred their longing for those precious days when the Prophet (PBBUH) lived among them in Madinah.

"Tomorrow We Will Meet Our Beloved Ones"

The caller to heaven and the first voice of Islam (i.e., the first muezzin) remained in the Levant until his inevitable end came. He lay on his deathbed at the age of sixty, in the year 17 A.H.

When his wife saw him approaching death, she cried out: "Oh what grief and calamity!"

Bilal replied: "Rather say, 'Oh what joy!' Tomorrow we will meet our beloved ones... Muhammad (PBBUH) and his Companions."

Our hero's life ended. Bilal met his beloved ones and found bliss in the company of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH).

May Allah's Mercy and Blessings be upon you, O muezzin of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH), O caller to heaven and the first voice of Islam.

May Allah be pleased with you and please you, O Bilal ibn Rabah.

4. Mus`ab ibn `Umair

May Allah Be Pleased with Him

4. Mus`ab ibn `Umair

Now, my dear readers, let us tread one of these pathways that carry scents all along it and encounter another fragrant flower, whose rich and long-lasting scent leaves an indelible mark on the minds. I am not exaggerating when I describe him as an aromatic bloom, for our hero was "the most fragrant of the people of Makkah". He was the most distinguished among the Qurayshi youths, the most radiant and handsome.

He had genuine and sincere faith in Allah Almighty that reflected in his actions and way of life, by which he attained the highest degrees. He was the first ambassador of Islam. He was Mus`ab ibn `Umair or Mus`ab, the Bringer of Good, as some Muslims called him.

Mus`ab's Upbringing

Mus`ab ibn` Umair grew up in a life of extreme luxury and comfort. He was one of the most affluent youths of Makkah due to his family's high financial standing. No one dressed like him or perfumed himself like him. People would know he had passed by any road they were walking on because of his beautiful scent that filled the air.

Mus`ab Embraces Islam Early

The impeccably elegant Makkan youth started to actively listen to and show interest in the information and news that people were circulating about

Al-Saddiq Al-Amin (the Truthful and Trustworthy One),[1] who was telling people that Allah (Exalted be He) sent him as a bearer of good tidings, a warner, and a caller to the One and Only True God. The pampered youth of Quraysh was eagerly seeking out the news of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) and what was said about him and his Message. His interest soon turned into a strong desire to meet him.

Mus`ab learned that the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) and the believers used to gather in the house of Al-Arqam ibn Abu Al-Arqam (the secret gathering place for early Muslims), away from the prying eyes and harassment of Quraysh. He did not hesitate long. One evening, he went there to meet the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH). As soon as Mus`ab sat with the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) and heard some ayahs from him, his heart opened up to Islam. He promptly extended his hand for the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) to testify that there is no god but Allah and that he is the Messenger of Allah.

Mus`ab (may Allah be pleased with him) thus took his place among the initial group of believers, whom Allah (Exalted be He) chose to be in the company of His Messenger (PBBUH). From this decisive moment onward, that pampered youth would transform into a superb figure of *Da`wah* (calling people to Islam), sacrifice, and giving for the well-being of others.

Mus`ab (may Allah be pleased with him) kept his conversion to Islam secret, fearing the reaction of his mother, Khunas bint Malik. She had an exceptionally powerful personality that surpassed that of many men and was respected to the point of awe. She was the only source of worry for Mus`ab after his conversion.

[1] Two titles given to Prophet Muhammad (PBBUH) by the people of Makkah due to his impeccable character, honesty, and reliability in all his dealings. He (PBBUH) was known for his integrity and was a trusted individual within the Makkah society, even before the start of his prophethood.

Mus`ab's Secret Is Revealed and Brought into the Open

Mus`ab (may Allah be pleased with him) continued to frequent the house of Al-Arqam and meet with the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH), feeling pleased and contented with being a Muslim. No one, especially his mother, knew about his conversion to Islam.

One day, while on his way to the house of Al-Arqam, Mus`ab's worst fears happened and his secret was divulged to his mother. `Uthman ibn Talhah saw him secretly entering the house of Al-Arqam. He then saw him praying in the same manner as the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH). `Uthman ibn Talhah, who had not yet converted to Islam, went directly to his mother to reveal her son's hidden conversion to Islam. He told her the news: "Your son has abandoned the religion of his fathers and followed the religion of Muhammad."

Mus`ab Endures Imprisonment Due to His Faith

Stunned and furious by the news of his faith in Islam, Mus`ab's mother was about to slap him hard when she saw him. However, she quickly relented in the face of his determination and the light and radiance that beamed from his face. Her maternal feelings restrained her from beating or harming him, but she resorted to another form of torture: imprisoning and shackling him inside her house.

Mus`ab Emigrates to Abyssinia

Mus`ab (may Allah be pleased with him) remained imprisoned until news of the successful emigration of oppressed Muslims to Abyssinia reached him.

He managed to escape from his mother as well as his guards and proceeded to Abyssinia as an emigrant.

Mus`ab stayed in Abyssinia for a while, then returned to Makkah. He emigrated once again with a group that were emigrating to Abyssinia.

Mus`ab Renounces This World and Its Fleeting Pleasures

Mus`ab (may Allah be pleased with him) returned to Makkah, where his mother attempted several times to coerce him into returning home and to stop worshiping the one true God. Finally, she despaired of his reversion to idolatry, so she tried to capture and imprison him again. Mus`ab threatened that if she did so, he would kill everyone she could use to capture him.

There was a strong insistence on disbelief on the part of the mother met with even a stronger insistence on faith on the part of the son, until the mother decided, as a last measure of pressure, to deprive him of all her wealth and reduce him to poverty, telling him: "Go your own way. I am no longer your mother. You will not receive a single dirham from my wealth." Mus`ab said to her: "O mother, I am your sincere advisor. I care for you. Bear witness that there is no god except Allah and that Muhammad is His slave and Messenger." She replied: "I swear by Al-Lat and Al-`Uzza (two of the most prominent goddesses in pre-Islamic Arabia) that I shall never embrace your religion."

Mus`ab's decision was final, and his heart belonged sincerely to Allah. Thus, the once pampered youth of Quraysh abandoned the life of luxury and ease he had been living and preferred a hard but meaningful life. He renounced fleeting worldly pleasures and possessions and devoted himself to worshiping Allah and the pursuit of knowledge.

Mus`ab's Poor Condition Arouses the Pity of the Prophet (PPBUH) and His Companions

The once elegant, perfumed youth of Makkah was never seen except wearing the coarsest clothes, eating one day and going hungry the next. However, his soul, radiant with the light of faith and devotion, transformed him into a different person, filling the eyes with admiration and the souls with awe.

Mus`ab's outward appearance aroused the pity of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) and his Companions. Seeing Mus`ab in this state, the Companions would lower their gaze and shed tears. They were reminded of his former state of luxury, comfort, and high living before his conversion to Islam.

One day, the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) saw him in his patched, tattered garment. He (PBBUH) looked at him with compassion, his eyes welling up with tears as he said: **"I have seen this Mus`ab. No youth in Makkah was more pampered by his parents than he was. Then he abandoned all that for the love of Allah and His Messenger."**

The First Ambassador of Islam

Mus`ab (may Allah be pleased with him) became a frequent Companion of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH), finding peace and joy in his company. The Prophet (PBBUH) was a flowing river of light, of which Mus`ab drank, adopting his noble manners and morals. It was even said that he was the Companion who most closely resembled the Prophet (PBBUH) in both physical appearance and character. The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) valued men who possessed admirable qualities and had a praiseworthy character. He placed each in his appropriate place and assigned each an appropriate task.

The First Caller to Allah in Madinah

Following the First Pledge of `Aqabah[1], the twelve men from Yathrib (later known as Madinah) asked the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) to send someone with them to Yathrib in order to teach them the Islamic beliefs and principles and call their people to Allah's religion. The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) chose the right man for the right mission—Mus`ab ibn `Umair (may Allah be pleased with him). He thus became the first ambassador of Islam and the first caller to Allah (Exalted be He).

Among the Companions there were those who were more important, influential, or well-known than Mus`ab. But the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH)

[1] The First Pledge of `Aqabah (12th Year of Prophethood) was a pivotal secret meeting between Prophet Muhammad (PBBUH) and a group of twelve men from Yathrib at an area called Al-`Aqabah near Makkah. This pledge was one of the precursors to the emigration of the Prophet (PBBUH) and the Muslims to Yathrib, which was later called Madinah.

chose Mus`ab, the Bringer of Good, for his remarkable style of preaching, his sagacity, and his noble character, which qualified him for this momentous task. The Prophet (PBBUH) placed in his hands the future of Islam in Madinah, which would become the homeland of the Muslim emigrants and the starting point of the Islamic call—preachers and bearers of glad tidings being sent out from it to everywhere.

Mus`ab in Madinah

Mus`ab (may Allah be pleased with him), living up the trust placed in him, arrived in Yathrib. At that time, there were only twelve Muslims there, the individuals who had pledged allegiance to the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH). Mus`ab remained among them, and in a matter of a few months the people answered the Call of Allah and His Messenger, and their hearts opened up to Islam.

How Godly Preachers Should Be Like

Calling people to Allah's Path is not accomplished through elaborate and ornate words or detailed sermons; rather, the call must be a way of life actively incorporated into the preacher's daily actions and overall lifestyle. A preacher must internalize and accept the values and ideals they preach within their own moral framework. Islamic values and ideals have to become real, tangible, and noticeable within the preacher's physical body and being. Essentially, a godly preacher is someone completely committed and devoted to Allah, the Lord of the worlds. Mus`ab ibn `Umair (may Allah be pleased with him) was one of these unique preachers. His refined style, lofty morals, profound wisdom, and inner peace played a major role in spreading Islam throughout Madinah.

Mus`ab's Method of Calling People to Allah

Now, my dear readers, let us present some instances of Mus`ab's method of inviting people to Islam, and how it had the greatest impact on the conversion of the Aws and Khazraj[1] chieftains, and the subsequent conversion of the people of Madinah.

Sa`d ibn Mu`adh and Banu `Abdul-Ashhal Clan

Mus`ab (may Allah be pleased with him) stayed with Asaad ibn Zurarah, the first chief in Yahtrib to become a Muslim. Together, they started to visit tribes, homes, and gatherings to convey to them the message of Islam. Mus`ab was known as 'the reciter' because of his beautiful voice when reciting the Qur'an. One day, Asaad ibn Zurarah accompanied Mus`ab to a well called 'Maraq' near the dwellings of Banu `Abdul-Ashhal, and some Muslim men gathered around them.

At that time, Sa`d ibn Mu`adh and Usayd ibn Hudayr, the two chieftains of their clan, Banu `Abdul-Ashhal, were adherents to the pagan religion of their people. Sa`d said to Usayd: "Go to these two (referring to Mu`ab and Asaad) who have come to deceive our weak ones and drive them away. Asaad ibn Zurarah is my relative. Were it not for that, I would have spared you this (mission by going myself)."

Usayd proceeded, his sword slung over his shoulder and his spear drawn. Directly upon reaching them, he addressed them in a tough, insulting manner, his face covered in intense anger. He said to them: "What has brought you to

[1] The two major Arab tribes inhabiting the city of Yathrib (later Madinah) before the arrival of Islam.

our neighborhood? Are you deceiving the weak ones among us? Leave us be, if you do not wish to depart this life."

Like a calm but powerful sea, Mus`ab's serene face brightened as he said to Usayd in a pleasant and friendly manner: "Why not sit down and listen? If you like the matter, accept it; and if you dislike it, we will stop talking about what you dislike." Usayd said: "You have spoken fairly."

Usayd sat down to listen, after planting his spear in the ground. No sooner had Mus`ab, the Bringer of Good, recited some passages of the Qur'an to him, explaining their meanings and the Message brought by the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH), then Usayd's face began to cheer up. His nervousness and tension soon relaxed, and acceptance of Islam could be seen on his face before he uttered a word. Usayd said: "How beautiful and true this statement is! What should someone who wants to embrace this religion do?" Mus`ab told him: "He should purify his clothes and body, and bear witness that there is no god but Allah and that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah." Usayd did so and stood up to declare his profession of faith in Islam after purifying himself.[1]

Usayd went back to Sa`d ibn Mu`adh. After exchanging a brief conversation with him, Sa`d became furious. He took his spear and went angrily to Mus`ab and Asaad ibn Zurarah. As Asaad saw him approaching, he said to Mus`ab with anticipation: "By Allah, the chief of his people is coming to you now. Should he follow you, none of them will stay behind."

Sa`d stood angrily and addressed them in a tough, insulting manner. Mus`ab said to him: "Will you sit down and listen?" He repeated what he had said to Usayd. Sa`d responded to him in the same way as Usayd, and he embraced Islam.

[1] This purification involves performing *Wudu'* (ablution) and *Ghusl* (full body wash), which are essential for maintaining ritual purity in Islam.

Thus, the leader of the Banu `Abdul-Ashhal embraced Islam, and all his people followed his example and embraced Islam as well.

The Conversion of the Aws and Khazraj Chiefs to Islam

Mus`ab (may Allah be pleased with him) continued his gracious style, calling people to Islam until Islam became the dominant faith in Madinah, to the point where every household included Muslim individuals, both males and females. The major chiefs of the Aws and Khazraj tribes, such as Sa`d ibn `Ubadah, `Amr ibn Al-Jamuh, and others, embraced Islam.

Madinah Prepares for the Arrival of the Light

A year passed, during which the Muslims in Madinah increased daily in number and power. The following year, during the Hajj season, Mus`ab ibn `Umair (may Allah be pleased with him) arrived in Makkah, accompanied by seventy-five Muslims—seventy-three men and two women—to give the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) the Second Pledge of `Aqabah.

Madinah was preparing to receive the light that would come and settle in it. Finally, the historical day arrived, and the momentous event happened: the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) emigrated to Madinah.

"May Allah Reward You with the Best, O Mus`ab ibn `Umair"

Mus`ab ibn `Umair is credited for having established the Muslim State and laid its foundations in Madinah, preparing it to receive the light of faith and certainty, making it truly "*Al-Madinah Al-Munawwarah* (the Enlightened City)".

From the center of lights in Madinah, the light of faith radiated and shone forth to illuminate every corner of the earth, revealing, clarifying, and making realities visible. How much good will you have in your scale of good deeds, O Mus`ab? Your scales will include everyone among the people of Madinah who testified to Allah's Oneness, and their followers and followers of the followers and so on throughout all generations until the Day of Resurrection.

Struggling in Allah's Cause[1]

After the first ambassador of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) achieved remarkable success in spreading the call to Islam in Madinah, the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) and his Companions emigrated to Madinah. Quraysh continued their pursuit of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) and invaded Madinah. The conflict escalated and culminated in the Battle of Badr. The role that Mus`ab ibn `Umair (may Allah be pleased with him) played was not limited to promoting Islam; he was also a first-class fighter. He participated in Badr and fought fiercely, until Allah granted victory to the believers.

The Final Chapter

After a short life in terms of years, but extensive and rich in achievements, the Battle of Uhud took place. In this battle Mus`ab ibn `Umair (may Allah be pleased with him) displayed unparalleled heroism, which ended with his death as a martyr.

The Courageous Standard-Bearer

The polytheists of Quraysh invaded Madinah to avenge the defeat that they had suffered at Badr. The Muslims prepared themselves for this second encounter with the enemies. The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) stood, examining the faces of the believers, choosing one of them who would carry the standard. He called out to Mus`ab, the Bringer of Good, who stepped forward to carry the standard for the Muslims.

[1] It is not limited to physical combat but includes striving for moral, social, and spiritual betterment, as well as defending Islam and Muslims against oppression.

Mus`ab Diverts the Enemies' Focus from the Prophet (PBBUH)

The battle began, and the fighting intensified. The archers disobeyed the Prophet's (PBBUH) orders and abandoned their positions atop the mountain after seeing the *Mushrikin* retreating in defeat. However, this disobedience on their part soon turned the Muslims' victory into defeat.

The *Mushrikin* took advantage of the chaos and panic that happened in the Muslim ranks, and they focused their attacks on the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH), with the specific aim of killing him.

Mus`ab ibn `Umair, who greatly resembled the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH), realized the danger that threatened the Messenger (PBBUH). He proceeded to move boldly and menacingly in the direction of the enemies, his only concern being to divert their focus from the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) and create an opportunity for others to defend him (PBBUH).

The enemies began to gather against Mus`ab. Ibn Qami'ah, one of the attackers, approached him and struck his right hand, cutting it off. Mus`ab was reciting Allah's Saying: ﴿Muhammad is no more than a Messenger, and indeed (many) Messengers have passed away before him﴾ (translated meaning of Al `Imran 3:144). Mus`ab grabbed the standard with his left hand and protected it with his chest. Ibn Qami'ah struck his left hand, cutting it off. Mus`ab bent down and took the banner with his upper arms, holding it to his chest, while still reciting: ﴿Muhammad is no more than a Messenger, and indeed (many) Messengers have passed away before him﴾. Ibn Qami'ah killed Mus`ab, thinking he was the Prophet (PBBUH) because of Mus`ab's close resemblance to the Prophet (PBBUH). He returned to Quraysh and confidently announced: "I have killed Muhammad!" This rumor caused Quraysh to calm down and cease their attacks.

Mus`ab ibn `Umair put himself in harm's way to save the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) and died as a martyr in Allah's Cause.

"Among the Believers Are Men True to What They Promised Allah"

The battle ended, and the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) started to inspect the battlefield and bid farewell to the martyrs. When he (PBBUH) saw Mus`ab, he stopped and said, with his eyes brimming with tears: ﴿Among the believers are men true to what they promised Allah. Among them is he who has fulfilled his vow (to the death), and among them is he who awaits (his chance). And they did not alter (the terms of their commitment) in the least﴾ (translated meaning of Al-Ahzab 33:23).[1]

Mus`ab Did Not Receive Any of His Reward in This World

Khabbab ibn Al-Arat said: "We emigrated with the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) in Allah's Cause, seeking His good pleasure. Our reward became due and sure from Allah (i.e., after a period of striving, sacrifice, and service, the promised reward from Allah was now deserved and rightfully ours). Some of us passed away without receiving any of their reward in this world. Among them was Mus`ab ibn `Umair, who was killed on the Day of Uhud. He did not leave behind (any possessions) except a striped woolen cloth. When we covered his head with it, his feet would be exposed. And when we covered his feet with it, his head would be exposed. The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) said, **'Cover his head with it and put *Idhkhir* (i.e. a kind of grass) over his feet.'"**

[1] Reported by Al-Bukhari, hadith no. 4082.

The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) Bears Witness That You Are the Martyrs

The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) cast a farewell glance at Mus`ab while he was wrapped in the cloth in which he was shrouded, saying: **"I saw you in Makkah, and there was no one there with finer clothes or a better appearance than you. Now here you are, disheveled, wearing a coarse garment."** The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) wept, and those around him wept. Then the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) buried the martyrs of Uhud and said: **"The Messenger of Allah testifies that you will be the martyrs before Allah on the Day of Resurrection."**

"O people, visit them, come to them, and greet them. By the One in Whose Hand is my soul, no Muslim greets them without them returning his greeting."

The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) and his noble Companions continued to remember Mus`ab ibn `Umair on various occasions and kept his memory alive, turning it into an incentive to perpetuate his mission and legacy.[1]

May Allah's Peace and Blessings be upon you, O Mus`ab, the Bringer of Good.

Peace be upon you, O first ambassador of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH).

May Allah be pleased with you and please you, O Mus`ab ibn `Umair.

[1] Please see part two of this book by the author: The Life of `Abdu-Rahman ibn `Awf,

5. Anas ibn Malik

May Allah Be Pleased with Him

5. Anas ibn Malik

Our splendid walk in the awesome gardens of the Companions continues. We feel immersed in their lush green vegetation and beautiful flower beds. Now we slow down to explore another exquisite flower. Through the following pages, we will have the chance to meet a venerable Companion, who was not only a constant follower, like a shadow, to the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) but was also one of his closest friends. He served the Messenger (PBBUH) for ten whole years, which he described as the most glorious and fulfilling years of his life. This was followed by a long life after the death of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) during which he filled the world with knowledge, wisdom, and meanings from the ocean of information that surrounded him.

He was the servant of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) and the prominent hadith narrator, Anas ibn Malik (may Allah be pleased with him).

Anas's Upbringing

Anas ibn Malik was born in Madinah ten years before the *Hijrah* (the Prophet's emigration to Madinah). His mother, Umm Sulaym—also known as Al-Ghumaysa' or Al-Rumaysa' bint Milhan—was one of the earliest converts to Islam in Yathrib (later Madinah). Her husband (Anas's father), Malik ibn Al-Nadr, adhered to his pagan faith. He wanted her to abandon Islam and adhere to the faith of her forefathers. One day, Malik left in anger, and an enemy met him and killed him.

Anas grew up an orphan from that moment on, but he remained under the care of his mother, whose heart was filled with the light of faith and love for the Prophet (PBBUH). She taught her son the Two Testimonies of Faith in Islam and instilled in his heart the love for Allah and His Prophet (PBBUH) before he even saw the Prophet (PBBUH). This only increased his longing to meet him (PBBUH).

The City Shines with the Prophet's Light (PBBUH)

As soon as Anas, his mother, and all the people of Madinah learned the news of the Prophet's departure from Makkah, emigrating to Madinah, their hearts were filled with joy and anticipation as they waited for his arrival. Every morning, young men would spread the word that the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) had arrived. Anas would go out enthusiastically with other people, young and old, but when he saw nothing, he would return disappointed.

One morning, some men from Madinah shouted that the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) and his Companion Abu Bakr were approaching Madinah. Everyone, men and women, interspersed with flocks of young boys, raced toward the path that would bring them the Prophet of Guidance and Goodness, who would lead them toward righteousness and moral excellence. At the forefront of these boys was the ten-year-old boy, Anas ibn Malik (may Allah be pleased with him).

The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) arrived in Madinah, which, from that day on, would shine with the light of faith and the light of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH).

Anas, a Servant of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH)

Once the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) settled in Madinah, Al-Ghumaysa' bint Milhan, Anas's mother, came to him with her young boy running after her. She said: "O Messenger of Allah, there is no man or woman left in Madinah who has not presented you with a gift. I cannot find anything to present to you except this son of mine. Take him and let him serve you for as long as you wish." The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) was delighted by this. He approached Anas with a cheerful face, stroked his head with his blessed hand, and took him into his family.

Anas (may Allah be pleased with him) was blessed to serve the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) from the age of ten. Anas continued to live under the Prophet's protection and care until the Prophet (PBBUH) returned to the Supreme Companion, when Anas was twenty years old. These ten years were the most brilliant and bountiful years of his life.

The Prophet's Kind Treatment of Anas

Anas (may Allah be pleased with him) continued to serve and look after the man whom Allah Almighty had sent as a mercy to the worlds (PBBUH). Anas directly experienced and interacted with his noble qualities and lofty characteristics. It was a unique experience that any Muslim would wish to live, and which pen and paper cannot adequately capture.

Here are some examples:

- Anas ibn Malik narrated: "The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) had the best manners among all people. One day he (PBBUH) sent me to do an errand for him, and I said, 'By Allah, I will not go.' But in my heart I intended to go and do what the Prophet of Allah (PBBUH) had told me to do. When I went out, I came across some boys who were playing in the marketplace. Suddenly, the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) caught me on the back of my neck from behind. I looked at him, and he (PBBUH) was smiling. He (PBBUH) said, **'O Unays[1], did you go where I told you to go?'** I said, 'Yes, I am going, O Messenger of Allah.'"[2]

- Sometimes the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) addressed Anas by his nickname: 'O Unays', and other times by: 'My son' to make him feel cherished.

The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) Imparts Valuable Advice to Anas

The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) lavished his blessed advice and exhortations on Anas (may Allah be pleased with him), which nourished his heart and mind and uplifted his soul.

Among the Prophet's wise sayings to him were:

– **"O my son, if you can keep your heart morning and evening void of rancor toward anyone, do so."**[3]

[1] A nickname used by the Prophet (PBBUH) to refer to Anas, meaning 'little Anas' or 'dear Anas' in Arabic, as a term of endearment and affection. Unays is a diminutive form of Anas, emphasizing kindness and closeness.
[2] Reported by Muslim, hadith no. 2310.
[3] Reported by Al-Tirmidhi, hadith no. 2678.

- **"O my son, this is part of my Sunnah, and whoever revives my Sunnah[1] loves me. And whoever loves me will be with me in Paradise."**[2]

- **"O my son, when you enter upon your family, greet them with peace; it will be a blessing for you and your household."**[3]

The Special Supplication That the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) Made for Anas

Anas ibn Malik narrated: "The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) entered upon us, and there was only me, my mother, and Umm Haram (my maternal aunt) present. He (PBBUH) said, **'Stand up so that I may lead you in prayer.'** He (PBBUH) led us in prayer, and then he (PBBUH) supplicated Allah to grant us every good thing in this world and the Hereafter. My mother said, 'O Messenger of Allah, your little servant Unays. Please supplicate Allah for him.' The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) said, **'O Allah, give him abundant wealth and offspring and a long life.'**"[4]

Allah (Exalted be He) answered the Prophet's supplication for Anas, and Anas (may Allah be pleased with him) became the wealthiest of the Ansar, so much so that any tree owned by him would bear fruit twice a year. He also had the largest number of offspring, so much so that he saw more than one

[1] Reviving the Sunnah refers to the act of actively practicing and promoting the Sunnah, which encompasses the teachings, practices, and morals of Prophet Muhammad (PBBUH). This involves following his way of life in various aspects, including worship, social interactions, and personal conduct. Reviving the Sunnah is considered a way to strengthen one's faith, connect with Allah, and honor the Prophet's legacy.
[2] Reported by Al-Tirmidhi, hadith no. 2678.
[3] Reported by Al-Tirmidhi, hadith no. 2698.
[4] Reported by Muslim, hadith no. 660, and Al-Adab Al-Mufrad, 653.

hundred of his children and grandchildren. Moreover, Allah gave him a long life with good health. He lived for a full century.

Every Part of Madinah Darkened Upon the Death of the Prophet (PBBUH)

Anas remained in the company of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) from the time he (PBBUH) emigrated until his death, which enabled Anas to mature due to the personal and transformative relationship with him. He stayed close to the Messenger of Allah all the time and fought with him (PBBUH) more than once. Anas was among those who pledged allegiance to the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) under the tree—an incident commonly known as the Ridwan Pledge.[1]

After ten years dedicated to the service of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH), the Messenger (PBBUH) returned to His Maker. Anas was deeply affected and felt that the entire world had darkened around him.

Anas (may Allah be pleased with him) said: "On the day when the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) entered Madinah, everything was lit up; and on the day when he (PBBUH) died, everything went dark."[2]

He also said: "The last glance that I had of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) was on a Monday, when the curtain was drawn back to reveal his room. I saw his face as if it were a page of the Qur'an."[3]

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[1] A pledge that was sworn under a tree to the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) by his Companions after the rumored death of `Uthman. All the Companions pledged that they would not flee the battlefield, if a battle broke out with Quraysh, and they would keep on fighting firmly and steadfastly to the last man.

[2] Reported by Ibn Majah, hadith no. 1631.

[3] *Al-Shama'il Al-Muhammadiyah* by Imam Al-Tirmidhi, 386.

He continued: "The people were praying congregationally behind Abu Bakr and were about to interrupt their prayer [when they saw the Prophet PBBUH], but he (PBBUH) gestured to them to keep firm (focused on prayer). The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) died at the end of that day."[1]

[1] *Al-Shama'il Al-Muhammadiyah* by Imam Al-Tirmidhi, 386.

Eighty Years of Reviving the Hearts with Prophetic Guidance

Allah (Glorified be He) answered the Prophet's supplication for Anas to prolong his life. Anas (may Allah be pleased with him) lived for eighty years after the Prophet's death.

Throughout these eighty years, Anas filled the hearts with the knowledge he learned from the Prophet (PBBUH) and brought life, vitality, and a positive change to everyone.

Throughout his long life, Anas became a reference for Muslims, who relied on his wisdom, experience, and ability to help resolve issues. He was the third most important hadith narrator, after Abu Hurairah and `Abdullah ibn `Amr.

Now, my dear readers, let us spend a few moments to hear Anas depicting some of the Prophet's physical and moral attributes.[1]

Anas ibn Malik (may Allah be pleased with him) said:

- "I have never touched silk or brocade softer than the palm of the Prophet (PBBUH), nor have I ever smelled a scent more pleasant than the sweat of the Prophet (PBBUH)."[2]

- "Whenever the Prophet (PBBUH) met a man and spoke to him, he (PBBUH) would not turn away until he (the man) turned away. And if

[1] To learn more about the lofty characteristics of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH), please refer to the first part of this book: *A Biography of the Best Man in Creation* by the author.

[2] Reported by Al-Bukhari, hadith no. 3561.

he shook hands with him, he (PBBUH) would not withdraw his hand until he (the man) withdrew his hand."[1]

– "The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) had the sublimest character among people. I had a (little) brother who was called Abu `Umair. When the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) came to our house and he saw him, he would say, **'O Abu `Umair, what has the Nughair done?**' Nughair was a small bird he used to play with."[2]

[1] Reported by Ibn Majah, hadith no. 3716.
[2] Reported by Muslim, hadith no. 2150.

The Outstanding Virtues and Deeds That Defined Anas

Anas (may Allah be pleased with him) possessed many virtues and admirable qualities, including:

Anas's Manner of Worship

- Abu Hurairah said: "I have never seen anyone whose prayer more closely resembles the prayer of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) than Ibn Umm Sulaym—meaning Anas."
- Thumamah said: "Anas would pray until his feet would bleed due to standing so long."
- Thabit said: "Whenever Anas completed a *Khatmah* (one complete reading of the entire Qur'an), he would gather his children and family and supplicate for them."

The Miracles with Which Allah Favored Anas

Thabit narrated: "The caretaker, who looked after Anas's garden, came to Anas in the summer and said to him, 'Your land is thirsty (i.e., dry and needs to be watered).' Anas asked for some water, performed ablution, then prayed. Right after this, clouds gathered, covered his land, and rain fell until it filled his cistern. It was summer at the time, and there had been no rain. Anas sent out a member of his family, telling him, 'See how far the rain has reached?' He found that it had reached only a short distance beyond his land."

Anas Dreams About the Prophet (PBBUH) Every Night

Anas (may Allah be pleased with him) continued to remember the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) throughout his life. He was extremely happy the day he met him (PBBUH), shed tears the day he parted from him, and frequently repeated his sayings. The two days he remembered most were: the day he met the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) for the first time, and the day he parted from him.

Anas would be delighted and elated whenever he related his first encounter with the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH). He would weep and sob, making those around him weep, whenever he related the last glances he took of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH).

He would often say: "I saw the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) the day he entered upon us. And I saw him the day he (PBBUH) was taken from us. I have seen nothing similar to these two days."

Because of the intensity of his love and deep connection with the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH), Anas would see him every night in his dreams. Anas said: "There is not a night in which I fall asleep without seeing my beloved one," and he shed tears.

The Final Chapter of Anas's Life

After a long life that lasted for a century, full of happiness and joy in the company of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH), and then full of sacrifice, service, and giving to others, Anas (may Allah be pleased with him) lay on his deathbed.

"Here Is Your Little Servant Unays!"

Anas had great hopes for the intercession of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) on the Day of Resurrection. He often said: "I hope to meet the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) on the Day of Resurrection and say to him: 'O Messenger of Allah, here is your little servant, Unays.[1]'"

A Personal Item of the Prophet (PBBUH) Is Buried Alongside Anas

When Anas felt his death approaching, he said to his family: "Remind me constantly while I am dying to say, 'There is no god but Allah, and Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah (i.e., the *Shahadah* or Testimony of Faith in Islam)'." He continued to repeat the *Shahadah* until his pure soul departed to its Creator.

Anas had instructed that a turban belonging to the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) be buried with him. It was placed between his side and his cloth (shroud).

Anas departed this world to the eternal abode of the Hereafter to join his beloved Teacher, whom he held in the highest regard and affection, the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH).

[1] A nickname used by the Prophet (PBBUH) to refer to Anas, meaning 'little Anas' or 'dear Anas' in Arabic, as a term of endearment and affection. Unays is a diminutive form of Anas, emphasizing kindness and closeness.

May Allah's Mercy and Blessings be upon you, O servant of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH).

May Allah be pleased with you and please you, O Anas ibn Malik.

6. Ja`far ibn Abu Talib

May Allah Be Pleased with Him

6. Ja`far ibn Abu Talib

Now, my dear readers, we are going to meet another outstanding figure among the virtuous Companions. He was an example of sacrifice and selfless service. He was the person who bore the closest resemblance to the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) in terms of physical appearance and character. The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) nicknamed him 'Father of the Poor' due to his deep compassion toward the poor. He was the flying martyr, the paternal cousin of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH), Ja`far ibn Abu Talib (may Allah be pleased with him).

Ja`far's Lineage and Upbringing

His full name was Ja`far ibn Abu Talib ibn `Abdu-Muttalib ibn `Abd Manaf. His father was Abu Talib, the paternal uncle of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) and the older brother of Imam `Ali ibn Abu Talib (may Allah be pleased with him). Despite his high status among Quraysh, his father, Abu Talib, was poor and had many children. His financial resources declined as he aged.

At that time, no one among Banu Hashim was more affluent than the Messenger of Allah (may Allah be pleased with him) and his paternal uncle, Al-`Abbas. The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) said to Al-`Abbas**: "Your brother Abu Talib has many children, and you see what has befallen people because of this crisis[1]. Let us go to him and relieve him of some of his dependents. I will take a young man, and you will take another young man, and take care of them for him."** They hurried to Abu Talib and presented the matter to him. He said to them: "Leave `Aqil (my eldest son), then do as you wish."

[1] Makkah was hit by a severe drought crisis.

The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) took `Ali, and Al-`Abbas took Ja`far, whom he placed among his own children. Ja`far stayed with his paternal uncle Al-`Abbas until he grew into a young man and started to depend upon himself.

Ja`far Embraces Islam and Faces Torture

When the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH), around the age of forty, started calling people to Islam after receiving his first revelation, Ja`far promptly responded and quickly joined the ranks of light. He embraced Islam through Abu Bakr Al-Siddiq. On the same day, his wife, Asma' bint `Umais, embraced Islam.

Their conversion to Islam occurred early, before the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) started to meet with his followers at the House of Al-Arqam. Al-Arqam served as a hiding place for early Muslims to have private meetings during the initial, secret phase of Islam.

The Hashemite youth and his wife suffered the same harm and torture from Quraysh as other Muslims.

Ja`far and His Wife Emigrate to Abyssinia

Because of the oppression and persecution carried out relentlessly by Quraysh against the believers in Allah and His Messenger, the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) ordered his Companions to emigrate to Abyssinia. Ja`far and his wife left Makkah with those who emigrated.

Quraysh Chase the Muslim Emigrants and Pressurize the Negus to Repatriate Them

Quraysh flew into a rage upon learning of the successful emigration and departure of this group of oppressed Muslims to Abyssinia. Their exasperation highly intensified at the prospect of Muslims gaining strength there and their numbers increasing, especially after they learned of the protection that the King of Abyssinia (the Negus) had extended to the Muslims. This protection would guarantee for them a safe and secure environment to live and practice their faith, without fear of harm, discrimination, or violence.

Thereupon, the Quraysh leaders decided to send two of their most powerful men to the Negus, bearing precious gifts in the hope they would expel these Muslims from his homeland and return them to the brutality and oppression of Quraysh.

These two representatives were `Amr ibn Al-`As and `Abdullah ibn Abu Rabi`ah, who were pagans at the time.

The Plan Devised by Quraysh to Recover the Muslim Emigrants

The Quraysh leaders instructed their representatives not to meet the Negus until they gave the gifts to the patriarchs, to win them to their side and ensure their assistance in persuading the Negus.

The two representatives arrived in Abyssinia, met the patriarchs, and spread the precious gifts they had brought before them. They proceeded to incite hatred against the Muslims and seek their help to compel the Negus to expel them from his country. The greatest fear which the two representatives of

Quraysh had was that the Muslims would speak and explain their faith before the Negus.

The Just Christian King

The two Qurayshi representatives, `Amr ibn Al-`As and `Abdullah ibn Abu Rabi`ah, appeared before the Negus after the patriarchs had agreed to advise the Negus to expel the Muslims from his land. They presented gifts to the Negus and then spoke to him, saying:

"O King, a group of our wicked youths have taken refuge in your land. They have brought a religion of their own invention that neither we nor you know. They have abandoned our religion and have not entered yours (Christianity). We have been sent to you, because of them, by the dignitaries of their people, from among their fathers, their uncles, and their clans, so that you may return them (these Muslim youths) to their people. They are most knowledgeable of the wrong attributed to them."

Here the King looked at his patriarchs, who said:

"They are right, O King. Their people are able to discern them the best and are most knowledgeable about what they have done. Therefore, hand them over to them so that they may decide what they think is most appropriate regarding them."

Here, the just Christian King became extremely angry at his patriarchs and said: "No, by Allah, I will not hand them over until I summon them and ask them about what has been attributed to them."

Ja`far: The Official Spokesman for the Muslims

The Negus sent a message to the Muslims, summoning them to meet him. The Muslim emigrants briefly convened before going to him and decided to adhere to their Islamic beliefs, whatever the consequences would be. They delegated Ja`far ibn Abu Talib to be the official spokesman who would represent them and communicate their views. Ja`far thus became the only authorized voice for that Muslim group; anyone else was not permitted to speak on their behalf.

This choice of Ja`far was due to his well-known tact, wisdom, knowledge, and eloquence.

The Historical Dialogue Between the Negus and Ja`far

The Muslims entered into the presence of the Negus and found him sitting on his throne with the patriarchs surrounding him, along with `Amr ibn Al-`As and `Abdullah ibn Abu Rabi`ah. A historical dialogue then took place between the Negus and the official spokesman for the Muslims, Ja`far ibn Abu Talib.

The Negus turned to the Muslims and said: "What is this religion that you have invented for yourselves by which you have departed from the religion of your people and have not entered my religion or the religion of any other (prevalent) creeds?"

Ja`far ibn Abu Talib stepped forward and said: "O King, we were a people living in ignorance. We used to worship idols, eat carrion, commit obscenities, sever family ties, mistreat our neighbors, and the strong among us preyed on

the weak. We remained like this until Allah sent to us a Messenger from among us, whose lineage, truthfulness, trustworthiness, and chastity we know."

Ja`far Gracefully Presents the Principles of Islam

Ja`far continued his talk, after presenting to the Negus a complete picture of their situation before Islam. He presented the principles of Islam, saying:

1. He (PBBUH) called us to Allah, to believe in His Oneness and worship Him alone, and to repudiate the stones and idols that we and our forefathers had been worshipping.

2. He (PBBUH) enjoined us to speak the truth, to restore that which is entrusted to us, to maintain the ties of kinship, to be good to our neighbors, and to refrain from forbidden acts and bloodshed. He prohibited us from all acts of immorality, uttering false testimony, appropriating the property of orphans, and slandering chaste women.

3. He (PBBUH) commanded us to worship Allah alone and not to associate anything with Him, and to offer prayer, give charity, and fast (Ramadan). So we affirmed his truthfulness, believed in him, and followed him in whatever he (PBBUH) brought from Allah. We treated as forbidden that which he (PBBUH) declared forbidden for us, and we treated as lawful that which he (PBBUH) declared lawful for us.

4. Because of this, O King, our people transgressed against us. They tortured us severely to tempt us away from our religion and revert us back to idol worship.

5. When they subjugated us, oppressed us, made life intolerable for us, and stood between us and our religion, our Prophet (PBBUH) ordered

> us to emigrate to your land, saying, **'There is a just king there.'** We came to your country and chose you over all others, desirous to live as your neighbors and hoping, O King, not to be wronged in your land.

Using such an elegant and calm tone, Ja`far (may Allah be pleased with him) presented Islam to the Negus with superb words that illuminated his soul. He said to Ja`far: "Do you have anything of what (revelations) your Prophet brought from Allah?" Ja`far replied: "Yes." He said: "Recite it to me." Ja`far proceeded to recite, with a sweet and humble voice, some ayahs from the beginning of Surah Maryam: ﴿Kaf, Ha, Ya, `Ayn, Sad. (This is) a mention of the mercy of your Lord to His slave Zakariya (Zachariah). When he called to his Lord in secret﴾ (translated meaning of Maryam 19:1-3). Ja`far continued until he reached: ﴿And peace be on him (Prophet Yahya) the day he was born, the day he dies, and the day he will be raised up to life (again)!﴾ (translated meaning of Maryam 19:15).

The Negus wept, and all his patriarchs wept with him. When his abundant tears stopped, he turned to Ja`far and the Muslims who were surrounding him and said: "By Allah, what your Prophet (PBBUH) brought and what `Isa (Jesus, PBBUH) brought emanate from the same lamp." Then he turned to the two Qurayshi envoys, `Amr and his companion, and said to them; "Go, for by Allah I will never hand them over to you."

A Last, Desperate Attempt to Recover the Muslim Emigrants

Everyone dispersed after Allah had given victory and support to His slaves. The Qurayshi representatives suffered a humiliating defeat. Yet `Amr ibn Al-`As, who was shrewd, resourceful, and ingenious in handling challenging situations and problems, refused to accept defeat or give in to despair. He said to his companion: "By Allah, I will go to the king tomorrow and expose to him

something about them that will uproot them." `Abdullah ibn Rabi`ah, the more pious of the two men, said: "Do not do that, for they are related to us, even if they have opposed us," to which `Amr ibn Al-`As replied: "By Allah, I will tell him that they claim that `Isa (Jesus PBBUH), son of Maryam (Mary), was merely a slave of Allah."

The next day, `Amr went to the Negus and said: "O King, these people you have sheltered are saying terrible things about `Isa, son of Maryam. Summon them and ask them what they say about him."

The Negus summoned the Muslims once again. When they learned of this new plot, they were overcome with distress like never before. They sat down to consult about what to say about `Isa, son of Maryam. They agreed to say only what Allah Almighty had said and what His Messenger (PBBUH) had brought, and let whatever would happen, happen. They also agreed that Ja`far ibn Abu Talib would speak on their behalf.

The assembly convened again in the presence of the Negus. Once the group of Muslim emigrants arrived, the Negus immediately asked them: "What do you say about `Isa, son of Maryam?" The representative of the Muslims, Ja`far ibn Abu Talib, replied: "We only say about him what our Prophet (PBBUH) has brought concerning him. He is Allah's slave, His Messenger, a spirit created by Him, and His word ('Be!'—and he was) which He sent down to Maryam the virgin, the chaste."

The Negus, on hearing Ja`far's words, picked up a straw from the ground and said: "By Allah, `Isa, the son of Maryam, is not more than what you have said, not even as much as this straw."

This was a clear declaration from the Negus that this was the same thing Christ had said about himself. Voices rose from the ranks of patriarchs around him in disapproval of what they had heard.

The Negus proceeded, with disregard to the patriarchs' disapproval, and turned his attention to the Muslims, to whom he said: "Go, for you are safe and secure in my land. Whoever insults or harms you will incur loss (a penalty). Not for a mountain of gold would I harm a single one of you." Then he turned to his entourage and said to them, pointing to the two Qurayshi envoys: "Return their gifts to them, for I have no need of them."

`Amr and his companion left for Makkah, broken and defeated, dragging tails of disappointment and disgrace.

Valuable Lessons from the Way Ja`far Presented Islam to the Negus

This elegant conversation in which Ja`far ibn Abu Talib (may Allah be pleased with him) presented Islam to the Negus has proficiency that inspires, enlightens, and captivates us. We need to stop a little and reflect upon Ja`far's presentation of Islam through its core beliefs, practices and background, as it serves as an important reference for every preacher of Islam in every time and place. His presentation revolves around the following aspects:

1. Highlighting the shortcomings of the pre-Islamic era and the corrupt conditions in which people lived before Islam. "We were a people living in ignorance. We used to worship idols…"

2. Introducing the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) and some of his distinctive characteristics. "Allah sent to us a Messenger from among us, whose lineage, truthfulness, trustworthiness, and chastity we know…"

3. Presenting the key principles or the fundamentals of Islam:

a. Creed: "He (PBBUH) called us to Allah, to believe in His Oneness, and to worship Him alone…"

b. Transactions: "He (PBBUH) enjoined us to speak the truth, to restore that which is entrusted to us…"

c. Acts of Worship: "He (PBBUH) commanded us to worship Allah alone and not to associate anything with Him, and to offer prayer, give charity…"

4. Exposing the injustice and oppression Muslims were subjected to because of their conversion to Islam. "Because of this, O King, our people transgressed against us…"

5. Praising the Negus genuinely, without any pretense. "Our Prophet (PBBUH) ordered us to emigrate to your land, saying: **'There is a just king there…'"**

6. Reciting the beginning of Surah Maryam was a shrewd and successful choice on the part of Ja`far, when the Negus asked him to recite a sample of the revelations that the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) received from Allah (Exalted be He). It mentions the story of Zakariya (Zachariah, PBBUH) and Yahya (John, PBBUH), the two Prophets who were contemporaries of `Isa (PBBUH). There is no difference between the account given by the Torah and that given by the Qur'an concerning them. Therefore, as soon as the Negus heard these ayahs, he wept until his beard became wet with tears—as mentioned earlier.

How much we need such a clear and graceful style of preaching Islam today, especially with the tribulations and challenges facing the nation nowadays.

Ja`far Returns to Madinah After Ten Years

Ja`far (may Allah be pleased with him) and his wife, Asma' bint `Umais, spent ten years under the protection of the Negus, living safely and securely and worshipping Allah (Exalted be He) without restrictions or the former oppression put on them by the disbelievers of Quraysh. During this period of well-being, Allah blessed them with three sons: Muhammad, `Abdullah, and `Awf.

The Muslim emigrants in Abyssinia closely followed the events taking place in Makkah. They heard about the emigration of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) and the Muslims to Madinah. They were delighted by the victory that the Muslims achieved at Badr, and they were also pleased by the Hudaibiyah Treaty and the parity that it created between Quraysh and the Muslims.

The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) saw no reason for the Muslims to remain in Abyssinia any longer, given that conditions had changed for the better. He (PBBUH) sent a message to the Negus asking him to permit the Muslims there to return. The Negus sent them back on two ships. They landed at the port of Yanbu` and then traveled to Madinah.

Which is More Joyful: The Victory of Khaybar or the Arrival of Ja`far?

Ja`far (may Allah be pleased with him) returned to Madinah, his feet racing with feelings of longing to see the beloved Prophet (PBBUH), who was on his way back from the Victory of Khaybar. The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) was no less delighted and happy than Ja`far was. Once the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) saw him, he (PBBUH) embraced him and said: **"By Allah, I do not**

know which one I am happier with: the victory of Khaybar or the arrival of Ja`far?"[1]

The Father of the Poor

The joy of Muslims in general, and the poor in particular, at Ja`far's return was no less than the joy of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH). Ja`far was extremely compassionate and kind to the poor and weak people, so much so that he was nicknamed 'Father of the Poor'. Abu Hurairah narrated: "The best of people to us, the poor ones, was Ja`far ibn Abu Talib. He would take us to his house and feed us with whatever he had. When he did not have any food, he would bring out for us a small sack of ghee (or honey), which was empty. We would split it open and lick whatever was inside."

[1] Reported by Al-Hakim in *Al-Mustadrak*, hadith no. 4931.

The Final Chapter of Ja`far's Life

Ja`far Yearns for *Jihad* (Fighting in Allah's Cause) and Martyrdom

Ja`far (may Allah be pleased with him) reunited with the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) after an absence of ten years. After this reunion, Ja`far accompanied the Prophet (PBBUH) throughout his travels. The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) and his Companions, along with Ja`far, set out for Makkah, where they performed '*Umrat-ul-Qada*' (Compensatory `Umrah performed instead of the `Umrah the Prophet, PBBUH, was prevented from completing), and then returned to Madinah.

Ja`far's soul was filled with awe at what he heard of his believing brothers who had fought with the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) at Badr, Uhud, and other battles.

His eyes overflowed with tears for those who had died as righteous martyrs. Their stories made him eager to fight in Allah's Cause and attain martyrdom.

The Battle of Mu'tah

The intensity of Ja`far's longing for martyrdom did not diminish over time. Fortunately, he did not have to wait long, for it was time for the Battle of Mu'tah—which has been previously recounted in detail.[1]

The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) prepared an army to fight the Byzantines in the Levant. He appointed Zayd ibn Harithah over the Muslim soldiers, saying: **"If Zayd is killed, then Ja`far ibn Abu Talib (should assume the leadership of the army). If Ja`far is killed, then `Abdullah ibn Rawahah. If**

[1] Please see the biography of Khalid ibn Al-Walid.

`Abdullah is killed, then let the Muslims agree upon a man from among them and appoint him as their commander." The Muslim army, numbering three thousand, advanced until they reached Mu'tah. There, they found the Byzantines had prepared one hundred thousand fighters, backed by another hundred thousand from their supporting Arab tribes.

The [unequal] battle began, and the two armies met. Zayd ibn Harithah was wounded and fell a martyr.

Ja`far Displays Exceptional Heroism and Courage

The Muslim standard was about to fall from Zayd's right hand when Ja`far grabbed it and continued fighting with extraordinary courage. More and more Byzantine fighters came against him. Ja`far felt his horse was hindering his movement. He dismounted and hamstrung it—that is, he struck its back legs with his sword—so that it would be of no use to the enemies after his death.

Amazed at the strength of Ja`far who fought as though he was an army, the Byzantines surrounded him, determined to kill him. They struck his right hand with their swords, cutting it off. Before the standard could fall to the ground, Ja`far caught it with his left. They struck his left hand, cutting it off. He embraced the standard with his chest and upper arms.

At that moment, Ja`far's sole concern was to ensure that the standard of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) would not touch the ground while he was alive. He continued fighting despite having multiple injuries until he obtained what he earnestly desired: martyrdom. When Ja`far fell as a martyr, the standard's pole was planted in his upper arms; it remained raised and fluttering until `Abdullah ibn Rawahah took it.

`Abdullah ibn `Umar narrated: "I was with Ja`far in Mu'tah. We searched for him and found on his body more than ninety wounds caused by spear thrusts and sword blows, none of which were on his back."[1]

The Flying Martyr

Back in Madinah, before any news arrived from the battlefield, the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) announced the death of the three leaders he (PBBUH) had assigned to run the battle. While standing on the pulpit, he (PBBUH) said: **"Shall I inform you about your army that set out in Allah's Cause? They have set off until they encountered the enemy. Zayd was martyred, so seek forgiveness for him. Then Ja`ar ibn Abu Talib took the standard and fought the enemy bravely until he was also martyred. I bear witness to his martyrdom, so seek forgiveness for him. Then `Abdullah ibn Rawahah took the standard and stood his ground until he was also martyred. So seek forgiveness for him. Then Khalid ibn Al-Walid took the standard. Although he was not among the commanders, he put himself in command,"** and the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) raised both his fingers and said: "**O Allah, he is one of Your swords. Grant him victory.**"[2]

The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) further said: **"I saw Ja`far flying in Paradise with the angels."**[3] Since then Ja`far ibn Abu Talib was known as the 'Flying Martyr.'

[1] All Ja`far's wounds were on the front of his body, indicating he did not turn his back to the enemy due to his outstanding bravery and steadfastness in the battle.

[2] Reported in *Siyar A`lam Al-Nubala'* by Imam Al-Dhahabi.

[3] Reported by Al-Tirmidhi, hadith no. 3763.

The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) Grieves Over Ja`far

The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) went to his paternal cousin's house. When he (PBBUH) approached them, his cousin's wife, Asma' bint `Umais, noticed sadness on the Prophet's (PBBUH) face. After he (PBBUH) greeted them, he said: **"Bring me Ja`far's children."** They rushed towards him happily and began to crowd around him, each one wanting to have his whole attention. The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) embraced them and began to smell them, his eyes shedding tears.

Asma' said to him: "O Messenger of Allah, may my father and mother be sacrificed for you, what makes you weep? Did you hear anything about Ja`far and his two companions?" He (PBBUH) replied: **"Yes, they were martyred today."** She wept intensely, and her children wept as well.

The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) departed, wiping his tears away and supplicating: **"O Allah, replace Ja`far in his family** (i.e., take care of them after his death)**."** He (PBBUH) also said: **"Do not neglect to prepare food for the family of Ja`far, for they are preoccupied with the affairs of their companion** (the affliction of his death)**."**[1]

The Striking Similarity Between Mus`ab ibn `Umair and Ja`far ibn Abu Talib

We are astounded by the similarity, or rather the identicalness, between these two noble Companions: Mus`ab ibn `Umair and Ja`far ibn Abu Talib.

They are similar to each other in several aspects:

[1] Reported by Ahmad in his Musnad, hadith no. 26546.

1. Their appearance and character bore close resemblance to the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH).

2. Both possessed masterful eloquence, characterized by fluency, elegance, and persuasiveness, and a captivating style of discourse.

Mus`ab ibn `Umair was the first ambassador of Islam, and through his refined style of preaching, the people of Madinah embraced Islam before the Prophet (PBBUH) emigrated there. Similarly, the style that Ja`far ibn Abu Talib used in presenting Islam to the Negus fully convinced the Negus and caused the dismissal of the Qurayshi envoys.

3. Both were martyred in the same way.

Mus`ab was the standard-bearer at Uhud. His right hand was cut off, so he carried the standard with his left hand. Then his left hand was cut off, so he carried it with his upper arms until he was martyred. The same happened to Ja`far when he was the standard-bearer at Mu'tah. His right hand was cut off, so he carried the standard with his left hand. Then his left hand was cut off, so he carried it with his upper arms until he was martyred.

4. Both were martyred in their thirties.

What a coincidence! Allah orchestrated it perfectly, and only He knows its purpose and significance.

And so, my dear readers, after a life of short years (only thirty-three years), but marked by significant accomplishments, the life of this hero ended in the best way. He joined the company of the righteous and the honorable martyrs.

May Allah's Mercy and Blessings be upon you, O Flying Martyr.

O Father of the Poor.

May Allah be pleased with you and please you, O Ja`far ibn Abu Talib.

7. Abu Hurairah

May Allah Be Pleased with Him

7. Abu Hurairah

Now, my dear readers, let us enjoy the company of a precious guest among this rich and varied fragrant bouquet of the 'Honorable Companions'. Our guest was the memory that vividly preserved the era of divine revelation and prophethood. He was the Imam, the diligent jurist, the hadith memorizer, and the Companion of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH)—Abu Hurairah.

He is the most frequently mentioned Companion. Not a day passes without us hearing or reading the famous phrase: "On the authority of Abu Hurairah (may Allah be pleased with him) who narrated that the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) said..."

Let us live with this noble Companion who possessed a distinctive aptitude for memorization that enabled him to learn and recall information easily and accurately. Abu Hurairah, due to his powerful and exceptional memory, is the man most capable of transporting us back to the days of revelation and the companionship of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH).

Abu Hurairah's Lineage

His full name was `Abd Shams (which the Messenger of Allah, PBBUH, changed to `Abdul-Rahman [slave of the Most Merciful]) ibn Sakhr Al-Dawsi Al-Yamani. His nickname was 'Abu Hurairah' [meaning, 'Father of the Kitten'] because, from the time he was a child, he was affectionate with animals. When he was young, he had a small cat that he would feed, clean, and always carry, so his peers began calling him 'Abu Hurairah'.

Abu Hurairah Embraces Islam

Abu Hurairah embraced Islam at the hands of Tufayl ibn `Amr Al-Dawsi, after which he remained in the land of his people, the Daws, for six years until he and a group of his people came to meet the Prophet (PBBUH) in Madinah. This took place after the Battle of Khaybar.

Abu Hurairah's Mother Replies with Rejection after Rejection Before Accepting Islam

As soon as Abu Hurairah set foot in Madinah, he devoted his entire time to keeping company with the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH). He continuously remained with him, like a shadow that follows the light. He was immensely blessed by this companionship. However, one problem tormented him: his mother. Abu Hurairah would constantly invite her to Islam out of compassion and filial duty toward her. But every time, she turned him down. He would leave her, his heart filled with sadness. One day, Abu Hurairah invited her to Islam, but she refused. Not only that, but she also said something bad about the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH). Extremely saddened and hurt by this, Abu Hurairah went to the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) weeping.

Abu Hurairah described this incident in his own words as follows: "I came to the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) weeping and said, 'O Messenger of Allah, I have been inviting my mother to Islam, but she persistently refuses. Today, I invited her, but she said to me something about you that I disliked. Kindly supplicate Allah to guide Abu Hurairah's mother.' Consequently, the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) said, **'O Allah, guide Abu Hurairah's mother.'"**

Abu Hurairah continued narrating: "I went out, feeling optimistic because of the supplication of the Prophet of Allah (PBBUH). When I came near her

door, I found it closed. My mother heard my footsteps and said, 'Stay where you are, O Abu Hurairah!' I heard the sound of water cascading downwards. She was performing *Ghusl* (full bath). She put on her garment but was in too much of a hurry to put on her head covering. She opened the door and said, 'O Abu Hurairah, I bear witness that there is no god except Allah and that Muhammad is His servant and Messenger.' I ran back to the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH), weeping with joy. I said, 'Rejoice, O Messenger of Allah, Allah has answered your supplication and guided Abu Hurairah's mother.' He (PBBUH) praised Allah, extolled Him, and uttered good words."[1]

"Make My Mother and I Beloved to His Believing Servants"

Abu Hurairah said: "'O Messenger of Allah, supplicate Allah to make my mother and I beloved to His believing servants, and to make them beloved to us.' The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) said, **'O Allah, make this servant of Yours'**—meaning Abu Hurairah—**'and his mother beloved to Your believing servants, and make the believers beloved to them.'**"[2]

Indeed, Allah (Exalted be He) answered the supplication of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH), and Abu Hurairah has become beloved by every believing man and woman until the Day of Judgment.

[1] Reported by Muslim, hadith no. 2491.
[2] Reported by Muslim, hadith no. 2491.

The Remarkable Deeds That Abu Hurairah Accomplished

Abu Hurairah enjoyed the benefits and blessings of constant companionship with the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH). During the day, Abu Hurairah would stay near the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH), only separating to sleep. He resided in the mosque with the 'People of the *Suffah*'[1]. Through continuous learning and interaction over time, Abu Hurairah acquired a wealth of valuable knowledge from the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH), which developed hour by hour and day by day.

Abu Hurairah discerned, through his sound instinct, the great role he could play in serving Allah's religion. There were many heroic fighters among the Companions, as well as many jurists and preachers. However, the environment and community lacked books and scholars. Abu Hurairah realized that the new society that Islam was building needed those who would preserve its legacy and teachings.

Four Years, so Impactful and Fruitful That They Equal an Entire Lifetime

Abu Hurairah spent only four years in the company of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH), from the time of his arrival in Madinah until the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) passed away. Despite their brevity, these four years were a lifetime in themselves, holding immense significance and profound experience.

[1] *Al-Suffah*: Literally, the shaded place. It was a roofed section in the back portion of the Prophet's Mosque in which the poor homeless Emigrants could find shelter and live. The inhabitants of it became known as the 'People of the *Suffah'*. All needy emigrants stayed there and were kindly provided for by the Muslim community.

They were long and broad, filled with every righteous word and deed and attentive listening.

Driven by a deep sense of care and commitment, Abu Hurairah became one of the Companions who narrated the most hadith from the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH). His dedication to learning and memorizing resulted in a vast collection of hadith which continues, to this day, to be passed down from generation to generation. This ongoing process of transferring hadith shall continue to the Day of Judgment. Not a day passes without us hearing the name of Abu Hurairah (may Allah be pleased with him). His life leaves us with the important lesson that true value lies in sincere work, genuineness, and dedication, rather than precedence in terms of years.

A Lifelong Journey in Pursuit of Knowledge

Now, my dear readers, let us connect with the knowledge journey of this eminent Companion to learn from and be inspired by his path. Let us see how he exerted tremendous effort and accomplished glorious work in a remarkably short time.

What is the Best Way to Use My Abilities to Serve Allah's Religion?

As mentioned earlier, Abu Hurairah, due to his keen intuition, realized the need for someone to preserve the legacy of Islam. He was aware that he had joined the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) late, but he resolved to make up for what he had missed by constantly following and sitting with the Messenger (PBBUH). He also recognized the vast and powerful memory that Allah had blessed him with. Its vastness was further enhanced by the Prophet's (PBBUH) supplication that Allah would bless it for him, as will be explained later. Abu

Hurairah devoted himself to observing all the Prophet's sayings and actions, memorizing them in his vast memory to accurately transmit them to others.

Accordingly, my dear readers, each of us must examine themselves and ask: How can I serve my religion? What unique abilities or talents has Allah bestowed upon me? How can I employ them in the service of Allah's religion?

Abu Hurairah Devotes Every Fiber of His Life to Serving the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH)

Abu Hurairah had no private occupations, such as a business to run or a land to tend, so he was completely devoted to serving the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH). His love for the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) mingled with his flesh and blood. He would never become tired of looking at him; he would often say: "I have never seen anything more beautiful or brighter than the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH), as though the sun runs (shines) over his face." He thanked Allah for his companionship with the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH), saying: "All praise be to Allah Who taught Abu Hurairah the Qur'an. All praise be to Allah Who blessed Abu Hurairah with the companionship of Muhammad (PBBUH)."

Abu Hurairah's Insatiable Passion for Knowledge and Learning

Just as Abu Hurairah was passionate about the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH), he was passionate about knowledge and learning. He was keen to observe the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH), as mentioned earlier, focusing on everything he (PBBUH) said and did as well as the manner in which he (PBBUH) did it. Abu Hurairah memorized all the Prophet's words, actions, and behaviors, and transmitted them to others.

For example, Abu Hurairah noticed that, during prayer, the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) remained silent for a short while and kept quiet after uttering the opening *Takbir* to start prayer and before beginning the recitation of Al-Fatihah. Abu Hurairah asked him about this, and he (PBBUH) replied: **"I say: O Allah, separate us from our sins as You have separated the East from the West."** Thus, we learned this supplication from the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) due to Abu Hurairah's passion for knowledge and learning.

The Prophet (PBBUH) Testifies to Abu Hurairah's Eagerness for Knowledge

The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) himself testified to Abu Hurairah's eagerness for knowledge and learning. Abu Hurairah narrated: "I asked the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH), 'Who will be the people most blessed with your intercession on the Day of Resurrection?' He (PBBUH) said, **'I thought, O Abu Hurairah, that no one would ask me about this before you, because I have seen how keen you are in acquiring hadith. The people who will be most blessed with my intercession on the Day of Resurrection are those who say '*La ilaha illa Allah* [There is no god except Allah] sincerely from the heart.'"**[1]

The Hardships Abu Hurairah Endured in Pursuit of Knowledge

Abu Hurairah's zealous pursuit of knowledge was not an easy endeavor. He suffered from hunger and harsh living conditions more than anyone else because of his full devotion to learning and gaining knowledge and his diligent effort to be present at every gathering of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH).

[1] Reported by Al-Bukhari, hadith no. 99.

Abu Hurairah spoke of his hunger, saying: "I used to ask a man from among the Companions of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) about an ayah, even though I knew it, for him to accompany me to his house and feed me a handful of dates or some barley porridge to satisfy my hunger."

"What Good Will This (Little) Milk Do to the People of *Suffah*?"[1]

Abu Hurairah narrated: "I would tie a stone to my stomach due to hunger. One day, I sat in the path along which the Companions used to come out. Abu Bakr passed by me, so I asked him about an ayah in Allah's Book. I only asked him for him to invite me [to his house], but he did not invite me. Then `Umar ibn Al-Khattab passed by me, so I asked him about an ayah in Allah's Book, but he did not invite me either. Then Abul-Qasim (the Prophet, PBBUH) passed by me. He (PBBUH) smiled when he saw me and said, **'Abu Hurairah?'** I said, 'At your service, O Messenger of Allah.' I followed him and entered the house with him.

"He (PBBUH) found a cup of milk there. He (PBBUH) asked his family, **'Where did this come from?'** They replied, 'So-and-so sent it (as a gift) to you.' He (PBBUH) said, 'O Abu Hurairah, go to the people of *Suffah* (place of shelter at the back of the Prophet's Mosque to which the poor resorted) and invite them.' I was dismayed by his sending me to invite them. I said to myself, 'What good will this (little amount of) milk do to the people of *Suffah*?' I hoped to get a drink of it to strengthen myself and then go to them.

[1] The quote refers to a specific incident involving a small quantity of milk given as a gift to the Prophet (PBBUH). The Prophet (PBBUH), instead of consuming it himself, shared the milk with the poor people of *Suffah*. Miraculously, the small amount of milk was sufficient to satisfy the hunger of all those present. The event is seen as a demonstration of Allah's Blessing and Abundance, as well as a lesson in sharing and generosity. It emphasizes the importance of faith and trust in Allah's Provision.

"However, there was no alternative but to obey Allah and His Messenger; I went to the people of *Suffah* and invited them, and they responded. When they sat down with the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH), he said, '**Take the cup, O Abu Hurairah, and give them some.**' I began to give some to each man, who would drink until he was satisfied, until they had all drunk their fill. I handed the cup to the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH). He (PBBUH) raised his head, smiling, and said, '**You and I are left.**' I said, 'You have spoken the truth, O Messenger of Allah.' He (PBBUH) said, '**Then drink.**' I drank. Then he (PBBUH) said, '**Drink** (**more**),' so I drank (more). He (PBBUH) kept saying, '**Drink,**' and I kept drinking until I said, 'By Him Who has sent you with the truth, I have no more space for it.' Therefore, the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) took the cup and drank some of the remainder."[1]

Some narrations state that the number of the people of *Suffah* exceeded four hundred. This is one of the miracles of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH), and there are many like this.[2]

Abu Hurairah did not ask people for anything. He said about himself: "No one among the people would give me a gift without me accepting it. As for asking, I would never ask [anyone for anything]."

Abu Hurairah (may Allah be pleased with him) worked as a laborer for a woman called Busrah bint Ghazwan, and his payment was a quantity of food enough to satisfy his hunger.

[1] Reported by Al-Tirmidhi, hadith no. 2477.

[2] Please see the Battle of the Trench, *A Biography of the Best Man in Creation*, by the author.

The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) Supplicates Allah That Abu Hurairah Never Forgets a Hadith

Because of the dedication and perseverance shown by Abu Hurairah as well the pain and challenges he experienced in his pursuit of knowledge, Allah (Glorified be He) bestowed this special gift and favor upon him and he attained the supplication of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) for him. He (PBBUH) requested Allah that Abu Hurairah be granted a strong memory [to remember details, facts, and experiences with clarity and precision].

Zayd ibn Thabit narrated: "Abu Hurairah, one of my companions, and I were in the mosque supplicating Allah and remembering Him. Then the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) appeared before us and approached us until he sat between us. We remained silent, so he (PBBUH) said, **'Return to what you were doing.'** My companion and I supplicated Allah first, before Abu Hurairah, and the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) responded to our supplication by saying **'Amen.'**

"Abu Hurairah then supplicated, saying, 'O Allah, I ask You for what my companions asked You for, and I ask You for enduring knowledge.' The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) said, **'Amen.'** We said, 'We too, O Messenger of Allah, ask Allah for enduring knowledge.' He (PBBUH) said, **'The young Dawsi man (i.e., Abu Hurairah) has preceded you to it.'**"[1]

"I Have Never Forgotten Anything After That"

Abu Hurairah narrated: "I said, 'O Messenger of Allah, I hear many hadiths from you and then forget them.' He (PBBUH) said, **'Spread out your garment.'**

[1] Reported by Al-Tabarani in *Al-Mu`jam Al-Awsat*, hadith no. 1228.

I spread it out. The Prophet (PBBUH) scooped something with his hand and then said, '**Wrap it round** [**you**]' so I wrapped it round my body, and since then I have never forgotten any of his hadith.'"[1]

According to another narration, Abu Hurairah said: "By the One Who has sent him (PBBUH) with the truth, I have never forgotten anything of his statements to this day."

The Companion Who Memorized the Most Hadiths

Abu Hurairah (may Allah be pleased with him) devoted himself and his powerful memory to memorizing hadiths. He was one of the Companions who narrated the most hadiths. He narrated more than three thousand hadiths.

Abu Hurairah said about himself: "There is no one among the Companions of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) who narrated more hadiths than me, except for `Abdullah ibn `Amr. [This is] because he writes, and I do not."

Imam Al-Bukhari said: "Nearly eight hundred or more of the Companions, Followers (the generation after the Prophet's Companions), and scholars transmitted hadiths on the authority of Abu Hurairah."

Thus, Abu Hurairah was a great school destined to last and continue illuminating the path over time.

[1] Reported by Al-Bukhari, hadith no. 3648.

The Secret That Helped Abu Hurairah Outshine Others as a Hadith Narrator

After the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) passed away, Abu Hurairah kept on narrating various and numerous hadiths, which led some of the Companions to marvel at the profound number of hadith he narrated, even though he had only accompanied the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) for four years. They would ask: "How did he (Abu Hurairah) acquire all these hadiths? When did he hear and learn them?" Abu Hurairah shed light on this unique ability, revealing the secret of this gift that Allah (Glorified be He) had bestowed upon him.

Abu Hurairah said: "You say, 'Abu Hurairah narrates many hadith from the Prophet (PBBUH)' and you also say (wonder), 'Why do the Muhajirun (the Emigrants from Makkah) and the Ansar (the Supporters of the Prophet from the local inhabitants of Madinah), who preceded him to Islam, not narrate these hadiths?' In fact, my Muhajirun brothers were occupied with their trade, and my Ansar brothers were occupied with their lands. I was poor, and I used to keep company with the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH), content with what fills my stomach. I was present when they were absent, and I memorized when they forgot.

"By Allah, were it not for an ayah in Allah's Book, I would never have told you anything: ﴿Indeed, those who conceal what We (Allah) sent down of clear proofs and guidance after We made it clear for the people in the Scripture—those are cursed by Allah and cursed by the cursers. Except for those who repent and correct themselves and make evident [what they concealed]. Those—I will accept their repentance, and I am the Accepting of repentance, the Most Merciful﴾ (translated meaning of Al-Baqarah 2:159-160)."

In this way, Abu Hurairah explained the specific qualities, potentials, and the combination of factors that contributed to his outshining others as a prolific hadith narrator. Briefly, they can be summarized as:

First: Fully dedicating himself to the company of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH).

Second: Possessing a strong memory, which the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) blessed, increasing its power.

Third: Conveying hadiths as a duty; otherwise, he would be concealing goodness and truth.

Caliph Marwan ibn Al-Hakam Tests Abu Hurairah's Memory

Abu Hurairah maintained a strong memory for as long as he lived. One day, Caliph Marwan ibn Al-Hakam wanted to test Abu Hurairah's memory capabilities. He invited him to sit with him and asked him to narrate some hadiths to him. He told a scribe to secretly sit behind a curtain and record his narrations in order to see if Abu Hurairah could remember them later. He ordered his scribe to write down everything Abu Hurairah said.

A year later, Marwan ibn Al-Hakam invited Abu Hurairah again and asked him to recite the same hadiths that his scribe had written down. Abu Hurairah recalled them all accurately, without forgetting a single word.

Abu Hurairah's Method of *Da`wah* (Calling People to Allah)

Just as Abu Hurairah loved to have knowledge, he loved for others to have it as well. He used his knowledge with love to build up and edify others. He wanted his brothers to be as keen on seeking and conveying knowledge as he

was. Therefore, he devised new and beneficial methods for calling people to Allah.

One day, Abu Hurairah passed by the marketplace of Madinah and found the people there busy buying and selling. He feared that worldly pursuits would turn them away from seeking knowledge. He stood before them and said: "How helpless you are, O people of Madinah!" They asked him: "Why do you see us as helpless, O Abu Hurairah?" He replied: "The inheritance that the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) left behind is being divided, and you are here! Why do you not go and take your share [of inheritance]?" They asked him: "Where is it, O Abu Hurairah?" He replied: "At the mosque."

The people left quickly, and Abu Hurairah waited for them until they returned. When they saw him, they said: "O Abu Hurairah, we went to the mosque and entered it, but we did not find anything being divided." Abu Hurairah said to them: "Did you not see anyone in the mosque?" They replied: "Yes, we saw some people praying, some people reciting the Qur'an, and some people discussing what is *Halal* (lawful) and what is *Haram* (unlawful)." Abu Hurairah said to them: "May Allah be merciful to you! This is the inheritance left by your Prophet (PBBUH)."

The Islamic preachers should be the same, always innovating new methods for preaching Islam, always searching for everything creative and employing it in the service of *Da`wah*.

The Outstanding Deeds and Virtues of Abu Hurairah

1. Abu Hurairah's Strong Memory and Insatiable Passion for Knowledge

The most prominent characteristic of Abu Hurairah (may Allah be pleased with him) was his zealous passion for knowledge and learning and his exceptional memory capabilities with which Allah had endowed him. His brilliant memory was further reinforced by the supplication of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) for him, as was mentioned earlier.

2. Abu Hurairah's Consistent Worship and Deep Commitment

- Abu Hurairah was a devoted worshiper. He would fast during the day and take turns in praying at night with his wife and his daughter. He would pray for a third of the night, then wake his wife for the second third, and finally wake her daughter for the final third. Thus, not a single hour of the night passed without Abu Hurairah's household being occupied with worship, remembrance, and prayer.

- Because Abu Hurairah knew that the blood money for a murdered person was twelve thousand dirhams, he would recite twelve thousand glorifications every day, saying: "I glorify Allah as much as my blood money, so that I may be freed from the Fire."

3. Abu Hurairah's Kindness to His Mother and His Eagerness to Promote Kindness to Parents

Abu Hurairah was extremely kind to his mother. His filial piety was so strong that he was highly keen to guide her. He asked the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) to make a special supplication, asking Allah Almighty to guide his mother to Islam. Her heart eventually softened, and she embraced Islam as was recounted earlier.

Abu Hurairah remained kind and dutiful to his mother throughout his life. Whenever he wanted to leave the house, he would stand at the door of her room and say: "May Allah's Peace, Mercy, and Blessings be upon you, O my mother." She would reply: "May Allah's Peace, Mercy, and Blessings be upon you too, O my son." He would say: "May Allah bestow mercy on you as you raised me when I was little." She would reply: "May Allah bestow mercy on you as you have been dutiful to me when I am old." When Abu Hurairah returned home, he would do the same.

His kindness and appreciation toward parents were not limited to his mother; he was also extremely keen to urge people to be kind to their parents and to uphold family ties.

One day, Abu Hurairah saw two men walking together, one of whom was older than the other. He asked the younger of the two: "How is this man related to you?" He replied: "He is my father." Abu Hurairah advised him: "Do not call him by his name. Do not walk in front of him. Do not sit before he does."

How much we need nowadays to teach our children these sublime principles and morals! When our young respect our elders and our elders show

compassion to our young, as the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) taught us, the nation will be upright and its condition will improve.

4. Abu Hurairah's Humility and Lightheartedness

- When the Muslims experienced overflowing blessings and plentiful grace, provision, and favor, Abu Hurairah acquired wealth, a home, and belongings. He had a wife and children. However, all this did not change his inherent noble character and good nature in the least, nor did it make him forget his past. Rather, it increased his humility and gratitude to Allah for the blessings He had abundantly bestowed upon him.

- Abu Hurairah said about himself: "I grew up as an orphan, and I emigrated as a poor person. I was a hired hand for Busrah bint Ghazwan, who provided me with food as a wage. I would serve the people when they dismounted, and I would lead their camels when they mounted. Then Allah married me to her. She is now my wife," referring to Busrah, whom he served and who became his wife.

- Abu Hurairah led the people in prayer one day. After offering *Taslim* (salutation of peace ending the prayer), he raised his voice and said: "Praise be to Allah Who made the religion firm and made Abu Hurairah an imam."

- Abu Hurairah was appointed governor of Madinah by Caliph Mu`awiyah ibn Abu Sufyan. This position altered nothing of his lenient nature and sense of humor. Once, while he was governor, Abu Hurairah was passing through a narrow alley, carrying a load of firewood on his back for his family. On the way, he passed by

Tha`labah ibn Malik and said to him: "O Ibn Malik, make way for the governor." Tha`labah said to him: "May Allah be merciful to you! All this space is not enough for you?" Abu Hurairah replied with a smile: "Make way for the governor and for the bundle of sticks on his back."

5. Abu Hurairah's Asceticism and Generosity

- Abu Hurairah (may Allah be pleased with him) focused on eternal values and never desired any of the fleeting worldly possessions. He lived his life as a devout worshiper, a keen ascetic, an ardent striver, and a passionate seeker of knowledge. When he was entrusted with leadership, he would accept it reluctantly and with fear, knowing that it was a duty, not an honor.

- His daughter said to him: "O my father, the girls taunt me, saying, 'Why does your father not adorn you with gold?'" Abu Hurairah said to her: "O my daughter, tell them: 'My father fears for me the heat of the Fire [meaning the heat of Hellfire].'"

- Abu Hurairah's refusal to give jewelry to his daughter was not because he was stingy or avaricious, for he was a generous man and gave munificently for Allah's Sake. It happened that Caliph Marwan ibn Al-Hakam sent him one hundred gold dinars. The next day, Marwan sent word to him: "My servant made a mistake and gave you the dinars. You are not the one meant to have them." Abu Hurairah was overcome with confusion and regret, and he replied: "I gave them all for Allah's Sake, and not a single dinar of them remains with me. When my salary (of the Muslim treasury) is due, take your money from it." When Marwan investigated the matter, he found him to be honest. He excused him and took nothing from him.

The Final Chapter of Abu Hurairah's Life

Constant Longing for the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH)

The noble image of the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) hardly left Abu Hurairah's mind after the Messenger (PBBUH) died. Abu Hurairah loved the Prophet (PBBUH) profoundly, even though he had only been with him for a few years, not more than four. Any time the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) was mentioned, his soul yearned for him. He would burst into tears, his eyes craving to see him alive. He would sit in the mosque, surrounded by people, and talk to them. He would say: "My friend, Abul-Qasim (PBBUH), told me." Overcome by emotion, he would weep, making those around him weep.

"O Allah, I Love To Meet You! Please Love To Meet Me As Well"

After a long life filled with struggle and sacrifices, Abu Hurairah lay on his deathbed. When his visitors entered, they found him weeping. They asked him: "What makes you weep, O Abu Hurairah?" He replied: "I am not weeping over this world of yours, but over the vast distance of the journey [ahead] and the scarcity of provisions. I have reached the end of the road, and it will take me either to Paradise or Hellfire. I do not know which one I will be in?"

Caliph Marwan ibn Al-Hakam visited Abu Hurairah and said to him: "May Allah heal you, O Abu Hurairah." But Abu Hurairah responded with: "O Allah, I love to meet You! Please love to meet me as well and hasten this meeting."

Shortly after Marwan left, Abu Hurairah departed this life, joining the one he longed to see, his beloved Prophet (PBBUH). His death occurred in the year 59 A.H., when he was seventy-eight years old.

His pure and tranquil body was laid to rest in a blessed place, among the inhabitants of Al-Baqi` cemetery.

May Allah's Mercy and Blessings be upon you, O you who preserved the knowledge of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) for humanity.

May Allah be pleased with you and please you, O Abu Hurairah.

8. Zayd ibn Harithah

May Allah Be Pleased with Him

8. Zayd ibn Harithah

Here we are, my dear readers, approaching another exquisite flower to enjoy its fragrant companionship and graceful features. He was a noble Companion granted the good fortune of living and growing up in the company of the best man in creation (PBBUH).

He had the unique honor of being the only person to have been ascribed to the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) and to have borne his name. He is the only Companion whose name is explicitly stated in the Noble Qur'an, which is an honor unmatched by any other.

He was the beloved one of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH), the martyred commander Zayd ibn Harithah.

Zayd's Lineage and Upbringing

His full name was Zayd ibn Harithah ibn Shurahbil Al-Ka`bi. His mother was Su`da bint Tha`labah ibn `Amir. Zayd grew up among his parents and siblings in a comfortable life.

Zayd was eight years old when his mother decided to visit her people, Banu Ma`n. She set out accompanied by her son, Zayd. Su`da stayed with her people for as long as Allah willed.

One day, the Banu Ma`n tribe was surprised by an attack from the Banu Al-Qayn tribe. They invaded them with their cavalry and overpowered them, seizing their wealth, driving away their camels, and taking their children as captives.

Among the children who were taken as captives was Su`da's son, Zayd ibn Harithah. Su`da, his mother, returned to her husband alone and sad.

Harithah, his father, collapsed in shock, horrified by what had happened to his son. He continued to roam the lands, crossing the deserts and asking tribes and caravans about his son.

Fate Brings Zayd to the Company of the Beloved Prophet (PBBUH)

Zayd was brought to the `Ukaz market and offered for sale. Hakim ibn Hizam ibn Khuwaylid, the nephew of Lady Khadijah bint Khuwaylid (the Prophet's wife), bought him for four hundred dirhams, as slavery was a prevalent practice in pre-Islamic Makkah.[1]

Hakim ibn Hizam bought a group of young boys and returned with them to Makkah. When his aunt, Lady Khadijah, visited him, he told her to choose one of the boys and take him as a gift. Lady Khadijah examined the faces of the boys and chose Zayd ibn Harithah.

Shortly afterwards, Lady Khadijah married the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH). She wanted to present him with a gift. She could not find anything better than this young boy, who bore signs of noble descent. She gave Zayd to the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH), so that Zayd might enjoy the company and care of the man whom Allah sent as a mercy to all the worlds (PBBUH).

It is fascinating how these 'honorable Companions', whom Allah Almighty elected to be the Companions of the 'Best Man Ever' (PBBUH), were pulled by

[1] In a world ruled by slavery, part of the Prophet's mission (PBBUH) was to establish the law of freedom by treating and gradually eliminating this deeply rooted social illness.

destiny toward attaining this fragrant companionship in their lives, even if they became slaves and faced hardships in the path leading to this companionship. Zayd ibn Harithah fell into captivity and was sold as a slave in order to obtain, in the end, the care and companionship of Messenger Muhammad (PBBUH). The same was true for Salman the Persian, as was mentioned in a previous section of the book, and others as well.

Events often turn out differently from our desires. They may appear to be a great evil but soon turn into great good about which only Allah (Exalted be He) knows. This is Allah's Grace, which He bestows upon whomever He wills among His servants.[1]

"I Will Not Choose Anyone over You!"

While the blessed boy was thriving under the care of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) and enjoying his generous companionship, his grieving mother was inconsolable. She did not know whether her son Zayd was alive, in order for her to hope for his return, or dead, to give up such hopes. As for his father, he continued to search for his son in every land and question every traveler about him.

During one of the Hajj seasons, a group from Zayd's tribe came to the Sacred House for pilgrimage. Zayd recognized them and they recognized him. When they informed him about the profound sadness and sorrow his parents were experiencing because of him, he said to them: "I know that they are

[1] All good fortune, blessings, and power come from Allah (Exalted be He). He grants these to whom He chooses out of His Wisdom and Immense Favor. This Islamic concept highlights that human success and well-being are not due to one's own merit or power but are a result of Allah's bestowal, inspiring humility and reliance on Allah.

grieving for me, so tell them that, praise be to Allah, I am in the best family, with the most generous father."

As soon as Harithah learned of his son's whereabouts, he quickly prepared his mount and took enough money to ransom his beloved son. His brother Ka`b accompanied him, and together they set off, racing like the wind until they arrived in Makkah. There, they met the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) and addressed him, saying: "O son of `Abdul-Muttalib! O son of the chief of your people! You are the people and neighbors of Allah's sanctuary. You set captives free, feed the hungry, and help the distressed. We have come to you regarding our son who is with you. Would you grant us a favor and show kindness to us in his ransom?"

The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) asked them: **"Who is your son?"** They replied: "Your servant Zayd ibn Harithah." The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) knew Zayd's strong attachment to him; at the same time, he (PBBUH) appreciated his father's right over him. Therefore, he (PBBUH) suggested an alternative, saying to them: **"Would you consider something better than offering a ransom?"** They said: What is it?" He (PBBUH) replied: **"I will ask him to come to you, and you give him the choice between you and me. If he chooses you, he is yours without a ransom. But if he chooses me, by Allah, I am not one who would turn away from someone who prefers me."** They said: "You are fair."

The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) summoned Zayd. When he came, he (PBBUH) asked him: **"Do you know these people?"** He replied: "Yes, this is my father, Shurahbil, and this is my paternal uncle, Ka`b." The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) further said to Zayd: **"I am giving you a choice: If you wish, you can go with them, or if you wish, you can stay with me."** Zayd immediately said: "Rather, I will stay with you, for I am not one to choose anyone over you."

His father exclaimed: "Woe to you, Zayd! Do you prefer slavery over your father and paternal uncle?" He replied: "I have seen something in this man; he is both a father and a paternal uncle."

Zayd Becomes the Adopted Son of Muhammad (PBBUH)

The Prophet's (PBBUH) eyes welled up when he heard what Zayd said. He (PBBUH) took hold of Zayd's hand, went out to the courtyard of the Ka`bah, where the Quraysh were gathered, and announced: **"O people of Quraysh, bear witness that Zayd (hereby) is my son. He will inherit from me and I from him."**

Harithah and his brother returned happy and reassured that their son was not only free but also under the care of a man commonly distinguished among Quraysh by the epithet of *Al-Sadiq Al-Amin* (the Truthful and Trustworthy).[1] He was also a descendant of the Banu Hashim. From that day on, Zayd ibn Harithah was called Zayd ibn (the son of) Muhammad (PBBUH).

Zayd had no idea of the immense goodness he had gained by this choice. He had no idea that his master, whom he had favored over his family and clan, was the 'Best Man' throughout history, from the very beginning to the end of existence. He (PBBUH) is the Messenger of Allah to all Allah's creation. None of this had crossed Zayd's mind. It was only a result of Allah's Grace on him. Indeed, Allah has complete control over His immense Grace and Favor, bestowing it upon whomever He wills and choosing whom to bless with His Mercy.

[1] The Prophet's (PBBUH) impeccable honesty and trustworthy nature earned him this title, leading people to seek his counsel and put their complete trust in him, even those who later disbelieved his message of prophethood.

Zayd Embraces Islam

Only a few years had passed after this incident before Allah (Exalted be He) sent His Prophet Muhammad (PBBUH) with the religion of guidance and truth. Zayd ibn Harithah was the first freed slave to embrace Islam and the second man to embrace Islam. It was even reported by some historians that he was the first man to embrace Islam. He was truly one of the first believers in Islam.

Zayd Goes to Ta'if in the Company of the Prophet (PBBUH)

Zayd experienced the same suffering, pain, and affliction as his Muslim peers. The call to Allah Almighty continued until the tenth year of the mission, when the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) lost his uncle and protector, Abu Talib, and his wife, Khadijah. The polytheists began to escalate the harm they were causing the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) after their deaths. The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) then set out, with his freed slave Zayd ibn Harithah, for the city of Ta'if (situated in the Hijaz Mountains southeast of Makkah), hoping to gain support and a base for Islam. He (PBBUH) stayed there calling the Banu Thaqif tribe (the inhabitants of the city of Ta'if) to the religion that guides humanity toward truth and righteous living. But no one listened to him or took him seriously. Not content with simply rejecting his call to Islam, they also incited their knaves and slaves against the Prophet (PBBUH), cursing him (PBBUH) and pelting him (PBBUH) with stones.

Zayd courageously warded off harm from the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH). He stood facing the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH), protecting him with his body and arms. He created a shield for him from the sharp pebbles and stones that were hurled at his head and feet, causing Zayd severe wounds.

The aggressive mob of Banu Thaqif continued to attack them until they both took shelter in a garden belonging to `Utbah and Shaybah, the two sons of Rabi`ah. At that point, the villains of Banu Thaqif withdrew and left. After that incident, the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) and Zayd returned safely to Makkah, where they remained until Allah (Exalted be He) permitted His Messenger (PBBUH) and the believers to emigrate.

Zayd Emigrates to Madinah

The persecution exercised by the *Mushrikin* (those who associate others with Allah in His divinity or worship) against the Muslims in Makkah intensified and became more extreme. Finally, the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) permitted his Companions to emigrate to Madinah. Zayd ibn Harithah was at the forefront of the Muslim emigrants.

In Madinah, the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) established a brotherhood bond between Zayd ibn Harithah and his paternal uncle, Hamzah ibn `Abdul Muttalib.[1] When Hamzah was martyred on the Battle of Uhud, the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) established a brotherhood between Zayd and Usaid ibn Hudair (a chief of the Banu Aws tribe).

[1] Prophet Muhammad (PBBUH) established brotherhood by instituting a formal bond between the Muhajirun (Emigrants from Makkah) and the Ansar (Supporters; natives of Madinah) after his emigration to Madinah. This brotherhood bond was a crucial step in unifying the disparate groups and fostering a strong sense of solidarity, support, and community among the Muslims, which became a foundational principle of Muslim society.

"Call Adopted Children by the Names of Their Fathers, That Is More Just with Allah"

The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) married Zayd to his cousin, Zaynab bint Jahsh. She had accepted Zayd to avoid disappointing the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) by refusing his mediation.

However, their marriage failed, and after all the factors that kept it going were exhausted, Zayd divorced Zaynab. The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) took responsibility for this marriage, which he (PBBUH) was responsible for concluding and which ended in separation. He (PBBUH) took care of his paternal cousin and married her after she had completed her `*Iddah* (a woman's prescribed waiting period after divorce). He (PBBUH) then chose a new wife for Zayd—Barakah (nicknamed Umm Ayman). Allah blessed Zayd with his son, Usamah, from her.

The hypocrites went around the city spreading insults and rumors, slandering the Prophet (PBBUH) for marrying the divorced wife of his son Zayd. The divine response came, distinguishing between adopted children and biological children and between adoption and sonship, emphasizing the importance of blood relationships rather than social ones and declaring the abolition of adoption. The Almighty says: ﴿Call them (adopted sons) by (the names of) their fathers, that is more just with Allah. But if you do not know their father's (names, call them), your brothers in faith and *Mawalikum* (your freed slaves). And there is no sin on you if you make a mistake therein, except in regard to what your hearts deliberately intend. And Allah is Ever Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful. The Prophet is closer to the believers than their own selves, and his wives are their (the believers') mothers (as regards respect and marriage). And blood relations among each other have closer personal ties in Allah's decree (regarding inheritance) than (the brotherhood of) the [other] believers

and the Muhajirun (emigrants from Makkah), except that you do kindness to those brothers (when the Prophet joined them in brotherhood ties). This has been written in Allah's Book of Divine Decrees﴾ (translated meaning of Al-Ahzab 33:5-6).

Zayd was called 'Zayd ibn Muhammad' until these two ayahs were revealed. Henceforth, he stopped being named 'Zayd ibn Muhammad' and returned to his original name of Zayd ibn Harithah.

Zayd's Name Is Immortalized in the Qur'an

When the honor of having his name linked to the Prophet (PBBUH) was taken away from Zayd, he was greatly saddened. Allah (Glorified be He) compensated Zayd for the loss of this honor by granting him a distinction He did not grant to any other Companion of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH). Allah Almighty refers to Zayd by name in the Noble Qur'an: ﴿So when Zayd had no longer any need for her, We (Allah) married her to you in order that there may be no blame on the believers concerning the wives of their adopted sons when they no longer have need of them. And ever is the Command of Allah accomplished﴾ (translated meaning of Al-Ahzab 33:37).

Thus, Zayd became the only Companion whose name is specifically mentioned in the Glorious Qur'an, which will continue to be recited and remembered until the Day of Judgment. This guarantees that his influence, achievements, and impact will continue and be remembered forever. It is an honor that was unique to Zayd (may Allah be pleased with him), bestowed upon him in compensation for the loss of the deep sense of honor and fulfillment he felt in being the son of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH).

The Beloved One of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH)

Just as Zayd dearly loved the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) and preferred him over his mother and father, the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) loved him greatly.

Whenever Zayd was absent, the Prophet (PBBUH) would miss him and rejoice at his return. He (PBBUH) would welcome him back in a way no one else had.

Lady `Aishah (may Allah be pleased with her) narrated: "Zayd ibn Harithah came to Madinah while the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) was in my house. Zayd knocked at the door. The Prophet (PBBUH) rose to receive him, trailing his garment. He (PBBUH) embraced and kissed him."[1]

The immense love that the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) had for Zayd became widely recognized among the Muslims, so they called him 'Zayd, the Beloved One' and referred to him as 'the Beloved One of the Messenger of Allah (PBUH)'.

Zayd Strives in Allah's Cause

The 'Beloved One of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH)' kept himself in his service. During battles, Zayd embodied the highest qualities of both dutiful service and courageous action in combat. He participated in the Battle of Badr, and when the Muslims were victorious, the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) sent him on his she-camel, Al-Qaswa', to announce the victory to the people of

[1] Reported in *Riyad As-Salihin*, hadith no 891.

Madinah. He also participated in the battles of Uhud, Al-Khandaq, Al-Hudaibiyah, and Khaybar. Moreover, the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) appointed him as his deputy in Madinah to lead the Muslim community in his absence when he (PBBUH) set out for the Expedition of Al- Muraysi`.

Zayd led nine expeditions. Lady `Aishah (may Allah be pleased with her) said: "The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) never dispatched Zayd ibn Harithah with an army without appointing him as their commander. If he had lived after the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH), he would have appointed him as his successor."[1]

Salamah ibn Al-Akwa` said: "I participated in seven battles with the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH), and in nine battles with Zayd ibn Harithah. The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) would appoint him as our commander."[2]

[1] Reported in *Al-Mustadrak `ala Al-Sahihayn* by Al-Hakim Al-Naysaburi, hadith no. 5006.
[2] Reported in *Al-Mustadrak `ala Al-Sahihayn* by Al-Hakim Al-Naysaburi, hadith no. 5036.

The Final Chapter of Zayd's Life

The Battle of Mu'tah

In the eighth year of the *Hijrah*, Allah, blessed is His Wisdom[1], willed that the beloved Prophet (PBBUH) be tested by being parted from his beloved one.

The ordained place was the Battle of Mu'tah—already recounted in detail in an earlier part of the book.[2]

The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) chose Zayd ibn Harithah to lead the army heading to Mu'tah and commanded them, saying: **"If Zayd is killed, then Ja`far ibn Abu Talib (should assume the leadership of the army). If Ja`far is killed, then `Abdullah ibn Rawahah."** Despite the fact that Ja`far ibn Abu Talib was the closest person to the heart of his cousin, the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH), and despite his courage, boldness, and distinguished lineage, the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) appointed him as second-in-command to Zayd, and made Zayd the first-in-command of the army.

Thus, Zayd ibn Harithah occupied the highest and most exalted status in Islam and in the heart of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH). Neither Islam nor its Messenger (PBBUH) paid a moment's attention to the prestige that comes from lineage or appearance rather than individual achievement.

[1] A declaration of trust and gratitude, affirming that all divine decrees, even those that seem difficult, are part of Allah's perfect, wise plan that serves a greater good beyond human comprehension.

[2] Please see the life of Khalid ibn Al-Walid.

Islam's core values of dedication, persistence, and hard work allowed oppressed Muslims like Bilal, Suhayb, `Ammar, Zayd, and Usamah, to shine and become esteemed and respected figures and righteous leaders.

The Martyred Commander

Zayd led the battle, with his hand firmly holding the banner of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH). The two armies met at Mu'tah, where the Muslims fought a battle that astonished the Byzantines, filling their hearts with fear. A small army of three thousand fighters stood their ground and confronted the Byzantine massive army of two hundred thousand. The Muslims daringly advanced under the leadership of their commander, Zayd ibn Harithah. He was in front of them, his hand clenched tight on the banner of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH), and he charged into the enemy lines in close combat with the enemy's spears, arrows, and swords.

Zayd fought gallantly to defend the battle flag of the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him). His efforts were heroic and unprecedented, resulting in hundreds of spears piercing his noble body.

The commander of the army fell as a martyr, and Ja`far ibn Abu Talib took over the banner and fought until he was martyred. `Abdullah ibn Rawahah then took it and fought until he was also martyred.

The Beloved Prophet (PBBUH) Grieves over His Beloved One

In Madinah, before any news arrived from the battlefield, the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) ascended the pulpit and ordered an announcement be made to gather the people. He (PBBUH) wanted to inform them of the heroic military prowess of their army in Mu'tah. He (PBBUH) said, based on divine revelation:

"Shall I inform you about your army that set out in Allah's Cause? They set off until they encountered the enemy. Zayd was martyred, so seek forgiveness for him. Then Ja`ar ibn Abu Talib took the standard and fought the enemy bravely until he was also martyred. I bear witness to his martyrdom, so seek forgiveness for him. Then `Abdullah ibn Rawahah took the standard and stood his ground until he was martyred as well. So seek forgiveness for him."[1]

The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) grieved deeply over his three outstanding commanders and went to their families to offer his condolences. When he (PBBUH) reached Zayd's house, his little daughter rushed to him with tears in her eyes. The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) wept until he sobbed. Sa`d ibn `Ubadah, trying to appease the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH), said: "What is this, O Messenger of Allah?" He (PBBUH) replied: **"This is how someone who loves weeps over his beloved one [who is gone]."**[2]

This was the end of Zayd ibn Harithah's life. He won martyrdom and the Messenger's deep love and appreciation for him.

May Allah's Mercy and Blessings be upon you, O 'Beloved One of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH)'.

May Allah be pleased with you and please you, O Zayd ibn Harithah.

[1] Reported in *Siyar A`lam Al-Nubala'* by Imam Al-Dhahabi.

[2] Reported in *Al-Tabaqat Al-Kubra* by Ibn Sa`d, vol. 3, p. 46.

9. Usamah ibn Zayd

May Allah Be Pleased with Him

9. Usamah ibn Zayd

And now, my dear readers, after these magnificent moments with the 'Beloved One of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH)', let us spend more time with one of his descendants.

He was one of the virtuous sons of Islam, being born into the faith. He received his first nourishment from its pure nature, without being tainted by the dark dust of *Jahiliyyah* (pre-Islamic time of ignorance). He was the youngest of those put in command of the army by the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH). He is the 'Beloved One, Son of the Beloved One'—Usamah ibn Zayd.

Usamah's Lineage and Upbringing

His full name was Usamah ibn Zayd ibn Harithah, and his mother was Barakah the Abyssinian, also known by the nickname of Umm Ayman. One day, the Muslims saw signs of joy and happiness on the face of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH). They learned that Umm Ayman had given birth to a baby boy, which brought joy and happiness to the heart of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH).

This newborn, who brought joy and happiness to the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH), is our hero, Usamah ibn Zayd. He was the son of two honorable parents who were among the earliest to embrace Islam and the closest to the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH).

His father, Zayd ibn Harithah, was the 'Beloved One of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH)' and his adopted son before Islam. Zayd favored the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) over his own family and clan. His mother, Barakah, the

Abyssinian, was a female slave who served Aminah bint Wahb, the Prophet's (PBBUH) mother. Barakah was the one who raised the Prophet (PBBUH) during his mother's lifetime and cared for him after his mother's death. Therefore, she was the only mother the Prophet (PBBUH) recognized since his mother's death. Barakah provided him with love, care, support, and sustained presence. The Prophet (PBBUH) loved her greatly and often said of her: **"She is my mother after my mother and the rest of my family,"** suggesting that she provided the security, support, and affection that a complete family would give.

The Muslims rejoiced immensely at the birth of Usamah ibn Zayd, as they had never rejoiced at any other birth. Everything that made the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) happy made them happy too, and everything that brought joy to his heart filled them with contentment.

The Beloved One, Son of the Beloved One

The love that the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) had for Usamah reached such a great level that all Muslims coveted the same amount of love. The Muslims even named Usamah 'the Beloved One, Son of the Beloved One'. The Muslims were not exaggerating when they bestowed this title on the young boy.

Dear readers, here are some scenes for you to contemplate the love that the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) had for Usamah.

"O Allah, I Love Them Both, Please Love Them"

Usamah ibn Zayd was close in age to the grandson of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH), Al-Hasan ibn `Ali, the son of his daughter Fatimah Al-Zahra'. Al-Hasan was fair-skinned, radiant, and remarkably handsome, resembling his grandfather, the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH). Usamah had dark skin, a flat

nose, and a striking resemblance to his mother, Barakah the Abyssinian. However, the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) loved them equally without preferring one over another or applying different standards or biases based on their individual characteristics. He (PBBUH) would take Usamah and place him on one of his thighs and take Al-Hasan and place him on the other thigh. Then he (PBBUH) would hug them both and say: **"O Allah, I love them both, please love them."**[1]

The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) Personally Treats Usamah's Wound

The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) loved Usamah very much. Usamah once stumbled on the threshold of a door, wounding his forehead and causing blood to flow. The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) rose and started wiping the blood from his face. He (PBBUH) personally dressed his wound and comforted him with words full of compassion and tenderness.

Usamah Intercedes for the Makhzumi Woman with the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH)

Quraysh were concerned about the Makhzumi woman who had committed theft and was about to be punished. They wondered: "Who will speak to the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) concerning her? Nobody dares do that except Usamah, the 'Beloved One of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH)'." But when Usamah spoke to the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) about her, he (PBBUH) replied: **"Are you interceding concerning one of the penalties prescribed by Allah?"** Then he (PBBUH) stood up and addressed the people, saying: **"O people, verily those who came before you were only destroyed**

[1] Reported by Al-Bukhari, hadith no. 3747.

because when one of their nobles stole, they would let him off; but when one of the weak stole, they would carry out the punishment on him. By Allah, if Fatimah, the daughter of Muhammad, were to steal, I would cut off her hand."[1]

"Anyone Who Loves Me, Let Him Love Usamah"

Lady `Aishah said: "No one should hate Usamah after I heard the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) say: '**Whoever loves Allah and His Messenger, let him love Usamah**.'"[2]

"Had the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) Seen Him, He (PBBUH) Would Have Loved Him"

Anyone who places the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) above their family and clan, Allah will place them above all others. Moreover, the Almighty will bless them and their offspring and favor them over others. Zayd ibn Harithah favored the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) over his family, and so he became the 'Beloved One of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH)'.

Not only that, but the Messenger's love was enduring and extended to Zayd's children and even his grandchildren. `Abdullah ibn Dinar narrated: "One day Ibn `Umar, while in the mosque, looked at a man who was dragging his clothes while walking in one of the corners of the mosque. He said, 'See who that is. I wish he was near to me.' Someone then said (to Ibn `Umar), 'Do you not know him, O Abu `Abdul-Rahman? He is Muhammad ibn Usamah.' On that Ibn `Umar bowed his head, dug the earth with his hands, and then said, 'If

[1] Reported by Al-Bukhari, hadith no. 6788.
[2] Reported by Ahmad, hadith no. 25234.

the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) saw him, he (PBBUH) would have loved him.'"[1]

[1] Reported by Al-Bukhari, hadith no. 3734.

Usamah's Period of Youth and His Remarkable Stances in Support of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH)

Now, dear readers, let us draw closer to the 'Beloved One, Son of the Beloved One,' and explore the depth of the Messenger's (PBBUH) love and closeness to him.

Despite his young age, Usamah ibn Zayd was a steadfast believer who was extremely intelligent, exceedingly humble, incredibly brave, and remarkably wise and thoughtful, placing matters in their proper places. He was chaste and lifted himself above worldly matters. Furthermore, he was amiable, agreeable, and beloved by the people, who felt secure and at ease around him.

The Precious Garment That Hakim ibn Hizam Gifted to the Prophet (PBBUH)

The Prophet's (PBBUH) affection for Usamah remained strong as he grew from a child into a young person. Hakim ibn Hizam presented the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) with a precious garment he had purchased from Yemen for fifty gold dinars. It had belonged to one of their kings. The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) refused to accept it unless he paid its cost. The Messenger (peace be upon him) wore it once, on a Friday. Then he (PBBUH) took it off and gave it to Usamah ibn Zayd, who used to go among his peers while wearing it.

Usamah Striving in Allah's Cause

The Battles of Badr and Uhud

Usamah ibn Zayd did not participate in the Battle of Badr or Uhud because the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) did not permit him to participate, turning him back due to his young age.

The Battle of the Trench

The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) permitted Usamah [when he had attained puberty] to participate in the Battle of the Trench. He was fifteen years old.

The Battle of Mu'tah

Usamah, aged less than eighteen, fought under the banner of his father, Zayd. He witnessed his father's death with his own eyes. This did not make him weaken or falter. His strength and resolve remained as high as ever; he continued to fight under the banner of Ja`far ibn Abu Talib until Ja`far was martyred. After that, he fought under the banner of `Abdullah ibn Rawahah, until `Abdullah was martyred, and finally under the banner of Allah's sword, Khalid ibn Al-Walid, until Khalid was able to safely withdraw and rescue the army from the clutches of the Byzantines.

Usamah returned to Madinah, having accepted his father's death as an act of Allah's Will. He regarded him a martyr with Allah, leaving his pure body at the borders of Syria. On the return journey, he rode the horse on which his father had been martyred. When Usamah met the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH), his eyes welled up with tears, so the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) embraced him and wept.

The Liberation of Makkah

The day of the great victory came, when the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) triumphantly entered Makkah with Usamah ibn Zayd behind him on the back of his camel. Then the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) entered the Ka`bah, accompanied by Usamah ibn Zayd and Bilal ibn Rabah. Both men had dark complexions, but Allah's Word which they carried in their great hearts bestowed upon them all light, honor, and glory.

The Battle of Hunayn

When the Muslims were defeated in the early morning of the battle due to an ambush placed by the polytheists [in a narrow valley with a thick presence of trees], the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) stood firm and called out to the people: **"Come to me, I am the Messenger of Allah."** The people fled, except for a small group who remained steadfast with the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH). Among those fighters who remained steadfast were Usamah ibn Zayd, along with Al-`Abbas, the Prophet's paternal uncle, Abu Bakr, `Umar, `Ali ibn Abu Talib, and Abu Sufyan ibn Al-Harith, the Prophet's cousin. Through his steadfastness and the steadfastness of this small group of believers, the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) was able to turn the defeat of his Companions into victory and protect the fleeing Muslims from being attacked by the polytheists.

The First Time to Assume Command and the Unforgettable Lesson

Two years before his death, the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) dispatched Usamah as commander of a detachment that set out to confront some *Mushrikin* who were hostile to Islam and Muslims. This was the first time

Usamah assumed command. He successfully accomplished his mission, which pleased the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH). However, the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) taught Usamah a lesson he would never forget. Let us listen to Usamah ibn Zayd relating a specific event, after the bringer of the tidings of victory had come to the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH). With his face beaming with joy, the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) asked Usamah to tell him the news of the victory.

Usamah ibn Zayd said that he came to the Prophet (PBBUH) and began to narrate to him [the occurrences that took place in the confrontation with the enemy]. Usamah said: "When the people were defeated, I caught up with a man and struck him with the spear. Therefore, the man said, 'There is no god but Allah,' but I stabbed him and killed him."

This man had harmed the Muslims during the battle and killed many of them. When Usamah attacked him and the man saw the sword, he uttered the declaration of faith: "There is no god but Allah," to avoid being killed—according to Usamah.

Usamah ibn Zayd continued, explaining that the expression on the face of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) changed and that he (PBBUH) said: **"Woe to you, Usamah! How can you explain** [**on the Day of Resurrection**] **his having said: 'There is no god but Allah'** [**yet you killed him**]**? Woe to you, Usamah! How can you explain his having said: 'There is no god but Allah'**?" Usamah added: "He (PBBUH) kept repeating this to me until I wished I could renounce every deed I had done and embrace Islam anew that day."[1]

This was the unforgettable lesson that Usamah learned from the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH). It pierced into his inner being and became a part of his

[1] Reported in *Al-Durr Al-Manthur* by Al-Suyuti and Muslim, hadith no. 97.

disposition forever, from the time he heard it from the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) until he met his Lord.

This lesson illuminates the humanity of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH), as well as his justice and sublime principles. The man whom the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) blamed Usamah for killing was a warrior whose sword was still stained with the blood of the Muslims. He uttered the declaration of faith to save himself from a fatal blow, as a way out for himself to change his course and then resume fighting. However, because this man pronounced the declaration of faith in Islam and uttered it with his tongue, his blood instantly became inviolable and his life protected, regardless of his innermost thoughts and true motives and intentions.

Dispatching Usamah's Army

In the eleventh year of the *Hijrah*, the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) put Usamah at the head of an army although he was less than twenty years old. Usamah received orders to lead the cavalry to the place where his father had been killed, at the borders of the Balqa region, which was part of the Byzantine Empire. Among the members of this army, which was under Usamah's command, were senior Companions such as Abu Bakr, `Umar, Sa`d ibn Abu Waqqas, Abu `Ubaidah ibn Al-Jarrah, and others.

Among a group of Muslims, there were murmurs of disapproval at the appointment of young Usamah ibn Zayd as commander of an army that included elders from the Ansar and Muhajirun. When their criticizing whispers reached the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH), he (PBBUH) ascended the pulpit, praised Allah, and extolled Him. Then he (PBBUH) said: **"If you people are criticizing his (Usamah's) leadership, you criticized the leadership of his father before. By Allah, he (Zayd) deserved the position of leadership, and**

he was one of the most beloved persons to me. Now this (**his son Usamah**) **is one of the most beloved persons to me after him."**[1] According to another narration, the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) said three times: **"O people, carry out Usamah's expedition."**[2]

[1] Reported by Al-Bukhari, hadith no. 6627.
[2] Reported in *Al-Tabaqat Al-Kubra* by Ibn Sa`d, vol. 2, p. 248.

Usamah with the Rightly Guided Caliphs

Execution of Usamah's Expedition

Before Usamah's army could set out, the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) fell seriously ill and so Usamah halted the advancing of his army, awaiting how the Prophet's (PBBUH) condition would progress. The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) passed away, and Abu Bakr Al-Siddiq assumed the caliphate.

"The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) Appointed Usamah and You Are Asking Me To Dismiss Him!"

Despite the new circumstances created by the death of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH), Abu Bakr, the Caliph of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH), ordered that Usamah's army be dispatched to its destination. However, a group of Muslims believed that Usamah's expedition should be delayed and that a man older than Usamah should assume command. Here, the Caliph of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) took a firm stand and said to the opponents of his decision: "The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) appointed him (Usamah), and you are asking me to dismiss him?"

Usamah's army set out, led by its young commander, riding on his mount and accompanied by the Caliph of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) on foot. Usamah exclaimed: "O Caliph of the Messenger of Allah, by Allah, you must either ride or else I will dismount." Abu Bakr replied: "By Allah, you will not dismount, and I will not ride. What harm can there be if my feet get dusty for a while in Allah's Cause."

The Caliph further said to Usamah: "I entrust to Allah your faith, the obligations that you are responsible for, and the last of your deeds. I urge you to carry out that which the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) has commanded you to do." Then Abu Bakr asked Usamah's permission to keep `Umar with him in Madinah, and Usamah gave `Umar permission to stay.

"We Have Never Seen an Army Safer or More Successful Than the Army of Usamah ibn Zayd"

Usamah advanced with his army, carefully executing all that the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) had ordered him to do and marching with the Muslim cavalry along the borders of Balqa. While the Byzantine emperor was receiving news of the death of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH), he simultaneously received news of the Muslim army raiding the borders of the Levant.

He was perplexed by the strength of the Muslims despite the recent death of their Messenger. They remained fixed in their determination, loyalty, and conviction, undeterred by the great loss. This caused the Byzantine forces to shrink, and any fear of them was stripped away from the hearts of the Muslims. Thus, Usamah's army paved the way for the Muslims to liberate the Levant, Egypt, and all North Africa.

Usamah ibn Zayd returned to Madinah, riding the horse on which his father had been martyred, carrying more booty than anyone had estimated, and entering the city without any casualties. The Muslims even said of him: "We have never seen an army safer or more successful than the army of Usamah ibn Zayd."

"Usamah Was Dearer to the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) Than You"

Usamah ibn Zayd remained a respected and revered figure among Muslims throughout his life. The Prophet's (PBUH) love for Usamah was passed on to the Caliphs who came after him: Abu Bakr, `Umar, `Uthman, and `Ali. Whenever `Umar ibn Al-Khattab met Usamah, he would say: "Welcome, my leader!" If he saw anyone who was surprised by this, he would say: "The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) appointed him as my leader."

When `Umar distributed the treasury's wealth, he gave people according to their merits and achievements in Islam. It was the turn of `Abdullah ibn `Umar, and `Umar gave him his share. Then came the turn of Usamah ibn Zayd, and `Umar gave him double what he had given his son `Abdullah.

`Abdullah ibn `Umar feared that his position in Islam was at the back, rather than at the front among the initial group of believers. He always hoped to be, because of his contributions, one of the foremost in belief, in Allah's Sight.

`Abdullah asked his father: "Why did you favor Usamah over me? By Allah, he never preceded me to any battle." `Umar replied: "Usamah was more beloved to the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) than you, and his father was more beloved to the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) than your father. Therefore, I gave preference to those beloved to the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) over those beloved to me."[1]

[1] Reported by Al-Tirmidhi, hadith no. 3813.

Usamah Avoids the Sedition

The sedition broke out between Imam `Ali and Mu`awiyah ibn Abu Sufyan in which Usamah ibn Zayd maintained absolute neutrality, avoiding it completely. He had learned well the lesson the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) had taught him when he (PBBUH) strongly reproached him for killing a polytheist warrior simply because he had said: "There is no god but Allah," before he was killed. How about those who are truly believers and are truly Muslims?

Some of the Companions visited Usamah asking about his position on the conflict, and Usamah replied: "No, by Allah, I will never fight anyone who says, 'There is no god but Allah,' after what I heard from the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH)."

The Final Chapter of Usamah's Life

After a life filled with much love, giving, serving, and sacrifice, in the year 54 A.H., Usamah lay on his deathbed, longing to meet his beloved one. His pure soul departed to its Creator so that he could meet his beloved one, the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH).

May Allah's Peace and Blessings be upon you, O 'Beloved One, Son of the Beloved One.'

May Allah be pleased with you and please you, O Usamah ibn Zayd

10. `Abdullah ibn Rawahah

May Allah Be Pleased with Him

10. `Abdullah ibn Rawahah

Now, my dear readers, let us become wrapped in the pleasant scent and gentle rustle of another subtle yet impactful flower among the honorable Companions.

He was one of the poets of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) and one of the twelve representatives [selected by the Prophet (PBBUH) after the Second `Aqabah Pledge to be responsible for the Muslim community in Yathrib]. He fought alongside the Prophet (PBBUH) with his sword, tongue, and pen.

He is the commander, the poet, and the martyr, `Abdullah ibn Rawahah.

`Abdullah's Lineage and Upbringing

His full name was `Abdullah ibn Rawahah ibn Tha`labah ibn `Imru'al-Qais ibn Tha`labah, Abu `Amr Al-Ansari Al-Khazraji.

Ibn Rawahah grew up in a noble family, being able to write and read in a community where writing was rarely practiced. He lived in a thriving environment abundant with plant life and fertile soil. He experienced poetry as a way of connecting with his inner emotions and the broader world around him until his words of poetry flowed forth, sweet and powerful.

Ibn Rawahah was not only a poet, but also a brave horseman, trusted and relied upon by his people, the Khazraj, against the Aws during the period of intense and mutual hostility between them.

`Abdullah Embraces Islam

The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) and those who believed with him were suffering under the ferocity of the Quraysh when a gentle breeze blew from the good land of Taybah[1]. Twelve men from the Ansar (the Supporters of the Prophet PBBUH from the local inhabitants of Madinah) came to Makkah to pledge allegiance to the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) in the 'First `Aqabah Pledge'.[2] `Abdullah ibn Rawahah was one of these twelve men.

In the following year, the 'Second `Aqabah Pledge' took place. Seventy-three men and two women came to Makkah to pledge allegiance to the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH). Ibn Rawahah was one of them. The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) chose him as one of the twelve representatives who would be responsible for the Muslim community in Yathrib according to that pledge.

Ibn Rawahah returned to Yathrib to begin his mission of calling people to Allah (Exalted be He). He was truly one of the first believers in Islam.

[1] The Arabic word for 'wholesome', 'good', or 'pure', which is an alternative name for Madinah.

[2] The formal oath of allegiance by twelve men from Yathrib to Prophet Muhammad (PBBUH) prior to his emigration to Yathrib, which he (PBBUH) later renamed Madinah.

The Remarkable Deeds and Merits of `Abdullah ibn Rawahah

1. Calling People to Allah

Ibn Rawahah returned to Madinah with his heart filled with light and motivation, and he began his journey of calling his community to Allah (Exalted be He). He spared no effort, using every possible method and all his ingenuity, to guide people to the path of truth.

Ibn Rawahah Helps His Friend Abul Darda' Find His Way to Islam

Ibn Rawahah had a close friend, named Abul Darda', with whom he shared a long-lasting friendship and brotherhood. When Islam came, Ibn Rawahah embraced it whereas Abul Darda' at first rejected it. However, this did not sever the friendship and brotherhood that existed between them.

Ibn Rawahah was pained by the sight of his friends and acquaintances worshipping idols instead of Allah, the Exalted Creator. He felt jealous for the religion of Allah, sincerely wishing that all people would maintain their exclusive devotion to Allah and become Muslims. He began to invite those closest to him to Islam, particularly his friend who was like a brother since pre-Islamic time—Abul Darda'. He wanted good for him and decided to guide him to Islam in a practical way that would leave no doubt within him and eliminate all uncertainties.

One day, Ibn Rawahah came to Abul Darda's house and asked his wife: "Where is Abul Darda'?" She replied: "Your brother has just left." So he headed

to the idol that Abul Darda' used to worship and pray to. He took a pickaxe and broke it into fragments. When Abul Darda's wife saw the idol in mere pieces, she exclaimed: "You have ruined me, O Ibn Rawahah."

After Ibn Rawahah departed, Abul Darda' returned home and found his wife weeping out of fear of his reaction. He asked her: "What is the matter with you?" She replied: "Your brother, `Abdullah ibn Rawahah, came in and did what you see."

Abul Darda' became extremely angry at what had happened to his idol, but he soon changed his mind and said: "If this idol could benefit or protect others, it would have protected and benefited itself first."

Ibn Rawahah thus succeeded to convey to his friend the futility of worshipping idols, contrasting them with the true God, Who possesses inherent power and is the source of all true protection and blessing.

The light of faith shone in Abul Darda's soul. He bathed, put on his best garment, and headed to meet the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH). Upon seeing Abul Darda' approaching, Ibn Rawahah said: "O Messenger of Allah, here is Abul Darda'. I think he came in search of us." The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) replied: **"He only came to embrace Islam. My Lord has promised me that Abul Darda' will become a Muslim."**

Abul Darda' stood before the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) to proclaim his faith in Islam and bear witness that there is no god but Allah and that Muhammad is His slave and Messenger.

Abul Darda' continued to carry within him deep love and gratitude for his friend, `Abdullah ibn Rawahah, for guiding him to Islam. He often said: "I seek

refuge with Allah that a day may pass without me remembering `Abdullah ibn Rawahah."

2. Ibn Rawahah Strives with Both His Sword and Pen

Ibn Rawahah remained close to the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH), witnessing all the battles with him. At Badr, after Allah granted victory to the Muslims, the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) dispatched him with Zayd ibn Harithah to announce news of the clear victory to the people of Madinah.

Ibn Rawahah also participated in Uhud, Al-Khandaq, Al-Hudaybiyah, Khaybar, and other battles. The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) dispatched him as commander of a detachment of thirty horsemen to Usayr ibn Rizam at Khaybar.

The Messenger (PBBUH) appointed him in charge of the affairs of Madinah during the Battle of Badr *Al-Maw`id* (Badr, the Promised Appointment; the Minor Badr; or Badr, the Second), when the Prophet (PBBUH) travelled to fulfill a promised meeting with Abu Sufyan after Uhud. The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) set out to meet Abu Sufyan at the location of the first Battle of Badr, but Abu Sufyan withdrew with his army without fighting.

The Role of Media

In our time, we see the great influence of the media and its mouthpieces on the course of events, to the point that they have become more powerful and influential than weapons.

During the era of the Prophet (PBBUH), this type of media did not exist. Poetry and poets played this important media role. Our hero was one of three

poets of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH), namely Hassan ibn Thabit, Ka`b ibn Malik, and `Abdullah ibn Rawahah.

Ibn Rawahah was distinguished by his bravery on the battlefield, in addition to his efforts with his pen and tongue in the arenas of poetry and poets. He was truly a fighter with his sword as well as with his intellect and creativity.

Here are some examples of the brilliance of Ibn Rawahah's poetry and its impact on his enemies:

After Hamzah, the Prophet's (PBBUH) paternal uncle, was martyred, Ibn Rawahah rose and mourned him with a poem in which he said:

My eyes weep, and they ought to weep, although neither weeping nor lamentation avails…

The Impact of Ibn Rawahah's Words Were More Severe Upon the Disbelievers Than Arrows

Anas ibn Malik narrated that the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) entered Makkah to perform *`Umrat-ul-Qada'* (compensatory `Umrah; instead of the `Umrah the Prophet PBBUH was prevented from completing). Ibn Rawahah was in front of him, saying:

Clear the path before him, O disbelievers! Clear the path, for all good lies in His Messenger…

`Umar exclaimed: "O Ibn Rawahah! Are you reciting poetry within the sacred precincts of Allah and in the presence of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH)?"

The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) said: **"Let him be, O `Umar. By the One in Whose Hand is my soul, his words are more severe upon them (the disbelievers) than arrows."**[1]

Ibn Rawahah's Poetry Urges Muslims to Embrace Struggle and Action

Qays ibn Abu Hazim narrated that the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) said to `Abdullah ibn Rawahah: **"Get off and encourage our camels to move faster."** So he dismounted while reciting:

O Lord, were it not for You, we would not have been guided,
Nor would we have given charity, nor prayed.
So send down tranquility upon us and make our feet firm when we encounter the enemy.
The disbelievers have transgressed against us. Yet if they want to put us in affliction (i.e., fight us), we will refuse (to flee; we will withstand them instead).

The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) said: **"O Allah, have mercy on him (Ibn Rawahah)."** `Umar said: "It has become certain for him." That is, Allah will surely bestow mercy upon Ibn Rawahah and grant him Paradise. The Muslims will always recite Ibn Rawahah's poetry, which will ignite their enthusiasm to fight and defend Allah's religion.

3. Ibn Rawahah's Piety and Fear of Allah Almighty

- `Abdullah ibn Rawahah found great joy in obeying Allah and following His Commandments. He would walk among his

[1] Reported by Al-Nasa'i, hadith no. 2893.

companions, encouraging them to increase their faith. Anas narrated: "When `Abdullah ibn Rawahah would meet any Companion of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH), he would say, to him 'Come, let us believe in (remember) our Lord for an hour.' However, one day he said this to someone and the person became angry and complained to the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH), saying, 'O Messenger of Allah, do you not see how Ibn Rawahah is turning away from your faith to just have faith for an hour. The Messenger of Allah replied (PBBUH), **'May Allah have mercy on Ibn Rawahah! He loves the gatherings that the angels boast of.'"**[1]

- Ibn Rawahah's wife narrated: "Whenever he wanted to leave his house, he would pray two *Rak`ah*s (units of prayer). And whenever he came in, he would pray two *Rak`ah*s. He would never abandon this (practice)."

- Just as Ibn Rawahah showed profound dedication to prayer, he was also diligent in fasting. Abul Darda' said: "We set out with the Prophet (PBBUH) on one of his journeys on a very hot day. It was so extremely hot that a man had to put his hand over his head because of the intense heat. None of us was fasting except the Prophet (PBBUH) and Ibn Rawahah."[2]

Ibn Rawahah's Eagerness to Obey Allah and His Messenger

Ibn Abu Laila narrated that `Abdullah ibn Rawahah came to the Prophet (PBBUH) while he (PBBUH) was delivering a sermon and heard him say: **"Sit down."** Ibn Rawahah immediately sat in his place outside the mosque until the

[1] Reported by Ahmad, hadith no. 13796.
[2] Reported by Al-Bukhari, hadith no. 1945.

Prophet (PBBUH) finished his sermon. News of that came to the attention of the Prophet (PBBUH), who said: **'May Allah increase your eagerness to obey Allah and His Messenger.'"**[1]

Ibn Rawahah's Extreme Awe of Allah

`Urwah narrated that when this ayah was revealed: ﴿As for the poets, the erring follow them﴾ (translated meaning of Al-Shu`ara' 26: 224), Ibn Rawahah [anxiously] asked: "Am I among them, O Messenger of Allah?" Then Allah revealed: ﴿Except those (poets) who believe, and do righteous deeds, and remember Allah much, and vindicate themselves after they have been wronged [by replying back in poetry to the unjust poetry (which the pagan poets utter against the Muslims)]. And the wrongdoers will soon know to which place they are going to return﴾ (translated meaning of Al-Shu`ara' 26: 227).

[1] Reported in *Dala'il Al-Nubuwwah* by Al-Bayhaqi, vol. 6, p. 257

The Final Chapter of Ibn Rawahah's Life

The Battle of Mu'tah

"What Makes You Weep, O Ibn Rawahah?"

The Battle of Mu'tah occurred—which was already mentioned in detail in the context of the life of Khalid ibn Al-Walid. The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) prepared the army for the battle and appointed Zayd ibn Harithah as their [first] commander. He (PBBUH) said: **"If Zayd is killed, then Ja`far ibn Abu Talib (should assume the leadership of the army). If Ja`far is killed, then `Abdullah ibn Rawahah."** The Muslim army, numbering three thousand, was lined up and ready to depart.

People came to bid farewell to the commanders of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH). When `Abdullah ibn Rawahah was bidden farewell, he wept. They asked him: "What makes you weep, O Ibn Rawahah?"

Ibn Rawahah replied: "By Allah, I am not weeping out of love for this world nor attachment to you. Rather, I heard the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) recite some ayahs from Allah's Book wherein Hellfire is mentioned: ﴿There is not one of you but will pass over it (Hell). This is with your Lord, a decree which must be accomplished﴾ (translated meaning of Maryam 19:71). I do not know how I will come out of it (safely) after having crossed over it."

The Muslims said: "May Allah be with you, protect you, and bring you back to us righteous."

When Ibn Rawahah bid farewell to the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH), he said:

May Allah establish firmly the goodness He has given you,

And grant you a great victory like that which Musa (Moses PBBUH) received.

I have seen by my intuitive sense abundant goodness in you, and Allah knows that my intuition is strong.

You are the Messenger who brings goodness. Anyone who deprives himself of his (the Prophet's) benefactions, after seeing him, has been disgraced by fate.

"What You Hate Is the Very Thing You Came Out for: Martyrdom"

The Muslim army advanced until they reached Ma`an (a city in southern Jordan) in the Levant where they learned that the Byzantines had amassed two hundred thousand fighters against them. Confronted with the enemy's immense numerical superiority compared to them, the Muslims stayed in Ma`an for two nights, considering their situation. How can a force of three thousand Muslims face two hundred thousand warriors? They were stunned and said to one another: "We should write to the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) to inform him about the number of our enemy. Either he (PBBUH) will reinforce us with (more) men or he will order us to advance, and we shall obey."

Here, Ibn Rawahah rose among the Muslim ranks to encourage them and boost their confidence, saying: "O people, by Allah, what you hate (now) is the very thing you came out for: martyrdom. We do not fight the enemy with numbers, strength, or multitude. We fight them only with (the power of) this religion, with which Allah has honored us. So advance, for only one of two good endings can happen: either victory or martyrdom."

Ibn Rawahah's words greatly impacted the Muslims, who were fewer in number than the disbelievers but more faithful.[1] They stood up, crying out: "By Allah, Ibn Rawahah has spoken the truth."

"I Made an Oath, O My Soul, That You Must Fight!"

The two armies clashed and the first commander, Zayd ibn Harithah, was martyred, followed by the second commander, Ja`far ibn Abu Talib. `Abdullah ibn Rawahah took up the banner and assumed command when the fighting was at its most intense and violent. While fighting as a soldier, Ibn Rawahah fought fearlessly and charged into the enemy without hesitation or fear for himself. Now that he became the commander of the army and responsible for every member of it, it seemed to the Byzantines that he had experienced a slight but noticeable sense of hesitation and apprehension. But Ibn Rawahah soon summoned all his courage to take risks and began to recite these verses, urging himself and others to fight:

I made an oath, O my soul, that you must go down to fight.
Why do I see you hate Paradise?
O my soul, death is inevitable, so it is better that you be martyred.
What you have wished for so long is finally yours.
If you do as these two (the martyrs—Zayd and Ja`far), you will be guided.

Are You Still in This World?

With such enthusiasm and self-control, Ibn Rawahah moved into the middle of the battlefield and began to attack the Byzantines violently. A cousin

[1] Allah values quality of character (faithfulness) over quantity (numbers). Allah does not favor people based on their numbers or outward visible characteristics, but rather on their inner commitment and faithfulness, emphasizing that a small, dedicated group can achieve significant results.

of his brought him some pieces of meat and said to him: "Strengthen yourself with this, for you have exerted yourself greatly these days." Ibn Rawahah seized a piece of meat and took just one bite of it when he heard a crash—the sound of horsemen and weapons—coming from the direction of the people. He said to himself: "Are you still in this world?" He threw the piece of meat from his hand, grabbed his sword, and fought until he was killed. His body fell so that his pure soul could ascend to its Creator and he could attain his most cherished wish: martyrdom.

"They (The Three Standard-Bearers) Have Been Raised to Paradise"

Back in Madinah, the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) announced to the Muslims the death of his commanders before any news arrived from the battlefield. He (PBBUH) said: "**Zayd ibn Harithah took the banner and fought holding it until he was martyred. Then Ja`far ibn Abu Talib took it and fought holding it until he was martyred. Then `Abdullah ibn Rawahah took it and fought holding it until he was martyred**." The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) remained silent for a while, his eyes welling with tears, then he (PBBUH) said: "**They have been raised to Paradise.**"[1]

And so, Ibn Rawahah departed this world after a long journey of struggle in support of the true religion, striving with his sword, his pen, and his tongue until he attained martyrdom.

May Allah's Mercy and Blessings be upon you, O commander, poet, and martyr.

May Allah be pleased with you and please you, O `Abdullah ibn Rawahah.

[1] Reported in Al-Bidaya wal-Nihaya by Ibn Kathir.

11. Abu Dhar Al-Ghifari

May Allah Be Pleased with Him

11. Abu Dhar Al-Ghifari

Now, my dear readers, let us go to another bright and glowing page of this 'fragrant companionship' and learn about this noble and eminent Companion. He was one of the first to embrace Islam and feared no blame for Allah's Sake.[1] He was the ascetic and the repentant—Abu Dhar Al-Ghifari.

Abu Dhar's Lineage and Upbringing

His full name was Jundub ibn Junadah, better known as Abu Dhar. He belonged to the Ghifar tribe who inhabited the Waddan valley on the road connecting Makkah to the Levant.

The Ghifar tribe survived on the meager offerings that the Quraysh trade caravans traveling between Makkah and the Levant gave them. They were known for blocking the roads of these caravans if they failed to give them what would satisfy them.

Abu Dhar was from this tribe, but he was distinguished by his boldness, his sound mind, and his foresight. He was deeply upset by the idols his people worshipped instead of Allah. He often sat alone, thinking about Allah, the Creator of this universe. He wished he could find the true path to Him.

Abu Dhar was always seeking a brighter future through an imminent dawn that would illuminate the universe and dispel the darkness of ignorance. It was only a short time before he found what he was looking for.

[1] An essential Islamic concept reflected in Islamic teachings where true believers are encouraged to fear only Allah and remain committed to doing what is right and pleasing to Allah, even if it means facing criticism or negative consequences from other people. It means not being afraid of social pressure or opposition because one's ultimate accountability is to Allah.

Abu Dhar Learns About the Advent of the New Prophet

Once Abu Dhar heard the news of the new prophet who had appeared in Makkah, he said to his brother, Unais: "Go to Makkah and learn about this man who claims to be a prophet." Unais went to Makkah and met the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH). When he returned to Abu Dhar, he said to him: "By Allah, I have seen a man who calls for noble morals, enjoins good, and forbids evil."

Abu Dhar asked him: "What do people say about him?" He replied: "They say he is a magician, a soothsayer, and a poet." Abu Dhar was not satisfied with what he heard from his brother and said: "By Allah, you have not satisfied my anxiousness to know about him. Take care of my family for me until I go and investigate more on him."

Abu Dhar's Journey in Search of the Truth

Abu Dhar gathered some provisions for himself for the journey ahead. Carrying his staff and a small waterskin with him, he headed to Makkah, determined to meet the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) and verify his claim to prophethood.

Abu Dhar arrived in Makkah, feeling uneasy as he had apprehensions toward its people. He knew of their aggressive anger at anyone who would dishonor their gods or fail to show appropriate reverence to them and their persecution of all who followed this new religion. Therefore, Abu Dhar preferred to search for the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) secretly, without asking anyone about him.

Abu Dhar Accommodated as `Ali's Guest

When night fell, Abu Dhar lay down in the mosque. `Ali ibn Abi Talib (may Allah be pleased with him) passed by and asked him: "Are you a stranger?" Abu Dhar replied: "Yes." `Ali said: "Come with me [as my guest]."

Abu Dhar went with `Ali and spent the night in his house until it was morning. He carried his waterskin and went to the mosque without anyone of them asking his companion about anything.

Abu Dhar spent the second day without succeeding in reaching the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH). When evening came, he lay down in the mosque. `Ali (may Allah be pleased with him) passed by him and said to him: "Is it not time for this man to return to his home?" (meaning `Ali's house). `Ali then took Abu Dhar with him to his house where he spent his second night. As had happened the day before, neither of them asked the other about anything.

On the third night, `Ali said to his companion: "Will you tell me what has brought you to Makkah, so that I may be able to help you?" Abu Dhar said: "If you keep my matter a secret and give me your pledge, I will tell you." `Ali granted him the pledge he wanted. So Abu Dhar said: "I came to Makkah seeking to meet the man who claims to be a prophet and to hear something of what he says." `Ali's face cheered up and he said: "By Allah, he is truly the Messenger of Allah." When morning comes, follow me wherever I go. If I see something I fear for you, I will stand close to a wall as if I am mending my sandals, and you will proceed."

The First to Use the Greeting of Peace

In the morning, `Ali and his guest walked to the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH), paying no attention to anything until they entered upon the Messenger (PBBUH). As soon as Abu Dhar saw him, the light of faith shone in his heart. He said: "May peace be upon you, O Messenger of Allah." The

Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) replied: "May Allah's Peace, Mercy, and Blessings be upon you."

Abu Dhar was thus the first to greet the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) using the Islamic greeting of peace, and it subsequently became widespread.

Abu Dhar said: "O Messenger of Allah, tell me about Islam," and he (PBBUH) explained Islam and recited some ayahs to him. Abu Dhar soon pronounced the Declaration of Faith (*Shahadah*), embracing Allah's religion before he left his place. He was the fourth or the fifth person to embrace Islam.

Abu Dhar Declares His Faith in Islam and Confronts the Ensuing Challenges

Abu Dhar stayed with the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH), who taught him Islam and recited to him some passages of the Qur'an. He (PBBUH) warned him saying: **"O Abu Dhar, keep this matter secret. Do not tell anyone in Makkah, for I fear that they will kill you."**

The situation in Makkah was serious for anyone who adopted a doctrine that contradicted the beliefs of the Quraysh at that time. But Abu Dhar, who was created to rebel against falsehood, refused to leave Makkah without proclaiming his faith loudly for all the people of Makkah to hear. He said to the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH): "By the One Who has sent you with the truth, I will speak it out loud among them." The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) remained silent.

Abu Dhar came to the mosque while the Quraysh people were sitting and talking together. He called out at the top of his voice: "O people of Quraysh, I bear witness that there is no god but Allah and that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah." No sooner had his words reached their ears than they rose

up angrily, surrounded him, and beat him. He would have died from their beatings had it not been for Al-`Abbas ibn `Abdul Muttalib, the Prophet's paternal uncle, who threw himself over Abu Dhar to shield him from their blows. Al-`Abbas then turned to them and said: "Woe to you! Are you killing a man from the Ghifar tribe although your caravans pass by them?" They stopped and moved away from him.

When Abu Dhar regained consciousness, he went to the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH), who, upon seeing his condition, said to him: **"Did I not advise you to not declare your faith in Islam?"** Abu Dhar replied: "O Messenger of Allah, I had a motive in my heart which I fulfilled."

The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) understood the nature of his new disciple and his ability to confront falsehood, but his time had not yet come. The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) said to Abu Dhar: **"Go back to your people and tell them what you have seen and heard. Call them to believe in Allah. I hope that Allah will benefit them through you and reward you for their sake. When you hear that I have been granted victory, come to me."**

The Remarkable Deeds and Merits of Abu Dhar

1. Calling People to Allah

Abu Dhar returned to his people to begin his journey of calling his community to Allah. The first person he addressed was his brother Unais. After he presented Islam to him, Unais exclaimed: "I have also accepted Islam and believed in it." They both went together to their mother to invite her to Islam. She said: "I have also accepted Islam."

"May Allah Forgive Ghifar and Keep Aslam Safe"

This faithful family embarked upon inviting their tribe to Allah until half of them had accepted Islam and the other half had said: "When the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) arrives in Madinah, we will embrace Islam." Getting his tribe, Ghifar, to embrace Islam was not enough for Abu Dhar; he had higher ambitions. Consequently, he moved to the tribe of Aslam to invite them to Islam.

The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) emigrated to Madinah and settled there, along with the Muslims. One day, Madinah was visited by long lines of pedestrians and riders. They headed toward the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH). This procession consisted of the tribes of Ghifar and Aslam. Abu Dhar brought both of them as Muslims.

The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) looked at their faces with joy and compassion. He (PBBUH) looked at the tribe of Ghifar and said: **"Ghifar, may Allah forgive them."** Then he (PBBUH) looked at the tribe of Aslam and said: **"Aslam, may Allah keep them safe."** How much reward and favor have you attained, O Abu Dhar, through the conversion of these people to Islam?!

Abu Dhar remained in Madinah and asked the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) for permission to serve him.

2. Abu Dhar Strives in Allah's Cause

Abu Dhar did not participate in the Battles of Badr, Uhud, or Al-Khandaq, as he was in the desert at the time, calling people to Allah, as explained earlier.

The Battle of Tabuk

For the Battle of Tabuk, in the ninth year of the *Hijrah*, the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) ordered preparations to encounter the Byzantines, who had begun plotting against Islam. The weather was extremely hot, the distance was long, and the enemy was dangerous, which caused a group of Muslims to make various excuses in order to refrain from setting out.

The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) and his Companions marched forth. On the way, they noticed the absence of some Muslims. They said: "O Messenger of Allah, so-and-so has lagged behind." He (PBBUH) replied: **"Leave him alone! If there is any good in him, Allah will make him join you. If not, Allah has relieved you of him."**

Abu Dhar was one of those absent. The people looked back but could not find him. They said to the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH): "Abu Dhar has stayed behind." The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) repeated his initial statement.

Abu Dhar's camel became slow and weak from lack of sufficient food and water. Its steps faltered due to exhaustion, and however hard Abu Dhar tried to urge it to continue, it was no longer able to move. Fearing that this would cause him to lag behind the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH), Abu Dhar dismounted from his camel, took his belongings, loaded them onto his back, and continued

to trot through the blazing desert, anxiously hoping to catch up with the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH).

"[May it] Be Abu Dhar!"

When the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) stopped at one of the places [along the road] and the Muslims put down their belongings to rest, one of the Muslims saw a man walking in the desert, surrounded by a cloud of dust. He drew the Prophet's attention to him, saying: "O Messenger of Allah, there is a man walking alone on the road." The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) said: **"[May it] Be Abu Dhar!"** The lonely traveler slowly approached them. When he reached the head of the caravan and the people looked at him, they said: "O Messenger of Allah, by Allah, it is Abu Dhar."

A smile lit up the face of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) when he saw Abu Dhar, and he (PBBUH) said: **"May Allah have mercy on Abu Dhar. He walks alone, will die alone, and will be resurrected alone."**

Abu Dhar had a strong excuse to stay behind. But he preferred to take the more difficult path and walk on foot through the blazing desert to catch up with the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH). Such is real love for the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) through active obedience to his commands. It flows from a genuine desire to please Allah and live according to His Will.

3. The Love That the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) Had for Abu Dhar

Just as Abu Dhar greatly loved the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH), the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) loved him with an immense love too.

- The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) said about Abu Dhar: **"Heaven has not shaded nor has the earth carried a person more truthful and trustworthy than Abu Dhar."**[1]

- The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) also said concerning him: **"Whoever would like to see the humility of `Isa (Jesus, PBBUH), let him look at Abu Dhar."**[2]

4. Truthfulness in Speech and Integrity in Action

The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) foretold Abu Dhar's future and summarized his life in these words: **"Heaven has not shaded nor has the earth carried a person more truthful and trustworthy than Abu Dhar."** Brave honesty in both words and actions was the hallmark of Abu Dhar's life.[3] His naturally rebellious nature would not allow him to remain silent in the face of falsehood. Rather, he refuted it and told the truth even when it was hard to say, fearing no one's blame for Allah's Sake[4].

"Be Patient Until You Meet Me"

The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) foresaw the hardships that Abu Dhar would face because of his unwavering honesty and steadfastness. He (PBBUH)

[1] Reported by Al-Tirmidhi, hadith no. 3802.
[2] Reported in *Al-Tabaqat Al-Kubra* by Ibn Sa`d, hadith no. 5407.
[3] This refers to speaking and acting truthfully with courage, especially when the truth is difficult, inconvenient, or potentially challenging. It involves choosing to do what is right and aligning one's actions with one's values, rather than prioritizing ease, comfort, or avoiding potential negative consequences.
[4] This concept is deeply rooted in Islamic teachings. It refers to the act of acting according to one's conscience and divine commands, without being concerned about human criticism or disapproval. Such a concept is due to the believer's ultimate loyalty being to Allah, Who is the only true source of ultimate judgement and reward. This principle encourages individuals to fear Allah above all else, thereby liberating them from the anxiety of public opinion when pursuing what is right.

always instructed him to embrace patience and forbearance as his primary approach and way of life. One day, the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) asked him: **"O Abu Dhar, how will you react if you lived at a time when leaders monopolize the spoils?"** He replied: "By the One Who has sent you with the truth, I will strike (resist this wrong act) with my sword." The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) said to him: **"Shall I guide you to something better than that? Be patient until you meet me (in the Hereafter)."**

Abu Dhar would keep the advice of his Teacher and Messenger (PBBUH). He would not use the sword against those leaders who would enjoy the wealth of the nation, but he would also not remain silent about them. If the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) forbade him from using the sword against them, he (PBBUH) did not forbid him from using his tongue in speaking the truth, which he certainly did.

5. Abu Dhar during the Era of the Two Sheikhs

After the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) joined the Supreme Companion (Exalted be He), Abu Dhar could not bear to remain in Madinah; it had become dark after its leader and its guiding force disappeared along with the radiance and knowledge he (PBBUH) provided through his gatherings.

Abu Dhar departed to the Syrian desert and stayed there for the duration of the caliphates of the two Sheikhs, Abu Bakr and `Umar (may Allah be pleased with them both). He continued to fight in Allah's Cause and participated in the liberation of Jerusalem during the era of `Umar ibn Al-Khattab (may Allah be pleased with him).

The ardent struggler continued to call people to Allah and exhort them to every virtue.

A Glimpse of His Exhortations

- Abu Dhar stood near the Ka`bah one day and said: "O people, I am Jundub Al-Ghifari. Come to your sincere and compassionate brother." People surrounded him. He said: "Have you considered that when one of you intends to travel, will he not take provisions that maintain his well-being and last until he reaches his destination?" They replied: "Yes." He said: "The journey to the Day of Resurrection is farther than what you intend, so take what will benefit you." They said: "What will benefit us?" He replied: "Perform Hajj for [combating] the serious matters (that are coming); fasting on a very hot day [in preparation] for the long Day of the Resurrection; and praying two *Rak`ah*s (units or prayer) in the darkness of the night for [countering] the loneliness of the graves."

- Abu Dhar also said: "Divide your wealth into two dirhams: one to spend on your family from lawful earnings and the other to put forward for your afterlife. The third will harm you and not benefit you, so do not seek it."

"My Best Friend Advised Me To Do Seven Things"

One day, Abu Dhar sat talking to the people and said: "My best friend (the Prophet, PBBUH) advised me to do seven things:

1. He (PBBUH) commanded me to love the poor and be close to them.
2. To look at those below me and not at those above me.[1]
3. Not to ask anyone for anything.

[1] Focusing on the less fortunate rather than the more fortunate, and to frequently remember that all good things come only from Allah.

4. To maintain kinship ties [remain kind, dutiful and respectful toward relatives], even if they turn away from me.

5. To speak the truth, even if it is bitter.

6. Not to fear the blame of any blamer for Allah's Sake [a state of not being afraid of others' criticism when one is acting in accordance with Allah's Commands].

7. To say often: "*La hawla wala quwwata illa billah* (there is neither might nor power except with Allah)."

Abu Dhar lived out these commandments until they became his way of life.

Imam `Ali (may Allah be pleased with him) said: "There is no one left who does not fear blame from others for Allah's Sake except Abu Dhar."

6. Abu Dhar during the Era of `Uthman

`Umar ibn Al-Khattab, the greatest and most just ruler in history, passed away, leaving behind a tremendous void. Victories and spoils continued to flow during the era of `Uthman ibn `Affan, and here Abu Dhar discerned the danger ahead as he saw people's preoccupation with worldly things and their indulgence in luxury. This preoccupation alarmed him and prompted him to declare his disapproval and condemnation of this lifestyle.

The Venerable Struggler

Abu Dhar's anger at the status quo soon erupted and sparked action. He stood up for what is right, just as the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) had described him: **"Heaven has not shaded nor has the earth carried a person more truthful and trustworthy than Abu Dhar."**

Abu Dhar headed to the strongholds of power and wealth and voiced his strong opposition, demanding a fair distribution of wealth and an end to luxury and extravagance. Within a few days, he became the standard around which the masses, especially the working class, rallied. He began with the most prominent among these strongholds in the Levant, where Mu`awiyah ibn Abu Sufyan was the governor. Abu Dhar's call resonated so well that he gained the hearing of the Levant.

Abu Dhar Confronts Mu`awiyah

Abu Dhar stood in front of Mu`awiyah and directly questioned him, without fear or flattery. He asked him about his wealth before he became a ruler and about his wealth today. He reminded him of the Almighty's Words: ﴿O you who believe! Verily, there are many of the (Jewish) rabbis and the (Christian) monks who devour the wealth of humankind in falsehood and hinder (them) from Allah's Way. And those who hoard up gold and silver and spend it not in Allah's Way—announce unto them a painful torment﴾ (translated meaning of Al-Tawbah 9:34). Mu`awiyah replied: "This ayah was revealed regarding the People of the Book (the Jews and the Christians)." Abu Dhar exclaimed: "No, it was revealed regarding us and them."

Abu Dhar advised Mu`awiyah and his companions to give up all the estates and palaces that belonged to them and to only retain the amount that was just enough for a single day, without any excess. The crowds spread the news of this debate and of Abu Dhar's replies. Abu Dhar's slogan was heard everywhere: "Give the hoarders [of gold and silver] the evil tidings of branding irons on the Day of Resurrection."

Abu Dhar Returns to Madinah

Mu`awiyah sensed the danger that Abu Dhar could bring, but he respected the eminent and distinguished position that this great struggler held and refrained from acting against him in any way.

Mu`awiyah wrote to Caliph `Uthman ibn `Affan informing him of the situation and the potential hazard it posed. Consequently, `Uthman summoned Abu Dhar to Madinah.

Abu Dhar accepted the Caliph's invitation and departed to Madinah, leaving behind the Levant where his words and opposition still resonated.

Voluntary Self-Exile

After a long debate between `Uthman and Abu Dhar, neither could convince the other of his view. `Uthman said to Abu Dhar: "Stay by my side. Good things will come and then go to you." Abu Dhar replied: "I have no need of your worldly life." Instead, Abu Dhar asked him to allow him to leave for Rabadhah, a small village in Madinah, and he granted him permission.

By going to Rabadhah, Abu Dhar went into voluntary exile to live a solitary life for the rest of his time on earth.

The Wholesome Opposition

As previously recounted, two types of opposition emerged during the seditions that affected the era of `Uthman ibn `Affan: the wholesome opposition, which came from some venerable Companions. The most prominent among them was Abu Dhar Al-Ghifari. This opposition had one goal: to correct the course of the state and enhance its standing. However, the malicious opposition, led by `Abdullah ibn Saba' and his followers, aimed to destroy the state and shake its foundations.

Therefore, Abu Dhar's response surprised the mutinous conspirators who formed the malicious opposition. When they approached him in Rabadhah, asking him to join them and raise the banner of revolt against the Caliph, he rebuked them with clear and firm words that left no room for doubt or argument. "By Allah, if `Uthman were to crucify me on the tallest piece of wood or mountain, I would listen, obey, be patient, and anticipate a reward from Allah, seeing that this is best for me." The conspirators were stunned and their plans were shattered after Abu Dhar forcefully asserted the authority of `Uthman as Caliph.

Abu Dhar continued his constructive and wholesome opposition and spent his entire life scrutinizing the governors' mistakes and exposing the temptations of wealth and power.

Abu Dhar's Profound Piety and Asceticism

Abu Dharr lived a life of renunciation and austerity, through simple living and self-discipline, transcending the temptations of leadership and wealth.

Here are some examples of his piety and asceticism:

"You Truly Magnify Worldly Possessions!"

One day, a friend of Abu Dhar saw him wearing an old cloak and asked him: "Do you not have another garment? I saw two new garments with you a few days ago."

Abu Dhar replied: "My nephew, I gave them to someone who is more needy than me."

His friend exclaimed: "By Allah, you are in need of them."

Abu Dhar said: "You truly magnify worldly possessions. Do you not see that I have this cloak, another one for Friday prayers, and a goat to milk? What blessing can be better than what we already have?"

"Where Are Your Belongings"

Once a man entered Abu Dhar's house and began to look around, but he found no household articles there.

He exclaimed: "O Abu Dhar, where are your household articles?" He replied: "We have a house there—meaning in the Hereafter—to which we send our best belongings."

The man understood what Abu Dhar meant and said: "But we must have belongings as long as you are in this house—meaning this world."

Abu Dhar replied: "The owner of the house will not leave us there for long."

"You Will Never Attach Me to Your Worldly Matters"

When the governorship of Iraq was offered to Abu Dhar, he refused it, saying: "By Allah, you will never attach me to your worldly matters." Abu Dhar meant that he would not allow worldly interests, including power and wealth, to influence him, control his decisions, or distract him from his principles. He detached himself from the material possessions and transient concerns of the world in favor of focusing on Allah and the afterlife.

Abu Dhar Spends in Charity from the Things He Loves

Abu Dhar said: "Allah (Exalted be He) says: ﴿Never will you attain righteousness until you spend from that which you love﴾ (translated meaning

of Al-Imran 3: 92). This camel was part of my possessions that I love, and I wanted to spend it in Allah's Cause."[1] So he gave this camel in charity.

[1] Giving from one's beloved items, a principle derived from the Qur'an (3:92), goes beyond mere generosity; it is a testament to the truthfulness of one's faith and a sincere act of sacrifice. True righteousness is achieved by giving not just from excess or spare possessions, but from what is most valuable to you, such as your most cherished money, time, or energy.

The Final Chapter of Abu Dhar's Life

After a long life filled with spiritual goals, selfless giving to others, and obedience to Allah, Abu Dhar lay on his deathbed, suffering the agonies of death in Rabadhah.

"A Group of Believers Witness His Death"

Abu Dhar's wife sat beside him, weeping. He asked her: "Why do you weep when death is (an inescapable) reality?" She replied: "I only weep because you will die in a deserted place and I have no garment to shroud you, nor can I carry your bier (i.e., I cannot bury you alone)."

Abu Dhar smiled and said to her: "Be at peace and do not weep. One day, while I was with the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) along with a group of his Companions, I heard him say, **'A man among you will die in a deserted place, witnessed by a group of believers.'** Everyone who was with me in that gathering died in a group or village, and none of them have remained except me. And here I am in the desert, dying. Watch the road, for a group of believers will appear before us. By Allah, I have neither lied nor have I been accused of lying."[1]

While his wife was going back and forth, watching the road and returning to nurse him, his pure soul departed to its Creator. His wife saw a caravan approaching on the road with a group of believers, led by `Abdullah ibn Mas`ud, the Companion of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH). As soon as Ibn Mas`ud saw the [dead] body stretched out with a woman and a boy weeping by

[1] Reported by Ahmad, hadith no. 21467.

its side, he pulled on the reins of his mount to bring it to a halt and he and the riders with him headed toward the place.

Once Ibn Mas`ud's gaze landed on the dead body and he found it to be his companion and brother, Abu Dhar, tears welled up in his eyes. He stood close to his pure body and said: "The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) spoke the truth. '**You walk alone, you die alone, and you will be resurrected alone.**'"

Ibn Mas`ud and the rest of the group prepared his body for burial. They washed him, shrouded him, and buried him.

At the time of burying Abu Dhar, Ibn Mas`ud narrated to his companions the story of Abu Dhar when the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) spoke this prophecy to him during the Battle of Tabuk, as mentioned earlier.

Abu Dhar died in the year 32 A.H., during the reign of `Uthman ibn `Affan, who ordered Abu Dhar's family to be taken into his care and be included in his family.

May Allah's Mercy and Blessings be upon you, O noble struggler, O ascetic, devout and repentant one.

May Allah be pleased with you and please you, O Abu Dhar Al-Ghifari.

12. `Amr ibn Al-`As

May Allah Be Pleased with Him

12. `Amr ibn Al-`As

Now, my dear readers, let us replenish ourselves and boost our souls by spending some precious time with this outstanding guest from the 'fragrant companionship'. He is the astute man of the Quraysh who showed himself to be a paragon of formidable intelligence, acumen, and decisiveness.

Although his conversion to Islam was late, it was a great victory. Through him, two major regions of the world were liberated from Byzantine oppression: Egypt and Palestine. Moreover, he was instrumental in bringing many people into Islam.

He is the eminent commander and imam, `Amr ibn Al-`As, about whom the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) said: **"People have submitted to Allah (i.e., accepted Islam), but `Amr ibn Al-`As has believed in Allah."**[12]

`Amr's Lineage

His full name was `Amr ibn Al-`As ibn Wa'il. His father, Al-`As ibn Wa'il, was one of the Arab rulers during the pre-Islamic period and a prominent figure among them. He belonged to an esteemed and ancient clan that traces back to the highest ranks of the Quraysh nobles.

His mother, Al-Nabighah bint Harmalah, was not of important lineage. Rather, she was a captive slave woman. She was captured during the pre-Islamic

[1] Reported by Al-Tirmidhi, hadith no. 3844

[2] This hadith highlights `Amr ibn Al-`As's strong faith, distinguishing his belief from the general submission of other people at the time. People entered Islam due to various reasons and in different circumstances, while `Amr believed with pure sincerity and a heartfelt desire. He converted to Islam in Abyssinia, two years before the Prophet's victorious entry into Makkah.

period and sold in the market of `Ukaz. `Abdullah ibn Jud`an bought her and gifted her to Al-`As ibn Wa'il. She bore him `Amr ibn Al-`As.

Later in his life, we shall see that some competitors or envious people would use his maternal lineage to harass `Amr ibn Al-`As, referring to his mother while he was sitting on the governor chair or ascending the pulpit in order to diminish his prestige or bring down his image.

The Hostile Positions that `Amr ibn Al-`As Adopted before His Conversion to Islam

`Amr ibn Al-`As was one of the most hostile people toward the Muslims. The Muslims suffered greatly because of him before his conversion to Islam.

To Abyssinia to Pursue the Muslim Emigrants

The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) ordered the Muslims to emigrate to Abyssinia and settle there until circumstances changed for the better. This angered the Quraysh, who resolved to bring the Muslims back to Makkah. They chose `Amr ibn Al-`As for this mission, due to his long-standing friendship with the Negus and his well-known astuteness and cleverness. They provided him with gifts for the Negus and his patriarchs and sent `Abdullah ibn Abu Rabi`ah with him.

When `Amr ibn Al-`As and `Abdullah ibn Abu Rabi`ah arrived at the Negus, and after they had offered the gifts to the patriarchs, they said to the Negus: "O King, some foolish young men from among us have taken refuge in your country. They have abandoned the religion of their own people and have not embraced your faith. They have introduced a religion of their own invention which neither we nor you know. We have been sent to you by the dignitaries of their people to bring them back to their religion and lead them back to their faith."

The Negus replied: "No, by Allah, I will not hand them over until I summon them and ask them about what has been attributed to them."

The Negus summoned the group of the Prophet's (PBBUH) Companions to hear their response. Ja`far ibn Abu Talib was the speaker on behalf of the Muslim emigrants[1].

After the Negus heard the Muslims, he refused to hand them over to `Amr and his companion. He also returned the gifts the Quraysh representatives had given him. The Quraysh envoys, `Amr ibn Al-`As and `Abdullah ibn Abu Rabi`ah, returned to Makkah without any result, having failed miserably in their mission.

[1] The entire dialogue with the Negus has already been stated in a previous section on the life of Ja`far ibn Abu Talib.

`Amr ibn Al-`As Embraces Islam

`Amr ibn Al-`As remained a staunch supporter of the Quraysh, fighting Islam and the Muslims on every occasion. This continued until Allah opened up his soul to faith in Islam, leading him to spiritual enlightenment and inner transformation.

"A Man to Whom the Greatest *Namus* (the Angel of Revelation) Comes"

Following the Battle of Al-Ahzab (the Confederates) and the defeat suffered by the *Mushrikin* (those who associate others with Allah in His divinity or worship), `Amr ibn Al-`As gathered a group of Quraysh, who used to hold him in high regard and listen to him, and said to them: "Do you know, by Allah, I see Muhammad's matter rising greatly. I think that we should join the Negus and be with him. If Muhammad prevails over our people, we will be safe with the Negus. If our people prevail, they recognize our merit and nothing but good will come to us from them." They replied: "This is the right opinion."

They gathered a large amount of leather to give to the Negus as a gift, because he loved leather. `Amr ibn Al-`As and those with him traveled to the Negus to enjoy living with him safely and securely.

One day, while they were sitting in his council, `Amr ibn Umayyah Al-Damri came to him. The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) had sent him to the Negus regarding Ja`far and the other Muslim emigrants. He entered in the presence of the Negus and then left.

When `Amr ibn Al-`As saw this, he asked the Negus to hand over `Amr ibn Umayyah Al-Damri to him to be killed. Thus, the Quraysh would see that

he had killed the Prophet's (PBBUH) messenger, which would elevate his status among the Quraysh.

As soon as the Negus heard Amr's demand, he shouted angrily: "Are you asking me to hand over the envoy of a man to whom the greatest *Namus* (Angel Gabriel, PBUH, who is responsible for delivering revelations from Allah to His Messengers) comes for you to kill him?"

"Obey Me and Follow Him"

`Amr said: "O King, is he as you say?" The Negus replied: "Woe to you, `Amr! How could the matter (truth) of Muhammad escape your knowledge? I know your sound mind and far-sightedness. Obey me and follow him. For, by Allah, he (PBBUH) is on the true path and will prevail over those who oppose him."

Right at this moment, the light of faith shone in `Amr's heart, and he said to the Negus: "Will you take my pledge of allegiance for Islam on his behalf?" He said: "Yes." `Amr extended his hand and pledged allegiance to the Negus for Islam. He then went out to his companions, concealing his conversion to Islam from them.

`Amr Meets with the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH)

`Amr ibn Al-`As bid farewell to Abyssinia and departed. The Negus's words resonated deeply in his soul. His conversation about the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) and the truth he (PBBUH) had brought continued to spur him on to meet the Messenger (PBBUH). He embarked on a sea voyage back to his country, heading toward Madinah to meet the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) and declare his acceptance of Islam before him.

While `Amr was on his way to Madinah, he encountered Khalid ibn Al-Walid and `Uthman ibn Talhah coming from Makkah. He learned that they too intended to meet the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) to embrace Islam.

The three men entered upon the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH), and both Khalid ibn Al-Walid and `Uthman ibn Talhah pledged allegiance to him for Islam. Then Amr ibn Al-`As stepped forward and said: "I pledge allegiance to you on the condition that Allah forgives my past sins." The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) said to him: **"O `Amr, pledge allegiance, for Islam erases whatever came before it."**[1] `Amr pledged allegiance to the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) and then left.[2]

`Amr, who was profoundly moved by this incident, later said: "I am one of the shyest of all people before the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH). I would not let my eyes look at him directly nor did I ever argue with him for anything I wanted until he (PBBUH) met his Lord (Glorified and Exalted be He), out of shyness before him."[3]

From that moment onward, `Amr ibn Al-`As put his exceptional cleverness and courage at the service of Islam.

[1] Acceptance of Islam wipes away all past sins, allowing a person to start a fresh life with Allah (Exalted be He).
[2] Reported by Ahmad, hadith no. 17777.
[3] Reported by Ahmad, hadith no. 17813.

The Remarkable Deeds and Merits of `Amr ibn Al-`As

1. During the Era of Prophethood

The Battle of Dhat Al-Salasil

The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) appreciated the value and capabilities of people and employed them to their fullest potential. He (PBBUH) knew well the exceptional skills, ingenuity, cleverness and sound judgment that characterized `Amr ibn Al-`As. He (PBBUH), therefore, appointed him commander of the Muslim army in the expedition of Dhat Al-Salasil, even though the army included Muhajirun, Ansar, as well as early believers in Islam.

"People Have Submitted to Allah, but `Amr ibn Al-`As Has Believed in Allah"

The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) loved Amr ibn Al-`As greatly and pinned to his chest fragrant words acknowledging his merits:

- The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) said: **"People have submitted to Allah (i.e., accepted Islam), but `Amr ibn Al-`As has believed in Allah."**

- He (PBBUH) also said: **"The two sons of Al-`As are believers: `Amr and Hisham."**[1]

- Moreover, he (PBBUH) said: **"Indeed, `Amr ibn Al-`As is among the righteous ones of Quraysh."**[2]

[1] Reported in *Sahih Al-Jami`* by Al-Albani.

`Amr ibn Al-`As, Governor of Oman

When the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) passed away, `Amr ibn Al-`As was his governor of Oman. He was deeply saddened by the death of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH).

2. During the Era of Abu Bakr Al-Siddiq

`Amr ibn Al-`As performed admirably in the Wars of Apostasy when the caliphate passed to Abu Bakr (may Allah be pleased with him). `Amr visited Banu `Amir, whose leader, Qurrah ibn Hubayrah, was planning to apostatize. He exposed his intentions to apostatize when he said: "O `Amr, the Arabs do not accept this tribute that you have imposed on the people (meaning *Zakah*; obligatory charity, one of the five pillars of Islam). If you exempt them from paying this, they will listen to you and obey you. If you refuse, there is no listening and no obedience."

`Amr ibn Al-`As shouted at the leader of Banu `Amir: "Woe to you! Have you disbelieved, O Qurrah? And are you threatening us with the apostasy of the Arabs? By Allah, I will trample you with our horses in your mother's tent (i.e., in your own house)."

After the Wars of Apostasy ended successfully, Abu Bakr dispatched `Amr ibn Al-`As at the head of an army to confront the Byzantines.

3. During the Era of `Umar ibn Al-Khattab

Abu Bakr passed away and Al-Faruq took over the reins of power. He relied on the capabilities and experience of `Amr ibn Al-`As, and victory was achieved at his hands.

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[2] Reported by Al-Tirmidhi, hadith no. 3845.

The Artabun[1] of the Arabs

Al-Faruq sent `Amr ibn Al-`As at the head of an army to the Levant. It was said to the Commander of the Believers [as a kind of deterrent] that the head of the Byzantine armies in the Levant was an artabun—a leader and commander in the Byzantine language—who was a brave, cunning man. `Umar's response was: "We have sent the artabun of the Arabs [`Amr ibn Al-`As] to confront the artabun of the Byzantines. Let us see what the outcome will be!" Things turned out to be a crushing victory for the artabun of the Arabs and their brilliant leader, `Amr ibn Al-`As. Eventually, the artabun of the Byzantines fled after his army's defeat in the battle.

Victories and Successes Achieved by `Amr ibn Al-`As

- `Amr participated in the Battle of Yarmouk and performed admirably.
- After winning the Battle of Yarmouk, Abu `Ubaidah ibn Al-Jarrah sent `Amr ibn Al-`As to Qinnasrin, and he made peace with the people of Aleppo and Manbij.
- Through him, Allah conquered the coasts of Palestine, one country after another. Then he led the siege of Jerusalem until he instilled despair into the Byzantine artabun who had fled before the artabun of the Arabs, as mentioned above.
- `Amr ibn Al-`As crowned his victories with the liberation of Egypt, adding this precious jewel to the necklace of Islam. There he founded the city of Fustat, where he built his famous mosque, the Mosque of `Amr ibn Al-`As.

[1] The name for a prominent Byzantine general and key military leader.

- He liberated Tripoli. By entering triumphantly into the city, he opened the gates of Africa and the Maghreb to the Muslim armies and later Spain.

4. Instance of `Amr's Astuteness and Exceptional Cleverness

There are many instances in which the brilliance of `Amr ibn Al-`As shone. Indeed, he was one of the most astute Arabs, exhibiting a wealth of originality, creativity, and innovative ideas.

Here are some examples of `Amr's keen intellect, sharp intuition, and quick understanding of situations:

"By Allah, This is `Amr Himself!"

In the Battle of Ajnadayn, when the Muslim commander, Amr ibn Al-`As, besieged the Byzantines in their fortress, the Byzantine commander sent a message to the commander of the Muslim army asking him to send a man from his side to debate and negotiate with him. Some Muslims volunteered to go, but `Amr said: "I will be the messenger of my people to him." He entered the presence of the Byzantine commander acting as if he had been sent by the Muslim commander. `Amr selected only the information that he intended for the Byzantine commander to learn, listened to his words, and studied the place until he had learnt the details he wanted. The Byzantine commander said to himself: "By Allah, this is `Amr himself! There is nothing better to devastate his people than his death." He summoned some of his men and ordered them to throw a rock over `Amr's head as he left the fortress. Without `Amr's knowledge, the Byzantine had prepared everything to guarantee `Amr's death.

As `Amr was on his way out of the fortress, he noticed a suspicious movement on its parapets which greatly aroused his sense of caution. He

immediately acted brilliantly, returning to the Byzantine commander with calm, confident steps, as if he was completely ignorant of the scheme being attempted against him. He entered and said: "An idea has occurred to me that I want to share with you. I have with me a group of the Companions of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) who were among the earliest Muslims. The Commander of the Believers does not make a decision without consulting them, and he does not send an army without placing them at the head of his fighters. I find it proper that I bring you ten of them to hear what I have heard from you and be as clear about the matter as I am."

The Byzantine commander thought that `Amr had naively given him a great opportunity. He was pleased with this suggestion that would allow him to kill ten Companions instead of just one. In a subtle manner, he ordered the plan to assassinate `Amr to be postponed, and the Byzantine commander bid `Amr a cordial farewell. Thus, `Amr ibn Al-`As was saved.

In the morning, after gathering the required information and news about the Byzantine army through his visit the day before, `Amr prepared his army and returned to the Byzantine fortress. Mounted on his horse, he conquered the fortress and forced the Byzantine commander to flee.

"If Someone Has Promised to Pay You Some Money, Take It"

One day, while `Amr was sitting on the governor chair, one of his envious rivals tried to embarrass him by mentioning his mother, who was a slave woman, as mentioned earlier. He enticed a man, in exchange for a large sum of money, to ask `Amr about his mother while he was ascending the pulpit. The man stood up and asked: "Who is the Emir's mother?" `Amr restrained himself and patiently endured the impudent behavior of the man. He replied: "She is Al-Nabighah, the daughter of `Abdullah. She was injured by Arab spears

during the pre-Islamic era and sold in the market of `Ukaz. `Abdullah ibn Jud`an bought her and then gave her to Al-`As ibn Wa'il (meaning his father). She conceived from him and gave birth to the Emir (meaning himself: `Amr ibn Al-`As)."

`Amr discerned, through his keen intuition and intelligence, the malicious intent behind the man's question and that the man who had asked him was merely a tool in the hands of some envious people who intended to embarrass him and diminish his prestige in the eyes of others. So `Amr maintained his composure and further said to the man: "If some of those whose hearts have been torn apart by envy have promised you some money, take it!"

5. `Amr's Comprehensible and Impactful Style and His Eloquence

`Amr ibn Al-`As was one of the brightest, most eloquent, and lucid people.

"By Allah, I Consult My Servants about Important Matters"

`Amr's eloquent speech included the memorable statement: "Men are of three types: a perfect man, half a man, and nothing.

- As for the perfect man, he is the one whose faith and intellect are complete. If he wants to decide a matter, he consults those with sound judgment, and he will always be successful.
- As for the half-man, he is the one whose intellect and faith have been brought to fullness and completion by Allah. But when he wants to decide a matter, he does not consult anyone but says: 'Would I prefer the opinion of people over mine!' So he is sometimes right and sometimes wrong.[1]

[1] His judgments, actions, or ideas are not consistently accurate or incorrect, but rather a mixture of correct and incorrect instances.

– As for the one who is nothing, he has neither faith nor intellect, and he will always be unsuccessful and lagging."

`Amr also said: "By Allah, I even consult my servants about important matters."

"The Creator of This Man and the Creator of `Amr ibn Al-`As Are the One God"

The Commander of the Believers, `Umar ibn Al-Khattab, regarded `Amr's eloquence as a sign of Allah's Power. When he saw a helpless, faltering man, he would say in amazement: "I believe in Allah. The Creator of this man and the Creator of `Amr ibn Al-`As is the one God!"

6. An Overwhelming Trial That Afflicted the *Ummah*

After the death of `Umar ibn Al-Khattab, `Amr ibn Al-`As continued to serve his religion during the caliphate of `Uthman ibn `Affan. Then a severe tribulation swept the *Ummah*, and strong disagreement arose between `Ali ibn Abu Talib and Mu`awiyah ibn Abu Sufyan (may Allah be pleased with them). `Amr held a particular standpoint in this dispute. The origins of this tribulation, its instigator, and what happened in it have already been stated in detail in the second part of this book series, *The Ten Given Glad Tidings of Paradise*.

We must restrain our tongues from evil and carefully chose our words when discussing the stances of the Companions of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) during this tribulation. The Companions were disinterested in material wealth and worldly pursuits. They were all just and trustworthy. Some of them exercised their discretion and succeeded, and some of them exercised their discretion but erred. Those who were correct earned two rewards, and

those who erred earned one reward, as the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) informed us.

May Allah be pleased with all the Companions.

The Final Chapter of `Amr's Life

In the year 43 A.H., after a long, glorious life filled with struggle and sacrifice, `Amr ibn Al-`As lay on his deathbed, reflecting on his life while readying himself to meet his Lord. He was in Egypt, where he had been its governor.

"My Life Had Three Stages"

In the last moments before his departure, `Amr ibn Al-`As reviewed his life at its close, saying to his son: "I have passed through three [major] stages in my life in which I recognized myself[1]:

- "I was a disbeliever in the first part of my life. I was one of the fiercest opponents of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH). If I had died then, Hellfire would have been my fate.

- "When I pledged allegiance to the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH), no one among the people was more beloved to me and more revered in my eyes than him. If I were asked to describe him, I would not be able to because I was the shyest of people before him, to the point that I would not let my eyes look at him [i.e., I never looked at him fully and directly]. If I had died then, people would have said: 'Congratulations to `Amr! He accepted Islam with all the previous good deeds that he

[1] These stages were key milestones for self-discovery and a change in his personal understanding of himself.

had done[1] and died as a good Muslim.' I would have hoped to be among the people of Paradise.

- "Then I was tested with governorship and with material matters, and I do not know whether they were against me or for me."

`Amr's Last Will

`Amr instructed his son `Abdullah concerning his preparation for burial, saying: "When I die, wash me once with pure water, then dry me in a cloth. Next wash me a second time with pure water, then dry me. Finally, wash me a third time with water containing camphor, then dry me and shroud me. When you carry me on the bier, walk in a moderate [balanced and humble] gait. Keep behind the bier, for the front of it is for the angels and the back of it is for the sons of Adam. At the end, when you place me in the grave, pour dirt over me little by little."

`Amr's Last Words— "*La ilaha illa Allah* (There Is No God but Allah)"

`Amr looked up to the heavens with a heartfelt supplication, beseeching his Almighty Lord, saying: "O Allah, You commanded us, but we were neglectful. You forbade us, but we did not desist. O Allah, I have no excuse for me to apologize or strength to be victorious. I am not being arrogant by saying this; rather I am imploring Your Forgiveness. We can only seek Your Forgiveness, O Most Merciful of the merciful ones"

`Amr kept saying humble supplications and prayers until his pure soul returned to its Creator. His last words were: "There is no god but Allah."

[1] All good intentions and acts before accepting Islam are not lost but are acknowledged and rewarded by Allah.

`Amr's body was buried under the soil of Egypt, which knew the path to Islam through him. On this country's land stands his ancient mosque, `Amr ibn Al-`As Mosque—the first mosque in Egypt in which the name of the One and Only God is glorified again and again. There is no Muslim living in the land of Egypt whose faith in Islam will not be counted among the good deeds of `Amr ibn Al-`As. This will be so until the Day of Resurrection. What a favor from Allah that no other favor can surpass!

May Allah's Mercy and Blessings be upon you, O Liberator of Egypt.
May Allah be pleased with you and please you, O `Amr ibn Al-`As.

13. Al-`Abbas ibn `Abdul-Muttalib

May Allah Be Pleased with Him

13. Al-`Abbas Ibn `Abdul-Muttalib

Let us now step into another flower-filled meadow of this "fragrant companionship" that strongly engage our senses with the scents of blossoms and grasses and the vibrant colors of roses. Amid the varied sights, sounds and textures, one luxurious long-stemmed flower stands out. It radiates energy and joy to those around it.

He was the paternal uncle of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH), as well as his steadfast supporter and helper before and after he declared his acceptance of Islam. After the death of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH), he was the one sought by the Companions to make supplication for rain during times of drought. He earned the title of *Saqi Al-Haramain* (the Server or Water Carrier for the Two Holy Sanctuaries) for his esteemed position of providing water to the pilgrims.

He is Al-`Abbas ibn `Abdul-Muttalib (may Allah be pleased with him).

Al-`Abbas's Birth and Upbringing

Al-`Abbas was born two years before the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH), which made him of the same age as the Messenger (PBBUH). They were two young men of the same generation and shared a similar background that led to the similarities in their ideas, attitudes, manners and morals.

Al-`Abbas was inculcated with the same virtues and ethical principles of righteousness as the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH). Al-`Abbas was extremely generous and devoted to maintaining family ties. Although `Abbas was two years older than the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH), he was so well-mannered

with the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) that when he was asked: "Who is greater [in age], you or the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH)?" he would reply: "He is greater, but I was born before him."

Al-`Abbas's Physical Description

Al-`Abbas was one of the tallest, the most handsome, and the most splendid men. His voice was the loudest and his presence was dominant and influential. There was patience in his character, combined with high status, authority, and nobility.

Al-`Abbas Embraces Islam

Al-`Abbas did not declare his entry into Islam until the year of the Liberation of Makkah, but he was not among the *Tulaqa'*.[1] He joined the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) before the Muslims' victorious entry into Makkah. He also had granted protection to Abu Sufyan ibn Harb by bringing him before the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) before the Liberation of Makkah took place.

Reliable evidence and some narrations indicate that Al-`Abbas was among the early Muslims and that he embraced Islam before the *Hijrah* but kept it a secret. He stayed in Makkah after the *Hijrah* as part of a well-thought-out plan that achieved its specific objectives in the best possible way, as we will see shortly.

[1] Literally, the freed ones. They were a group of Makkans who were opponents of Prophet Muhammad (PBBUH) but were granted amnesty by him upon the victorious Liberation of Makkah and they accepted Islam.

The Remarkable Deeds and Merits of Al-`Abbas

1. On the Day of the Second `Aqabah Pledge

On the day of the Second `Aqabah Pledge, Al-`Abbas exhibited deep love and intense protectiveness toward the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH). He acted with evident astuteness and cleverness during this very important meeting.

A delegation of the Ansar—seventy-three men and two women—arrived in Makkah to pledge allegiance to the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) as a formal commitment before he (PBBUH) would emigrate to their city. The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) had formerly informed his paternal uncle, Al-`Abbas, of this pledge, as the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) trusted his uncle and valued his opinion.

The delegation members who were expected to pledge their allegiance sat in the mountain pass near `Aqabah awaiting the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) until he (PBBUH) arrived, accompanied by his paternal uncle, Al-`Abbas ibn `Abdul-Muttalib. Al-`Abbas was the first to speak, saying: "O people of Khazraj[1]! You all know the (esteemed) position that Muhammad holds among us. We have protected him against those of our people (i.e., who do not believe in him). He is honored by his people (Banu Hashim) and well-defended in his city. However, he refuses to be on any side but yours and to join you (in your city). If you think you can fulfil what you have called him to and can defend him against his opponents, assume the responsibility that you have taken. But if

[1] The Arabs used to refer to all Yathribites as Khazraj. Even though Al-Aws and Al-Khazraj were the two principal tribes in Yathrib, when addressed together, they would be called Khazraj.

you think that you will turn him over to his enemies and desert him after he has emigrated to you, then leave him now."

As Al-`Abbas spoke these words, his eyes were attentively fixed on the faces of the Ansar, tracking the impact of his words on them.

"How Do You Fight Your Enemy?"

Al-`Abbas was not satisfied with this speech, but directed a clever question to them, saying: "Describe war for me. How do you fight your enemy?" Their response to this challenging question came from one of them, `Abdullah ibn `Amr, who stood up and said: "By Allah, we are people of war. We have been nourished by it and inherited it from our ancestors, from generation to generation. We shoot arrows until they are all gone, we thrust spears until they all break, and then we march with the swords and engage in [fierce] fighting until one of the fighting parties dies, one of us or one of our enemies."

Al-`Abbas received the answer he was looking for. His worries went away, and his heart was reassured that his nephew would be safe and protected with the Ansar. Whether Al-`Abbas was a Muslim but concealed his belief or continued to follow the religion of his people, his great support to the Prophet (PBBUH) on that day clearly defines his stance against the forces of evil and reflects the dimensions of his outstanding personality as well as his earnest love for the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH).

At that meeting, a wonderful conversation took place between the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) and the Ansar.[1]

[1] For more information on the Second `Aqabah Pledge, please refer to the first part of this book series, *A Biography of the Best Man in Creation (PBBUH)*, by the author

2. On the Day of Badr

On the Day of Badr, Al-`Abbas showed unwavering loyalty to the covenant and promise he made to the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH). Some historians, as mentioned earlier, stated that Al-`Abbas converted to Islam before the *Hijrah* (the Prophet's emigration to Madinah). When Quraysh began their attack on Madinah, Al-`Abbas had successfully informed the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) of the movements being made by Quraysh.

Quraysh, however, did not hide their suspicions about Al-`Abbas's real motives, but they also found nothing concrete to support their suspicions, especially since Al-`Abbas appeared to agree with their beliefs and their views.

Quraysh saw the Battle of Badr as an opportunity to reveal Al-Abbas's inner convictions. They forced him to go out with them [fighting on their side]. He went out compelled.

"Do Not Kill Al-`Abbas if You Meet Him in Combat"

The battle began, and the two armies met. The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) called out to his Companions, saying: **"Men from Banu Hashim and others have been forced out [into battle]. They have no desire to fight us. Whoever among you meets any of them, do not kill him. Whoever meets Abu Al-Bakhtari ibn Hisham, do not kill him. Whoever meets Al-`Abbas ibn `Abdul-Muttalib, do not kill him, for he was forced out."**

The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) did not command his Companions to spare his uncle because of his kinship with him. Rather, he (PBBUH) valued any favor or kind gesture regardless of who provided it. The Prophet (PBBUH)

knew that his uncle hid his faith in his heart and appreciated the visible services he had been secretly providing Islam.

The same was true of Abu Al-Bakhtari, who rejected the oppression exercised by Quraysh when they decided to impose a siege and boycott on the Muslims. He was the first to break this siege and end this unjust boycott, even though he was not known to have embraced Islam, whether secretly or openly.

"I Heard Al-`Abbas Moaning Because of His Chains"

The Companions complied with the orders of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH); Al-`Abbas was not killed but was captured. Ibn Al-Yusr narrated: "I looked at Al-`Abbas on the day of Badr. He stood there like a statue [immobile], his eyes shedding tears. I said to him, 'Are you fighting your nephew?' He replied, 'What do you want from me?' I said, 'To take you a captive, for the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) forbade killing you.' So I captured him."

The battle ended, and evening came which the captives had to spend in chains. The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) remained sleepless. He (PBBUH) was asked about the reason for his sleeplessness, even though Allah had granted him a decisive victory, and he (PBBUH) replied: **"I heard my uncle Al-`Abbas moaning because of his chains."** The Companions hurried to the place where the captives were, released Al-`Abbas from his chains, and returned to inform the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH). He (PBBUH) said to them: **"Go and do the same to (unchain) all the captives."** They did so, and the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) was happy. He (PBBUH) was then able to sleep.

"This Is Better Than What Has been Taken from Me"

The love that the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) had for his uncle, Al-`Abbas, did not mean that he (PBBUH) would treat him differently from other people who were in similar circumstances. When it was decided that financial ransom should be taken from the captives, the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) said to his paternal uncle: **"Ransom yourself, your nephew `Aqil ibn Abu Talib, Nawfal ibn Al-Harith, and your ally `Utbah ibn `Amr."** Al-`Abbas obeyed and ransomed himself and those with him.

Regarding this incident, the Almighty revealed His Saying: ﴿O Prophet! Say to the captives that are in your hands: "If Allah knows any good in your hearts, He will give you something better than what has been taken from you, and He will forgive you, and Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful"﴾ (translated meaning of Al-Anfal 8:70).

Al-`Abbas kept repeating to himself, as he headed back to Makkah: "As for one of the two things that Allah promised us, He has fulfilled it. This is better than what has been taken from me, and I do not know what Allah will do regarding the other."

3. Al-`Abbas Continues to Act as the Prophet's Secret Intelligence Agent in Makkah

Al-`Abbas returned to Makkah with new resolves. After Badr, Quraysh could not deceive him into engaging in any conflict, battle, or aggression against the Muslims. Rather, he remained the eye of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) in Makkah. He kept him informed of all Quraysh's important news and movements.

Al-`Abbas was credited with supplying crucial information related to several battles, especially the Battle of the Trench, when Quraysh and their allies decided to attack Madinah. Al-`Abbas sent a message to the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) informing him of these movements.

Al-`Abbas's message was received in sufficient time to prepare for the confrontation, allowing the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) and his Companions to take decisive action to repel this aggression, which the Arabs had never witnessed before on such a scope and with such magnitude. There was sufficient time for the Muslims to dig the trench, which was a major factor in the victory of the believers and the defeat of the polytheists.

4. Al-`Abbas, the Last of the Emigrants

On the day of the victorious entry into Makkah, the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) set out at the head of a massive army to liberate the city. The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) was met by Al-`Abbas at Al-Juhfah—between Madinah and Makkah. Al-`Abbas had left with his family as a Muslim emigrant.

The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) was gratified by his acceptance of Islam, or rather, by his declaration of Islam. He (PBBUH) said to him: **"You are the last of the emigrants and I am the last of the Prophets."** Then the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) proclaimed: **"There is no emigration after the Liberation (of Makkah)."**[1]

[1] Reported by Al-Bukhari, hadith no. 2825.

Al-`Abbas Helps Abu Sufyan Obtain Protection

Al-`Abbas was awestruck by the vastness and might of his nephew's army. He wanted to alert his people to the situation. He asked the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) for permission to take his mule and search for those who might inform Quraysh that the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) was outside the city, so that they might come out to the Messenger (PBBUH) and ask him for a guarantee of safety before he (PBBUH) entered Makkah by force. The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) gave him permission.

Al-`Abbas was riding the Prophet's mule and searching the area when he encountered Abu Sufyan, who was also overwhelmed by the strength of the Muslims. Abu Sufyan asked Al-`Abbas to help him obtain a guarantee of safety from the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH). Abu Sufyan rode behind Al-`Abbas, who led him into the Muslim camp. Every time the two riders passed by one of the Muslim campfires, the men there looked at him and asked: "Who is this?" But when they saw and recognized the Prophet's mule, with Al-`Abbas riding on it, they would say: "This is the paternal uncle of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) riding upon the Messenger's mule," and they would let him pass.

`Al-Abbas brought Abu Sufyan before the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH), who granted him protection in response to Al-Abbas's request. Abu Sufyan embraced Islam in the presence of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) and testified that no one deserves to be worshipped except Allah and that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah.

5. On the Battle of Hunayn

The Day of Hunayn came to demonstrate the selflessness and heroism of Al-`Abbas ibn `Abdul-Muttalib, and his evident perseverance when need arose. After the Liberation of Makkah, the tribes of Hawazin, Thaqif, and others assembled to launch a decisive and fierce attack on the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH), after sensing the danger of the growing strength of Islam. They said: "Muhammad has finished fighting his people, and he will not leave us alone. Let us attack him before he attacks us."

"We Will Not Be Defeated Today Due to Small Numbers!"

These tribes rallied to attack the Muslims, and the Muslims marched out to encounter them with a strength of twelve thousand men. The Muslims spent the night filled with sure prospects of mounting a sweeping attack on the enemy at dawn. Some of them even became so carried away with overconfidence and pride in their great numbers that they said: "We will not be defeated today due to small numbers!"

The Enemy Surprises the Muslim Army

Allah Almighty wanted to teach a valuable lesson to those Muslims who were impressed by their great numbers and who were overcome by pride. He (Glory be to Him) wanted them to learn not to rely on their strength and numbers, for victory is in His Hands. The lesson came in the form of a shock, which was disturbing but healing.

The Muslim army was caught off guard by an unexpected attack as they were gradually descending into Hunayn Valley. An incessant shower of arrows came raining down upon them from the enemy, who had been lying in wait for them in the darkness of dawn. The shocking surprise caused the Muslim soldiers to rush away, fleeing for their lives, none heeding the other.

The Steadfastness and Unwavering Determination of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH)

The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) saw the horrific impact of this sudden and intense attack on the Muslims, who were fleeing in chaos with the enemy chasing after them, so he (PBBUH) mounted his white mule and shouted: **"Come to me, O people, come to me!"** He (PBBUH) rushed to confront the large enemy force head on, advancing, like a powerful torrent, while repeating: **"I am the Prophet, it is no lie. I am the son of `Abdul Muttalib."**

No one was around the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) but Abu Bakr, `Umar, `Ali ibn Abu Talib, Al-`Abbas ibn `Abdul-Muttalib, `Usama ibn Zayd, and a few other Companions.

Al-`Abbas Calls Back the Fleeing Muslim Soldiers, Who Return and Resume Fighting

Amid this difficult situation, Al-`Abbas was beside the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH), holding the reins of his mule to restrain it from advancing toward the enemy any further.

The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) ordered Al-`Abbas to shout to the people to come back. Al-`Abbas was a tall man with a powerful voice—as described earlier. He began to call out as loudly as he could: "O supporters! O people of Al-Samurah (which was the name of the tree under which the Muslims had gathered to give the Ridwan Pledge[1])." Al-`Abbas kept calling the

[1] A pledge that was sworn under a tree to the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) by his Companions after the rumored death of `Uthman. All the Companions pledged that they would not flee the battlefield, if a battle broke out with Quraysh, and they would keep on fighting firmly and steadfastly to the last man.

army back until the whole valley reverberated with his call. His powerful and commanding voice sounded like a summoner and a warner from Allah; no sooner had it reached the ears of those fleeing from the shock of the surprise attack than they responded: "At your service, at your service...," and they turned back like a hurricane. The war raged again, and the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) shouted: **"Now the battle has intensified."**

The tide of the battle turned against Hawazin, Thaqif, and those who fought with them. Allah's victory was for the believers.

Allah Admonishes Those Who Were Puffed Up by Their Numbers

Concerning this incident, Allah (Exalted be He) revealed words describing the battle and the huge shifting of its course from defeat to victory, including an admonition to those who boasted about their large numbers. This is His Saying: ﴿Truly, Allah has given you victory on many battlefields, and on the Day of Hunayn (Battle) when you rejoiced at your great number but it availed you naught, and the earth, vast as it is, was straitened for you, and you turned back in flight. Then Allah sent down His tranquility upon His Messenger (Muhammad) and upon the believers, and He sent down forces (angels) which you saw not and punished the disbelievers. Such is the recompense of disbelievers﴾ (translated meaning of Al-Tawbah 9:25-26).

6. The Death of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH)

The shock and grief experienced by the Muslims at the death of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) were profound. Al-`Abbas grieved deeply over his death. He was the only one of the Prophet's paternal uncles to witness his death.

He washed him and buried him with the help of some of the Prophet's household.

7. The Water Carrier for the Two Holy Sanctuaries

In the Year of Ramada[1], when a devastating drought struck the people and the country, the Commander of the Believers, `Umar ibn Al-Khattab, and the Muslims with him went out into an open-air space to perform the *Istisqa'* (Rain-Seeking) Prayer.[2]

`Umar stood, held Abbas's right hand, raised it toward the sky, and said: "O Allah, we used to ask our Prophet (PBBUH) to supplicate You for rain, and You would give us rain. We are now asking our Prophet's paternal uncle to supplicate You for rain, so give us rain."

Al-`Abbas raised his hands in supplication to Allah, saying: "O Allah, no calamity is sent down except due to a sin, and no calamity is removed except with repentance. The people have turned to You by my supplication to You because of my status with Your Prophet. These are our hands with which we committed sin stretched before You for mercy and our forelocks directed toward You in repentance. Please send us rain."

The Muslims did not leave their place until the rain came, pouring down until the land was drenched. The Companions approached Al-`Abbas, embracing him and saying: "Congratulations to you, O *Saqi Al-Haramain* (the Server or Water Carrier for the Two Holy Sanctuaries)."

[1] The Year of Ramada (Ashes) is the name given to a year of drought, famine and hunger that struck Madinah and its surroundings during the caliphate of `Umar ibn Al-Khattab. The famine lasted nine months, turning the land black, resembling ash. Hence it became known as the Year of Ashes.

[2] A congregational Islamic prayer performed during a drought to ask Allah Almighty for rain.

The Final Chapter of Al-`Abbas's Life

Al-`Abbas lived a long life of prosperity and fulfillment. Allah (Exalted be He) bestowed upon him many righteous children. The scholar of the nation, `Abdullah ibn `Abbas, was one of his blessed descendants.

When Al-Abbas's time drew near, he freed seventy slaves, hoping for Allah's generous provisions and rewards.

"May Allah Have Mercy on Those Who Attend the Burial of Al-`Abbas ibn `Abdul-Muttalib"

On Friday, the fourteenth of Rajab, in the year 32 A.H., the people of Madinah heard a caller announcing: "O people of Madinah, may Allah have mercy on those who attend the burial of Al-`Abbas ibn `Abdul-Muttalib." The people realized that Al-`Abbas had died.

An unprecedented huge crowd thronged to escort Al-`Abbas to his burial place. The Caliph of the Muslims at that time, `Uthman ibn `Affan, led the Funeral Prayer over him. Al-`Abbas was buried in Al-Baqi` cemetery.

May Allah's Mercy and Blessings be upon you, O paternal uncle of the Prophet (PBBUH).

O water carrier for the Two Holy Sanctuaries.

May Allah be pleased with you and please you, O Abul-Fadl, Al-`Abbas ibn `Abdul-Muttalib.

14. Suhayb Al-Rumi

May Allah Be Pleased with Him

14. Suhayb Al-Rumi

Let us approach another magnificent, large, beautiful to look at, and very powerfully fragrant flower of the honorable companionship. Let us live the coming moments with the man who sold himself seeking Allah's good pleasure and sacrificed everything he owned to win the company of the beloved Prophet (PBBUH).

Our hero is the one who traded with Allah by sacrificing his entire wealth for his faith, and his trade was profitable. He was one of the first to embrace Islam. He is Suhayb ibn Sinan, or Suhayb Al-Rumi (the Roman).

Suhayb's Lineage and Upbringing

His full name was Suhayb ibn Sinan ibn Malik Al-Numayri. His mother was from Banu Tamim. As for his connection with Roman culture, there is a story behind it that holds a precious lesson.

His father, Sinan ibn Malik, emigrated from Makkah to Iraq long before Islam. He lived there and grew to prominence until approximately two decades before the emergence of Islam. He took over Al-Ubulla (a major port city in southern Iraq) and became its ruler on behalf of Khosrau, the Persian king.

In the arms of luxury, in Sinan's palace on the banks of the Euphrates, his son Suhayb was born. He was his father's most beloved son.

From Luxury to Slavery

Suhayb reached the age of five while living in this bliss and comfort. Then a tragic transformative event occurred to him. His mother took him out with her guards and servants to Al-Thani village for a picnic. While they were on their outing, the country was attacked by the Byzantines. A Byzantine detachment raided the village where they were picnicking, killing the guards, looting the property, and capturing the children. Among those captured was Suhayb.

Suhayb was sold in the Byzantine slave market and transitioned from luxury to slavery. He was sold multiple times and passed from one master to another. Suhayb spent his entire childhood and early adulthood in the Byzantine territory, and he acquired their language and dialect through regular exposure and engagement. This allowed him to penetrate the depths of the Byzantine societies and to become aware of the vices and flaws of their communities.

Suhayb Escapes Enslavement

Despite Suhayb's long stay in the Byzantine territory and among its people, his yearning for the day he would be freed from slavery and be reunited with his original homeland never waned.

His feelings of nostalgia and his connection to his Arab homeland were further heightened when he heard a Christian priest say to one of his masters: "The time has come when a prophet will emerge from Makkah in the Arabian Peninsula. He will confirm the message of `Isa (Jesus PBBUH), son of Mary, and bring people out from darkness into light."

When the opportunity arose, Suhayb fled the humiliation of slavery, which had stripped him of his dignity, identity, and rights. He headed toward Makkah. As soon as he arrived and the people interacted with him, they nicknamed him 'Suhayb the Roman,' due to his accent and red hair.

Suhayb had a rosy complexion, red hair, and was of average height. He was neat in appearance and dress.

Suhayb Forms an Alliance with `Abdullah ibn Jud`an

Suhayb settled in Makkah and formed an alliance with one of its leaders, `Abdullah ibn Jud`an. He kept working with him in trade business until, over time, he amassed a great wealth.

According to some historical accounts, Suhayb was sold as a slave to `Abdullah ibn Jud`an, who was soon impressed by his intelligence and energy. He freed him and provided him with the opportunity to trade with him.

In any case, Suhayb built a large, profitable business that generated considerable wealth.

Suhayb Embraces Islam

Despite the prosperity of his business and the continued growth of his wealth and profits, Suhayb was not distracted from his main pursuit. The words of the Christian priest that he heard while he was in the Byzantine lands, regarding the advent of the awaited Prophet, still rang in his ears and shook his heart. He eagerly hoped for the fulfillment of this prophecy.

It was only a short time before the light of Islam shone in the region, replacing the darkness of corrupt beliefs.

In the House of Al-Arqam ibn Abu Al-Arqam

One day, Suhayb was returning to Makkah from one of his business journeys when he was told that Muhammad ibn `Abdullah (PBBUH) had been sent as a prophet. He (PBBUH) urged people to worship Allah alone and abandon the worship of idols. He (PBBUH) promoted justice, benevolence, and generosity, and he (PBBUH) forbade indecency, wrongdoing, and aggression.

Suhayb asked: "Is he not the man commonly distinguished by the epithet of *Al-Sadiq Al-Amin* (the Truthful and Trustworthy)?[1]

They replied: "Yes."

In the morning, before life began to move on the roads of Makkah, Suhayb headed for the house of Al-Arqam ibn Abu Al-Arqam (the secret gathering

[1] The Prophet's noble character stood him out as the most impeccable one ever, to the point that his polytheistic people used to call him '*Al-Saddiq* (the Honest One)' and '*Al-Amin* (the Trustworthy One)' long before he was commissioned with prophethood.

place for early Muslims in Makkah). He knew that the Prophet (PBBUH) was there, teaching Islam to early Muslims and new converts.

Suhayb proceeded cautiously, taking care not to be detected by anyone from Quraysh. When Suhayb reached Al-Arqam's house, he found his friend `Ammar ibn Yasir at the door. Suhayb hesitated for a moment, then approached `Ammar and asked him: "What do you want, `Ammar?"

`Ammar replied: "The same thing you want?"

Suhayb said: "I want to go in to meet this man and hear what he has to say."

`Ammar replied: "I want that too."

Suhayb said: "Let us go in together."

Suhayb and `Ammar entered the presence of the Prophet (PBBUH) together, and he (PBBUH) presented Islam to them, which they then accepted.

They stayed there all day, learning from the guidance of the Prophet (PBBUH) until it was evening. In the deep of night, they left the Prophet's presence in secret, their hearts filled with the light of faith.

The Foremost Believers

Suhayb left the house of Al-Arqam, after meeting the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH), fundamentally different due to his experience there. His relationship with people, the world, and himself had taken on a new character.

With an ascetic and devoted soul, Suhayb embraced life that had become more profound and meaningful in his eyes. Suhayb was not content with declaring his Islam privately in the presence of the Messenger of Allah

(PBBUH), but he wanted to announce it loud and clear, powerfully striking with his announcement the ears of the polytheists. He was among the first to declare their Islam publicly.

Ibn Mas`ud said: "The first to declare their Islam publicly were seven: the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH), Abu Bakr, `Ammar ibn Yasir, his mother Sumayyah, Suhayb, Bilal, and Al-Miqdad."[1]

So here was Suhayb at the forefront of the first believers, not only in his conversion to Islam but also in declaring his profession of Islam.

Whenever a certain person is referred to as being at the forefront of the leaders in their field—such as science, sports, and so on—immense honor and recognition are bestowed upon them for their exceptional skill, influence, and expertise.

May abundant happiness be showered on Suhayb for his precedence and excellence that positioned him at the front rank of the Muslims.

Patience in the Face of Harm

Suhayb's courageous proclamation of his faith in Islam came with significant personal cost. He suffered the same persecution as Bilal, `Ammar, Sumayyah, and other oppressed Muslims. Yet he endured the harm inflicted by Quraysh with immense patience, accepting Allah's Decree, trusting Allah's Plan, and hoping for Allah's generous provisions and rewards. This was because he knew that the path to Paradise was fraught with hardships.

[1] Reported by Ibn Majah, hadith no. 150.

"A Profitable Sale, O Abu Yahya"

The day of the emigration to Madinah came, on which Suhayb performed an outstanding deed that is far more valuable than any amount of material wealth.

The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) embarked on his emigration journey in the company of Abu Bakr. Suhayb learned of his departure and wanted to accompany the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) and Abu Bakr. But once Quraysh sensed his resolve to emigrate, they impeded him from achieving his aim. They surrounded him with guards to prevent him from escaping their grasp.

Suhayb Escapes His Guards by Feigning a Severe Stomach Ailment

The guards responsible for monitoring Suhayb were always vigilant. Suhayb was left with no other way than to use trickery. One cold night, Suhayb pretended to have a problem with his stomach and went out many times as if he was relieving himself. His guards thought he was sick, which caused them to become careless and fall asleep. Suhayb slipped away from them, and he headed toward Madinah.

"If I Leave You My Wealth, Will You Let Me Go?"

Not long after Suhayb's escape, his guards noticed his absence. They sent their men after him until they caught up with him. When Suhayb sensed that they were getting closer, he stood on a high place, took out his arrows from his quiver, and threatened: "O Quraysh, you know that I am one of the most skilled and accurate archers among people. By Allah, you will not reach me until I kill

one of you with every arrow I have. Then I will strike you with my sword until nothing of it remains in my hand. Come forward if you wish." When they realized that preventing him from emigrating was useless, they decided not to let him leave with his wealth.

One of them said: "By Allah, we will not let you get away with your life and your wealth. You came to us as a poor wretch, then your wealth grew among us, and you rose to a high status."

Suhayb said: "Tell me, if I leave you my wealth, will you let me go?"

They replied: "Yes."

Suhayb directed them to the location where he kept his valuables in his house in Makkah. They left him alone and returned to Makkah to seize all his wealth. They found it at the exact place that he had specified.

The Disciples of *Al-Sadiq Al-Amin*

It is astonishing how they took Suhayb's words for granted without suspicion or investigation. They did not detain him until they were certain of the truth of his words or even obligated him to take an oath or a serious commitment that could not be easily waived. They just believed what he said unconditionally. In their eyes, Suhayb was a truthful and trustworthy man. Why not? Indeed, he was one of the followers and disciples of *Al-Sadiq Al-Amin* (PBBUH).

Suhayb's Outstanding Deed

Suhayb began his emigration journey, covering the distance as fast as he could, yearning to join the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH). He was fleeing

Makkah to keep his faith safe and strong at Madinah, having no regret for the wealth that had been taken from him, which he had consumed his youth collecting.

At Quba', Suhayb met with the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH). As soon as the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) saw him approaching, he (PBBUH) called out to him with rapturous joy: **"A profitable sale, O Abu Yahya! A profitable sale, O Abu Yahya!"**[1] He (PBBUH) repeated this three times. Suhayb's face overflowed with happiness, and he said: "By Allah, no one reached you before me, and none could have told you this except Jibril (Angel Gabriel, PBUH)."

To honor Suhayb's outstanding deed, a special revelation was sent down from Allah, the Most High, about him: ﴿And of humankind is he who would sell himself, seeking Allah's pleasure. And Allah is full of kindness to (His) slaves﴾ (translated meaning of Al-Baqarah 2:207).

Indeed, Suhayb had purchased his believing soul with all the wealth he had spent his life accumulating, as no treasure could equal Allah's good pleasure and closeness to the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH).

[1] The greeting signifies that Suhayb's self-sacrifice was a successful and rewarding transaction: a 'profitable sale' in Allah's Sight.

In the Company of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH)

Suhayb took his place in the caravan (community) of believers, moving together toward a common spiritual goal and enjoying the company of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH).

About his companionship with the Prophet (PBBUH) and his exceptional loyalty to him, Suhayb narrated:

- "The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) was never involved in an important situation without me being present."
- "He (PBBUH) never received a pledge of allegiance without me being present."
- "He (PBBUH) never dispatched a military unit without me being present."
- "He (PBBUH) never led an army, at the beginning or the end of his life, without me being on his right or left."
- "Whenever the Muslims were threatened from the front, I was there in front of them [supporting them and ensuring the group's safety from the front]. And whenever they were threatened from the rear, I was there at the back of them [supporting them and ensuring the group's safety from behind]."
- "I never let the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) stay in a position between myself and the enemy, until he (PBBUH) met his Lord (meaning: he

would always stand ready to protect the Prophet, PBBUH, and willing to sacrifice himself for him)."

This is such a superb image that depicts Suhayb's sincere emotions of exceptional faith and great loyalty.

Suhayb's Good Sense of Humor

The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) loved Suhayb with a great love. In addition to his piety and devotion, Suhayb was also a lighthearted person.

One day, the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) saw Suhayb eating some fresh dates while he had conjunctivitis in one of his eyes. The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) said to him cheerfully: **"Do you eat dates while you have conjunctivitis in one eye?"** He replied: "I am chewing on the other side." The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) laughed.

Suhayb's Consistent Commitment to Good Deeds

Suhayb continued to serve his religion and his Messenger (PBBUH), using all his strength and spending his wealth and energy on Allah's Cause. He was generous and giving, helping everyone in need and aiding those in distress.

Suhayb continued to act righteously, upholding a high moral standard in his actions and words, until the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) died while he was pleased with him.

Caliph `Umar Appoints Suhayb to Lead the People in Congregational Prayers

Days passed filled with momentous events, and Suhayb remained true to his pledge and promise to serve his religion during the caliphate of Abu Bakr and later the caliphate of `Umar ibn Al-Khattab.

When Caliph `Umar was stabbed and felt the approach of his death, he did not forget the worth of Suhayb. He chose him to lead the Muslims in prayer until the *Shura* Council would agree on the new Imam (caliph). `Umar clearly said: "Let Suhayb lead the people in prayer."

This is a great acknowledgment by Al-Faruq[1] of all that Suhayb had done and all that he was. `Umar, especially during those moments when his pure soul was preparing to meet his Lord, would think a thousand times before making his choice. Indeed, no one would be more fortunate than the one chosen by Al-Faruq at those serious moments.

Suhayb kept leading the people in prayer until the *Shura* Council agreed on the Imam of the Muslims.

Suhayb continued to occupy a great position during the caliphate of `Uthman, exerting every effort in Allah's Path.

[1] The title of 'Al-Faruq' was given to `Umar by the Prophet (PBBUH). It means the one by whom truth and falsehood are separated and distinguished.

The Final Chapter of Suhayb's Life

Suhayb continued to strive in Allah's Way with his life, possessions, and righteous deeds, seeking Allah's Good Pleasure. He witnessed Allah's Grace upon the believers and the abundant blessings and gifts that they received from Allah. Thus, disbelief in the lands of Persia and Byzantium lands was shattered; Suhayb felt a sense of peace settle deep within him, and he rejoiced in Allah's Grace upon him and the believers. When the sedition arose, Suhayb withdrew himself and did not take anyone's side.

After a life filled with giving, and when Suhayb was nearly seventy years old, his pure soul departed to his Creator. He died in Madinah in the month of Shawwal in the year 38 A.H.

May Allah's Mercy and Blessings be upon you, O you who profitably traded with Allah Almighty.

May Allah be pleased with you and please you, O Abu Yahya, Suhayb Al-Rumi.

15. Zayd ibn Thabit

May Allah Be Pleased with Him

15. Zayd ibn Thabit

Here we are, my dear readers, moving from flower to flower, like a bee gathering nectar, when a particularly striking flower attracts our attention due to its variety of colors and individuality.

Allah (Exalted be He) used him to preserve His Noble Book. No Muslim opens the Glorious Qur'an and reads a surah (chapter) or ayah from Allah's Book without expressing gratitude and appreciation to this great name. Every ayah that is recited from Allah's Book, day or night, is recorded as a good deed in the scale[1] of this noble Companion.

He was the scribe of the divine revelation and the one tasked by Caliphs Abu Bakr and `Uthman to collect the Qur'an into a single manuscript. He was the great Imam, the sheikh of reciters, Zayd ibn Thabit (may Allah be pleased with him).

Zayd Embraces Islam

Right after the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) emigrated to Madinah, Zayd embraced Islam at the age of eleven, with the other members of his family. He was blessed by a special supplication by the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH).

[1] Every action, breath, and intention are precisely measured in a physical scale that will weigh a person's deeds on the Day of Judgment.

Zayd Shows Eagerness to Participate in the Battles of Badr and Uhud

When the Battle of Badr came closer, and the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) was preparing his army to encounter the enemy, Zayd ibn Thabit approached him. He was a young boy then, not yet thirteen years old, glowing with intelligence, brilliance, and zeal. He approached the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) and said: "May I be sacrificed for you, O Messenger of Allah. Permit me to be with you and fight the enemies of Allah under your banner." The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) gave him a look of joy and admiration, patted him gently on the shoulder, and spoke some comforting words to him. He (PBBUH) sent him away due to his young age and small build.

The Battle of Uhud occurred, and Zayd once again was not granted permission to join the Muslim army, for the same reasons that prevented him from participating in the Battle of Badr: his young age and small stature.

Zayd Identifies His Own Strengths

Zayd ibn Thabit realized that he could not gain closeness to the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) in the field of war and physical power due to his young age and small stature, so he began to look within and discover his natural talents and how he could harness them to serve Allah's religion and draw closer to the Messenger (PBBUH). Eventually, he found what he was looking for. He recognized that Allah (Exalted be He) had gifted him with an excellent, sharp memory, a love of knowledge, and a passion for learning. He hoped that this might bring him closer to the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH). He mentioned this ambition to his mother, who was delighted. She informed some men from her people of her son's aspirations.

The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) Listens to Zayd

Zayd, accompanied by some men from the Ansar, went to the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) and proposed the matter to him, saying: "O Messenger of Allah, this is our son, a boy from Banu Al-Najjar. He has memorized seventeen surahs (chapters) of Allah's Book and recites them as they were revealed to your heart. He is also adept at reading and writing. He wants to draw closer to you and adhere to your company. Listen to him if you wish."

The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) heard some Qur'anic passages that Zayd had memorized. His recitation was proficient, clear, beautiful, and reflected his deep emotion. His pauses while reciting showed he was not just reciting the words but actively feeling and understanding their meaning.

The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) Appoints Zayd as His Translator

The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) was pleased with Zayd's recitation and saw some inherent capacities beyond what his people had described, which Zayd had not yet fully utilized, especially his mastery of writing coupled with his passion for learning. The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) turned to Zayd and said: **"O Zayd, learn the writing of the Jews (the Hebrew script) for me, for I do not trust them (the Jews) in [correctly transmitting] the messages between us (me and them)."** Zayd replied: "At your service, O Messenger of Allah."

The clever young man focused his energy on learning Hebrew, and in less than half a month, he returned to the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) fluent in both reading and writing Hebrew. When the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) saw Zayd's capacity in accomplishing great feats, he (PBBUH) asked him: **"Do you know Syriac?"** Zayd replied: "No." He (PBBUH) said: **"Learn it."**

Just as Zayd had learned Hebrew in two weeks, he learned Syriac in seventeen days.

Zayd returned to the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) fluent in both languages, thus gaining the Messenger of Allah's confidence. He became the Messenger of Allah's translator, writing for him when he (PBBUH) needed to address letters to the Jews and other people, and reading their letters to him (PBBUH).

Zayd Becomes the Prophet's Personal Scribe of Divine Revelation

Zayd's talent was evident early on, leading to a swift recognition of his skill. The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) quickly became confident in his ability as well as integrity, trustworthiness, and comprehension of the texts, and so he (PBBUH) entrusted him with the message from Heaven to Earth. Every time an ayah of the Qur'an was revealed to the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH), he (PBBUH) would summon Zayd and say to him: **"Write, Zayd,"** and he would write it down.

Zayd would receive the Qur'an directly from the mouth of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH), fresh, original, and with an explanation of the reasons for any ayah's revelation. His soul would shine with the light of its guidance, and his mind would be enlightened by the secrets of its law. Thus, this fortunate young man, Zayd ibn Thabit, specialized in the Noble Qur'an and became the primary reference point for it after the death of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH).

A Vital Lesson To Learn from Zayd's Diligence

Let us pause for a second and give this some thought. Allah Almighty has equipped each person with unique abilities and dormant potential in some field. This talent may be the individual's source of strength, but it remains hidden inside. It needs to be discovered and used for the benefit of oneself and others. We must search and examine ourselves carefully and with honesty to identify our inner strengths and how we can utilize them in the service of our religion to bring ourselves closer to Allah and His Messenger (PBBUH). This is the essential insight gained from the life of the noble Companion, Zayd ibn Thabit. He failed to be a soldier in combat. Instead, he became a scholar and an important reference for Muslims because he recognized his strengths and utilized them properly.

Zayd's Remarkable Stance on the Day of Saqifah[1]

Zayd (may Allah be pleased with him) continued to be close to the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH), writing down the divine revelation for him and carrying out all his commands, until the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) died while he (PBBUH) was pleased with him.[2]

The Day of Saqifah came when the Muhajirun (the Emigrants from Makkah) and the Ansar (the Supporters of the Prophet, PBBUH, from the local inhabitants of Madinah) gathered to choose a caliph for the Muslims. A great

[1] Saqifah of Banu Sa`idah, simply known as the Saqifah, was a roofed structure that served as a communal gathering place for the Banu Sa`idah clan of the Banu Khazraj tribe where decisions were made and public affairs were discussed. The Saqifah is significant as it is the site where Abu Bakr was elected as the first Caliph of the Muslims, after the death of Prophet Muhammad (PBBUH).

[2] This emphasizes Zayd's high status and good standing with the Prophet (PBBUH) and also conveys a sense of righteousness and approval from the Prophet (PBBUH).

conflict almost broke out between them. The important representatives among the Ansar rose and suggested to the Muhajirun (they share the leadership), saying: "One man (caliph or ruler) from us and one man (caliph or ruler) from you." Here Zayd ibn Thabit, who was from the Ansar, at once rose and said: "The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) was from the Muhajirun, and we are his supporters. The caliph must be from the Muhajirun, and we his supporters, just as we were the supporters of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH)." Abu Bakr said: "May Allah reward you well, O group of the Ansar, and may He keep your speaker steadfast."

Thus, the conflict was nipped in the bud before it even began, thanks to the wisdom and insight of Zayd ibn Thabit (may Allah be pleased with him).

The Collector of the Noble Qur'an

The most outstanding deed of Zayd ibn Thabit, which is more valuable than the whole earth full of gold, was his significant role in the noblest mission in the entire history of Islam: the task of gathering all the written and memorized ayahs to create the first complete manuscript of the Qur'an.

Zayd Collects the Noble Qur'an on the Orders of Caliph Abu Bakr

Many Qur'an memorizers were martyred during the Wars of Apostasy, especially in the Battle of Yamamah. This aroused the fears of `Umar ibn Al-Khattab. He appealed to Caliph Abu Bakr Al-Siddiq for strong and immediate action, urging him to quickly order the compilation of the Qur'an before death would claim the rest of the reciters and memorizers. The Caliph sought guidance from his Lord and consulted his Companions. Then he summoned Zayd ibn Thabit and said to him: "You are a young, wise man. We do not doubt your ability [to live up to your new responsibility]. You were one of the scribes of the divine revelation for the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH). Trace (any sources and materials containing) the Qur'an and collect it."

"Moving a Mountain from Its Place Is Easier for Me Than Collecting the Qur'an"

Zayd set out to accomplish the enormous task he was assigned, and he performed admirably in it. He proceeded to collect the scattered pieces of the Qur'an written on various materials (such as palm fronds and thin stones) and from the chests of the memorizers, taking care of every ayah, every word, and every letter, until he compiled the Qur'an, organized and ordered from

beginning to end, into a single copy. This copy of the Qur'an remained with Abu Bakr Al-Siddiq until his death. Then it remained with `Umar ibn Al-Khattab throughout his life, and after his death, it was with the Mother of the Believers, Hafsah bint `Umar.

Zayd ibn Thabit, describing the difficulty of the task he was assigned, said: "By Allah, if they had ordered me to move a mountain from its place, it would have been easier for me than what they ordered me to do, which is to collect the Qur'an."

Zayd Transcribes the Noble Qur'an on the Orders of Caliph `Uthman

During the caliphate of `Uthman ibn `Affan, as the liberation of lands increased and many people embraced Islam, different ways in recitation began to appear across the expanding Muslim empire. This alarmed many of the Companions, most notably Hudhayfah ibn Al-Yaman who noticed variations in the way people were reciting the Qur'an. He said to Caliph `Uthman: "O Commander of the Believers, save this nation before they disagree about the Book (the Qur'an) as the Jews and Christians disagreed (about their own scriptures)."

The Caliph sought guidance from his Lord and consulted his Companions. Just as Zayd ibn Thabit had played an enduring role in collecting the Qur'an [from various sources into a single manuscript] during Abu Bakr's lifetime, he also played a significant role in transcribing the Qur'an into a single version [which would be the final reference for everyone] during the reign of `Uthman ibn `Affan.

Just as Abu Bakr had previously sought help from Zayd ibn Thabit regarding collecting the Qur'an, `Uthman ibn `Affan sought help from him in unifying the Muslim community around a single standard version.

Zayd assembled his companions and assistants and brought the master copy of the Qur'an from the house of Lady Hafsah bint `Umar. They devoted themselves to this significant task and created several identical copies from the original manuscript of the Qur'an. `Uthman sent a copy of this standard version to each province and ordered all personal copies to be burned.

These are the same copies of the Qur'an that we have to this day. Allah Almighty used these noble Companions, foremost among them Zayd ibn Thabit, to preserve His Glorious Book.

Zayd's Outstanding Virtues and Knowledge

Zayd's deep knowledge and comprehension of the Glorious Qur'an and his long association with the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) made him a beacon of guidance [as an authoritative figure on the Qur'an] for the Muslims. He attained a high status among the people and became the object of their respect and honor. Caliphs consulted him on difficult matters, and the public sought his advice on confusing issues, especially inheritance laws.

Here are some of the sayings of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) and his noble Companions about Zayd's merit and knowledge:

- Anas ibn Malik narrated that the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) said: **"The most knowledgeable in the science of inheritance among my followers is Zayd ibn Thabit."**[1]

- `Umar ibn Al-Khattab said: "O people, whoever wants to ask about the Qur'an, let them go to Zayd ibn Thabit, and whoever wants to ask about jurisprudence, let them go to Mu`adh ibn Jabal."

- The eminent scholar of the nation and the vast sea of knowledge, `Abdullah ibn Abbas, saw Zayd ibn Thabit about to mount his riding animal. He stood before him, holding the stirrup and reins of his riding animal [to lead it]. Zayd said to him: "Step aside, O cousin of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH)." Ibn `Abbas replied: "No, for this is how we have been commanded to treat our scholars."

[1] Reported by Ibn Majah, hadith no. 154.

- Ibn Abbas also said: “The learned Companions of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) knew that Zayd ibn Thabit was among those firmly grounded in knowledge.”

- Thabit ibn `Ubayd said: “I have never seen a man more humorous at his home nor more dignified at his assembly place than Zayd ibn Thabit.”

The Final Chapter of Zayd's Life

After a long, blessed life filled with dedication, sacrifice, knowledge, and teaching, Zayd ibn Thabit lay on his deathbed. His pure soul ascended to its Creator, and he joined the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH), along with the prophets, the truthful ones, and the martyrs.

When Zayd died, the Muslims wept for the immense knowledge that would be buried with him.

- Abu Hurayrah said: "The eminent scholar of this nation has died. Perhaps Allah will make Ibn `Abbas his successor."

- Ibn `Abbas said: "This is the way scholars depart. Today, much knowledge has been buried."

Zayd ibn Thabit departed this world. Every time we read a surah or an ayah of Allah's Book, we cannot forget the tremendous effort put by those whom Allah chose to compile the Qur'an and preserve it, foremost among them being Zayd ibn Thabit.

May Allah's Mercy and Blessings be upon you, O scribe of the divine revelation and compiler of the Noble Qur'an.

May Allah be pleased with you and please you, O Zayd ibn Thabit.

16. Sa`d ibn Mu`adh

May Allah Be Pleased with Him

16. Sa`d ibn Mu`adh

Each individual flower representing the honorable Companions is distinct from others. No flower in the bouquet clashes with another or is out of place. Every flower belongs there and makes it the beautiful bouquet it is.

Let us, my beloved readers, welcome this radiant flower with a gentle smile. In the following pages, we will encounter a man whose conversion to Islam illuminated Madinah and brought eminence and glory to the Muslims.

He was the one whose strong positions in support of Islam at the Battles of Badr, Uhud, and Al-Ahzab (the Confederates) are engraved in letters of light.

He was the one for whom the Throne of the Most Merciful Lord shook with joy at the arrival of his soul. He is the heroic martyr, Sa`d ibn Mu`adh.

Sa`d's Lineage

His full name was Sa`d ibn Mu`adh ibn Al-Nu`man ibn `Abdul-Ash'hal, Abu `Amr Al-Ansari Al-Awsi.

Sa`d's Physical Description

Sa`d ibn Mu`adh was a fair-complexioned, tall, strong and handsome man.

Sa`d Embraces Islam

Sa`d ibn Mu`adh was a chief among his people—Banu `Abdul-Ash'hal. After the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) sent Mus`ab ibn `Umair as an ambassador to preach Islam in Madinah, many people embraced Islam through him. However, Sa`d clung to his people's faith.

Mus`ab Visits the Dwellings of Banu `Abdul-Ash'hal

One day, Mus`ab ibn `Umair set out with Asaad ibn Zurarah (the maternal cousin of Sa`d ibn Muadh), heading for the dwelling place of Banu `Abdul-Ash'hal. They reached a well called 'Maraq,' where many men and women gathered around them, with many of them accepting Islam.

Sa`d ibn Mu`adh and Usayd ibn Hudayr, the two chieftains of Banu `Abdul-Ash'hal, still followed the pagan faith of their people at that time. When they heard that Mus`ab and Asaad ibn Zurarah were preaching Islam in their neighborhood, Sa`d said to Usayd: "Go and forbid them from coming to our neighborhood. Asaad ibn Zurarah is my maternal cousin. If it were not for that, I would have spared you this (mission)."

Usayd took his spear and headed toward Mus`ab and Asaad ibn Zurarah. When he arrived, he stood there, cursing them. Mus`ab said to him: "Why not sit down and listen [instead]? If you like the matter, accept it. If you dislike it, we will refrain from what you dislike [i.e., refrain from discussing this issue any further]."

As soon as Usayd sat down and listened to Mus`ab, acceptance of Islam became evident on his face before he even spoke. He gladly embraced Islam.

"Coming to You Now Is a Chief Obeyed by His People"

Usayd returned to Sa`d ibn Mu`adh, and he said to him: "I spoke to the two men, and by Allah, I saw nothing wrong with them." Sa`d stood up angrily, took his spear, and went out to them. When he arrived, he stood there, cursing them. He said to Asaad ibn Zurarah: "O Abu Umamah, by Allah, were it not for the kinship between us, I would have acted more firmly. Do you make us hear what we hate in our neighborhood?"

Asaad ibn Zurarah whispered to Mus`ab: "By Allah, a chief obeyed by his people has come to you. Should he follow you, not even two persons of them will stay behind."

The Breezes of Faith Blow Gently on Sa`d's Heart

Mus`ab said to Sa`d: "Why not sit down and listen [instead]? If you are pleased with the matter and desire it, accept it. If you dislike it, we will keep away from you that which you dislike?" Sa`d said: "You have spoken fairly." Then he planted his spear in the ground and sat down.

Mus`ab talked to Sa`d in a sweet and refined style, presented Islam to him, and recited the Noble Qur'an to him. Gentle breezes of faith began to waft over Sa`d's heart, bringing him peace and guidance. Soon acceptance of Islam was evident on his face before he even spoke. Once Mus`ab finished speaking, Sa`d asked him: "What should you do when you embrace Islam and join this religion?" He said: "Have a bath and purify your garment, utter the Testimony of Truth (*Shahadah*), and then pray two *Rak`ah*s (units of prayer)." Sa`d rose, washed himself, purified his garment, prayed two *Rak`ah*s, and then returned to his people.

The Sub-Clan of Banu `Abdul-Ash'hal Embrace Islam

As Sa`d's people saw him approaching, they said: "By Allah, Sa`d has come back to you with a different face than the one he left with [i.e., returned with a different perspective than when he had left]." When Sa`d stood before them, he said: "O Banu `Abdul-Ash'hal, what is my status among you?" They said: "You are our master and the one whose opinion we value the most." He said: "I forbid myself to speak to any of you, men and women, until you believe in Allah and His Messenger."

Before the night came, every one of Banu `Abdul-Ash'hal, men and women, had embraced Islam.

With the conversion of Sa`d, and the subsequent conversion of all his people in imitation of him, a new sun rose over Madinah, signifying a fresh start for many hearts that had submitted to Allah, the Lord of the Worlds. Sa`d and the Muslims of Madinah eagerly waited for the arrival of the beloved Prophet (PBBUH) to their city.

The Remarkable Deeds and Merits of Sa`d

Sa`d embraced Islam, along with his people and the entire city, bearing the responsibilities coming with being a Muslim with heroism, loftiness, and pride. As soon as his eyes met the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) upon his arrival in Madinah, Sa`d felt a great love for him that made him wish to sacrifice his life and wealth for him.

The Banu `Abdul-Ash'hal clan held open doors to the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) and the emigrants with him. Their wealth and everything they owned were at their disposal, with love and without seeking praise or recognition.

Indeed, Sa`d ibn Mu`adh held memorable positions that are recorded in letters of gold. The following is a summary of them.

1. Sa`d's Attitude toward the Disbelievers of Quraysh

Sa`d possessed both deep faith and courage, which empowered him to confront Allah's enemies boldly. After the emigration of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) to Madinah, Sa`d set out for Makkah to perform `Umrah (minor pilgrimage). He stayed as a guest with his friend, Umayyah ibn Khalaf, and went with him to the Sacred House (the Ka`bah) to circumambulate it. Abu Jahl met them and said to Sa`d: "I see you wandering about safely in Makkah, even though you have sheltered the apostates (meaning the Muslims) and have claimed to support and aid them. By Allah, if you were not in the company of Abu Safwan (meaning Umayyah ibn Khalaf), you would not be able to go to your family safely."

Here, Sa`d's courage and boldness manifested themselves. Sa`d, raising his voice, said to Abu Jahl: "By Allah, if you prevent me from this (i.e. performing *Tawaf*), I will certainly prevent you from something which is more significant for you, that is, your passage through Madinah (meaning their trade route to Syria)." Abu Jahl was stunned and did not respond.

2. Sa`d's Prominent Position on the Day of Badr

Sa`d ibn Mu`adh's position in the Battle of Badr was historically significant and fundamentally changed the course of the battle and its outcome. When the situation on the Day of Badr shifted from simply intercepting the caravan of Quraysh to a battle between the Muslims and the *Mushrikin* (those who associate others with Allah in His divinity or worship) and the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) learned that Quraysh had marched out with a large well-equipped force that was quite beyond their expectations and preparations, the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) wanted to hear the opinion of his Companions before embarking on that decisive battle.

Abu Bakr Al-Siddiq first rose and spoke words of support and encouragement, as did `Umar ibn Al-Khattab and Al-Miqdad ibn `Amr (may Allah be pleased with them all). However, all the three leaders who spoke—Abu Bakr, `Umar, and Al Miqdad—were from the Muhajirun, who only constituted a minor section of the Muslim army. It was the Ansar's view that the Prophet (PBBUH) wanted to know, especially since the articles [obligations and agreements] of the `Aqabah Pledge did not require them to fight outside Madinah.

"If You Lead Us Headlong to the Sea and Plunge Into It, We Will Plunge Into It with You"

The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) said: **"Advise me, O people,"** by which he (PBBUH) meant the Ansar, in particular, who made up the bulk of his force.

Their leader and standard-bearer, Sa`d ibn Mu`adh, understood this and said: "By Allah, it seems you mean us, O Messenger of Allah." He (PBBUH) said: **"Yes."**

Sa`d said: "O Messenger of Allah, we have believed in you, confirmed your truthfulness (as Allah's Messenger), and testified that what you have brought is the truth. Based on this, we have given you our pledges and covenants. Go ahead with whatever you decide, O Messenger of Allah. We are with you. By Him Who has sent you with the truth, if you lead us headlong to that sea (i.e., the Red Sea) and plunge into it, we will plunge into it with you and not a single man of us will lag behind. Moreover, we will not feel any displeasure in facing the enemy with you tomorrow. We are truly patient in war and trustworthy in combat. And we hope Allah will show you something from our efforts that pleases your eyes. So lead us forward (to the battlefield), with Allah's Blessings."

Sa`d's notable position was a turning point in the course of the battle. What he said was like good, joyful news. Immediately, the face of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) brightened with contentment and happiness. He (PBBUH) said: **"March on and receive the glad tidings. Verily, Allah has promised me (victory over) one of the two parties (either the caravan or Quraysh's army). By Allah, it is as though I am now looking at the (exact) places where those people will be killed."**

The battle was over, and Allah bestowed a manifest victory upon the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) and the believers.

3. Sa`d's Steadfastness on the Day of Uhud

The tide turned against the Muslims after most of the archers left their positions on the hill to gather the booty, acting against the orders of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) who commanded them to remain fixed on their post, regardless of the battle's outcome. Consequently, the Muslims broke ranks and fled in different directions under the sudden assault of the polytheist army, who had managed to regroup and continue fighting. The disbelievers vehemently attacked the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) with the intention of killing him. Sa`d ibn Mu`adh stood firm beside the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH), defending and protecting him with the perfect and self-sacrificing courage which he always showed on the field.

4- Sa`d's Important Role in the Battle of the Trench

The Battle of the Trench occurred when the evil forces of Quraysh and their allies joined with the Jews and invaded Madinah. They could have annihilated the city and its inhabitants, had it not been for Allah's Grace and Protection of His Messenger (PBBUH) and the believers with him. The idea of digging the trench to defend the city astounded the disbelievers, and they stood totally powerless before it.

"By Allah, We Will Give Them Nothing but the Sword!"

In this battle, the exceptional courage and heroism of Sa`d ibn Mu`adh stood out brightly and gloriously.

Since Ghatafan [a large, ancient Arab tribal confederation originally based northeast of Madinah] was Quraysh's greatest ally, the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) considered isolating Ghatafan from Quraysh, thereby reducing the attacking confederate army by half its size and strength. The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) began negotiating with the leaders of Ghatafan, offering them a third of the date harvest of Madinah in exchange for their withdrawal from the war.

The leaders of Ghatafan agreed, and before this agreement was formally documented, the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) consulted the two Sa`ds—Sa`d ibn Mu`adh and Sa`d ibn `Ubadah—the two chiefs of the Ansar. When he (PBBUH) presented the matter to them, the two Sa`ds asked the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH): "Is this an optional opinion that you can take or leave or is it a revelation from Allah that He has commanded you to do?" The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) replied: **"Rather, it is a matter I have chosen for you. By Allah, I am doing this only because I have seen that the Arabs are shooting at you from a single bow and coming at you from every direction. I want to reduce, at least to some degree, their strength against you."**

At that point, Sa`d ibn Mu`adh said: "O Messenger of Allah, when we and these people (meaning the Ghatafan tribe) were polytheists and idolaters, they (the Ghatafan tribe) did not hope to eat a single piece of fruit from Madinah except as a present from us or if we sold it to them. Now that Allah has honored us with Islam, guided us to it, and strengthened us through you and it, would we (willingly) give up our wealth to them! We have no need for this (agreement)! By Allah, we will give them nothing but the sword until Allah judges between us and them."

Immediately, the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) retracted his opinion, and Sa`d ibn Mu`adh went out to the leaders of Ghatafan, raising his voice in

defiance, saying: “Go back! There is nothing between us and you except the sword.”

What admirable courage and steadfast commitment to Allah, His religion, and His Messenger! Amid extremely distressful circumstances under the intense siege that the Muslims were facing, causing their hearts to leap into their throats, these firm words emerged from the heart of Sa`d ibn Mu`adh, manifesting his confidence, manliness and bravery...astonishing the leaders of Ghatafan and teaching them that what brings victory is the strength of faith and belief in Allah alone.

The Treachery of Banu Qurayzah by Allying with the Enemy

When the siege dragged on fruitlessly and the feeling of defeat seeped into the hearts of the confederate troops, the Jewish leaders who had instigated the confederate tribes and planned this battle feared the consequences of withdrawal and defeat. They resorted to their last weapon, which was inciting Banu Qurayzah [a Jewish tribe inhabiting Madinah], with whom the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) had peace treaties and agreements.

They succeeded in inciting Banu Qurayzah to join the disbelievers and polytheists in fighting the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH). They devised a plan whereby the Jews of Banu Qurayzah would carry out sabotage from within and around Madinah while the armies of the confederates launched a surprise attack.

Once the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) learned of the plot, he sent Sa`d ibn Mu`adh and Sa`d ibn `Ubadah to the leaders of Banu Qurayzah to ascertain the true situation. His two representatives met with the leaders of Banu Qurayzah, and they found them to be very hostile and evil. They openly

insulted the Muslims and proclaimed enmity toward them. Their leader said: "Who is the Messenger of Allah? There is no treaty between us and you!" Both Sa`d ibn Mu`adh and Sa`d ibn `Ubadah returned to inform the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) of what they had heard from Banu Qurayzah.

"O Allah, Make What Has Befallen Me a Means to My Martyrdom"

Madinah went through a terrible siege. The Muslims were dressed in their battle attire and ready for war. During one of the battles, Sa`d received an arrow shot from one of the polytheists. It severely wounded his arm and blood gushed from his vein. He was quickly given temporary first aid to stop the bleeding.

The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) then ordered that Sa`d be carried to the mosque, where a tent had been set up to treat the wounded.

Sa`d was carried to his place in the Prophet's Mosque. There, Sa`d looked up to heaven and supplicated, saying: "O Allah, if there remains any war with Quraysh, keep me alive so that I may fight against them in Your Cause. There is nothing more beloved to me than to fight in Your Cause against those who have harmed Your Messenger, belied him, and turned him out (of Makkah). If You put an end to the war between us and them, make what (injury) has befallen me a means to my martyrdom. And do not make me die before you do to Banu Qurayzah what pleases my eye."

5. Despite His Injury, Sa`d Continues to Stay Active in the Battle of Banu Qurayzah

The Battle of the Trench ended with Allah's victory for the believers. Quraysh and their allies departed Madinah defeated and humiliated after the

failure of their conspiracy with Banu Qurayzah against the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH).

Laying Siege to Banu Qurayzah

Just when the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) returned from the battle, laid down his weapons, and was performing ablution, Jibril (Angel Gabriel PBUH) came to him and said: "Have you laid down your weapons? By Allah, the angels have not yet laid down their weapons. Indeed, Allah has commanded you to march to Banu Qurayzah."

The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) complied with Allah's Command and marched, along with the Muslims, to Banu Qurayzah. They besieged them for twenty-five nights while Banu Qrayzah stayed securely in their fortresses. Finally, when they realized that it was useless for them to proceed further, they accepted to submit to the Prophet's verdict for their crime of high treason. But they had a request which they hoped would be granted by the Prophet (PBBUH)—that one of their allies would be appointed as their judge. The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) allowed them to choose whomever they wished from among their allies to be their judge.

The Verdict of Sa`d ibn Mu`adh

Banu Qurayzah chose Sa`d ibn Mu`adh—the chief of the Aws tribe and their ally in the pre-Islamic era. It was as though Allah had cast a veil upon their hearts, causing them to forget Sa`d's first approach at their initial breach of their covenant, his warnings to them, and their insults to the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH).

The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) summoned Sa`d ibn Mu`adh, who was in Madinah as he was prevented from participating in the siege due to the wound he had sustained, as mentioned earlier. He was mounted on a donkey and brought to the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH). When the Jews of Banu Qurayzah saw Sa`d coming, they began saying: "O Sa`d, be kind to your allies and gentle in your judgment." When they pressed him too much, he said to them: "It is time for Sa`d to act solely for Allah's Sake, fearing not the blame of any blamer (i.e., totally uninfluenced by people's opinions of his verdict)."

"You Have Judged Them According to Allah's Judgment"

Sa`d wanted to secure everyone's agreement and obtain their pledge that his judgment, once issued, would be final and unappealable. He turned to Banu Qurayzah and said: "Do you take upon yourselves an oath and covenant by Allah that the judgment shall be as I have decreed?" They replied: "Yes." Then he turned to the direction where the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) was and, with his gaze lowered in reverence and respect, asked: "Shall it be binding upon him who is here?" The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) replied: **"Yes."** Sa`d said: "My judgement concerning them is that their fighters be killed, their women and children be taken captive, and their wealth be divided (as spoils of war)."

When Sa`d pronounced this judgment, the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) approved it, saying: **"You have judged them according to Allah's Judgment from above the seven heavens, O Sa`d."**

Thus was the punishment of Banu Qurayzah for what we call today 'high treason.'

The Final Chapter of Sa`d's Life

Allah Answers Sa`d's Supplication

Allah Almighty answered the supplication that Sa`d made, and this became the last of Quraysh's raids on Madinah. After the Battle of Al-Ahzab (Confederates), the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) said**: "Quraysh will never invade you after this year of yours. (From now), it is you who will invade them (i.e., you will take the offensive against them)."** Sa`d's wound would be his means to attain martyrdom, after he had the satisfaction of seeing Banu Qurayzah defeated.

After passing judgment on Banu Qurayzah for their treacherous crime, Sa`d was brought back to Madinah, where he was treated for his serious injury in the Prophet's Mosque. However, Sa`d had exerted himself, aggravating his wound, and his condition deteriorated significantly. Preparations for his departure began.

Moments of Farewell

The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) entered, accompanied by Abu Bakr and `Umar, to visit Sa`d. He was in the final moments of his life. The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) placed Sa`d's head in his lap and supplicated to Allah, saying: **"O Allah, Sa`d has striven in Your Cause, believed in Your Messenger, and fulfilled his duty. Receive his soul with the best acceptance You have ever bestowed upon any soul."**

The Prophet's words descended upon the noble departing soul like a gentle soft breeze, bringing him peace.

"Rejoice, O Abu `Amr!"

Sa`d struggled desperately to open his eyes, hoping that the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) would be the last they would see in this world.

Sa`d said: "Peace be upon you, O Messenger of Allah. I bear witness that you are the Messenger of Allah. All praise be to Allah that my last act in this world has been seeing the face of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH)."

Sa`d's pure soul departed to its Creator while his head was resting in the lap of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH).

The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) said: **"Rejoice, O Abu `Amr."**

The Companions Grieve over Sa`d

Abu Bakr said: "My back has been broken, O Sa`d[1]!" The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) said to him: **"Take it easy, O Abu Bakr."** `Umar said: "Verily, to Allah we belong, and to Him we shall return."

Lady `Aishah narrated: "The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH), Abu Bakr, and `Umar were present when Sa`d ibn Mu`adh was dying in the tent that had been erected for him in the Prophet's Mosque. By Him in Whose Hand is the soul of Muhammad, I could not distinguish the weeping of Abu Bakr from that of `Umar, even though I was in my room. They were as Allah described them: ﴿…merciful among themselves﴾ (translated meaning of Al-Fath 48:29)."

[1] A lamentable expression of losing one's support and comfort in life.

The Scent of Musk Emanates from Sa`d's Grave

Abu Sa`id Al-Khudri narrated: "I was among those who dug the grave for Sa`d ibn Mu`adh. Every time we dug a layer of earth, we smelled the scent of musk, and this continued until we reached the burial niche."

The Angels Carries Sa`d's Bier, and the Throne of the Most Merciful Lord Shakes with Joy at the Arrival of His Soul

The people carried Sa`d's bier to bury him. When they finished burying him, they said to the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH): "O Messenger of Allah, we have never carried a corpse lighter than his"—even though he was physically large. The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) said: **"What prevents him from being light when so many angels have descended, more than they had ever descended before, and carried him with you."**[1]

According to another narration by Jabir: "Jibril (Angel Gabriel, PBUH) came to the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) and said, 'Who is this righteous slave who has died? The gates of heaven were opened for him, and the Throne of the Most Merciful Lord moved for him?'"[2]

The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) said: **"The Throne of the Most Merciful Lord shook because of the death of Sa`d (rejoicing at his arrival)."**[3]

[1] Reported in *Al-Tabaqat Al-Kubra* by Ibn Sa`d, Sirah 1, 520.
[2] Reported by Al-Daraqutni, hadith no. 3280.
[3] Reported by Al-Bukhari, hadith no. 3803.

Sa`d's Handkerchiefs in Paradise

Sa`d was unforgettable; he held a special place in the Prophet's emotions and thoughts, and the Prophet (PBBUH) continued to remember him fondly until he (PBBUH) passed away.

Al-Bara' narrated that the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) was once gifted a luxurious, embroidered silk garment. His Companions admired the beauty and softness of the cloth. In response to their admiration, the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) said: **"Are you marveling at the softness of these handkerchiefs? Indeed, the handkerchiefs of Sa`d ibn Mu`adh in Paradise are better and softer than this** (luxurious garment you are currently admiring)."[1]

Only Seven Years as a Muslim

May Allah reward you with the best, O Sa`d ibn Mu`adh! You embraced Islam at the age of thirty and died at the age of thirty-seven, spending only seven years as a Muslim. What deeds, in just seven years, earned you the great honor and high status bestowed on you?!

Was it your high ambition?
Or sincerity in your actions?
Or your deep love for the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH)?
Or all these qualities combined?

Sa`d ibn Mu`adh said: "There are three things in which I am strong and in other than them I am weak:

[1] Reported by Muslim, hadith no. 2468.

- I have never prayed a prayer since I embraced Islam without keeping my entire thoughts focused on it until I have finished it.

- I have never attended a funeral procession without thinking about what the deceased was saying or what was being said to the deceased, until the burial was complete.

- I never heard the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) say anything without knowing it to be the truth."

Congratulations to you, O Sa`d ibn Mu`adh! You have done well in your life. Congratulations on succeeding in attaining the good pleasure of Allah and His Messenger.

May Allah's Mercy and Blessings be upon you, O you for whose death the Throne of the Most Merciful shook with joy and whom the angels carried.

May Allah be pleased with you and please you, O Sa`d ibn Mu`adh.

17. `Abdullah ibn Mas`ud

May Allah Be Pleased with Him

17. `Abdullah ibn Mas`ud

Dear readers, we are still enjoying the company of this glorious bunch of esteemed Companions. Now, we are about to meet a man who was among the first to embrace Islam. The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) loved to hear the Noble Qur'an recited by him. Despite his small stature and slight build, he was of great weight in the scales; the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) testified that his legs on the Day of Judgment would be heavier in the scales than Mount Uhud[1]. He is the learned Imam, the jurist of the nation, `Abdullah ibn Mas`ud.

`Abdullah ibn Mas`ud Embraces Islam

"You Are a Learned Youth"

`Abdullah ibn Mas`ud was a young boy—not yet thirteen—when he tended sheep for `Uqbah ibn Abu Mu`ayt. He was sincere and trustworthy, even though he had not yet heard of Islam and its call for honesty, truthfulness, and integrity. He had heard some news about the emergence of the Prophet (PBBUH) among his people, but he did not give it sufficient attention. Then came the day when he was destined to encounter the light of guidance and the radiance of certainty.

One day, while `Abdullah ibn Mas`ud was tending a flock of sheep, the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) and Abu Bakr Al-Siddiq passed by him. He did not recognize them. They were very thirsty. The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) asked him: **"Young man, do you have any milk for us to drink?"** He replied:

[1] This highlights that the weight of a person's good character and actions on the scale of judgment can be immense, regardless of their worldly appearance

"Yes, but I cannot give any to you for the sheep do not belong to me. I am only entrusted [by their owner] with looking after them." Admiration was clear on the faces of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) and Abu Bakr due to his evident trustworthiness. The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) further asked him: **"Is there a ewe that has not yet mated with a ram?"—**meaning, one that has not yet given milk. `Abdullah ibn Mas`ud brought him a young ewe. The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) stroked its udder while supplicating to Allah. Soon after, the ewe's udder became swollen (very distended) and abundant milk flowed from it. `Abdullah ibn Mas`ud milked it into a vessel, and the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) and his Companion drank. The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) then gave some to the young shepherd, `Abdullah ibn Mas`ud. When they had all drunk their fill, the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) said to the udder: **"Shrink"**—meaning, contract and stop producing milk. It shrank and returned to its previous state.

Ibn Mas`ud stood motionless, quite astonished by what he had seen. He said to the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH): "Teach me some of that which you have said." The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) stroked his head and said to him: **"May Allah have mercy on you! You are a learned youth."**

From the Humble Beginning of a Shepherd to a Companion of the Best of Humankind

`Abdullah ibn Mas`ud loved this righteous servant and honest Messenger (PBBUH). Before Islam entered the house of Al-Arqam ibn Abu Al-Arqam, Ibn Mas`ud had already become a believer in his religion—the sixth of six people to first embrace Islam and follow the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH). Indeed, he was among the foremost Muslims.

Ibn Mas`ud went from tending sheep to becoming a close Companion of the best of humankind (PBBUH). This poor, weak, hired shepherd boy was little aware that he would become one of the marvels of this religion that would humble the pride of the mighty chiefs of Quraysh and put an end to their arrogance.

The Remarkable Deeds and Merits of `Abdullah ibn Mas`ud

1. The First to Publicly Recite the Qur'an Aloud in Makkah

The young man, small in stature but great in faith, courageously went forth to spread the word of truth without fear or hesitation.

Al-Zubayr narrated: "The first person to publicly recite the Qur'an aloud in Makkah after the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) was `Abdullah ibn Mas`ud. One day, when the Companions of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) were assembled, they said: 'By Allah, Quraysh have never heard this Qur'an recited aloud before. Who is the man who will make them hear it?'

`Abdullah ibn Mas`ud said: 'I will.'

They said: 'We fear for your safety. We want a man with a clan who can protect him from the people if they try to harm him.'

Yet `Abdullah ibn Mas`ud said: 'Let me do it, for Allah shall protect me.'

`Abdullah ibn Mas`ud approached the people in the forenoon, while Quraysh were gathered in their meeting places. He stood at *Maqam Ibrahim* (the Station of Ibrahim [Abraham, PBBUH]) and began to recite in a loud voice: 'In the Name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful. ﴿The Most Gracious (2) Has Taught (you, humankind) the Qur'an﴾ (translated meaning of Al-Rahman: 551-2)'.

The people of Quraysh looked at him intently, saying: 'What is the son of Umm Ma`bad saying?'—for this was his nickname—'He is reciting what Muhammad has brought!'

The Qurayshi people rose up and began to beat his face severely, but `Abdullah ibn Mas`ud continued to recite as much as Allah willed that he should. `Abdullah ibn Mas`ud returned to his companions, wounded in his face and body.

They said to him: 'This is what we feared would happen to you.'

`Abdullah ibn Mas`ud replied: 'The enemies of Allah have never been more insignificant to me than they are now. If you wish, I will do the same to them tomorrow.' They said: 'No, you have done enough. You have made them hear what they do not wish to hear.'"

Certainly, the grand power of faith provided `Abdullah ibn Mas`ud with the inner strength and motivation to act with such courage in that situation! What miracle have you brought, O Messenger of Allah (PBBUH), that transforms enslaved people into free people and the oppressed into heroes?!

Here is `Abdullah ibn Mas`ud, who used to not dare walk past a gathering of Qurayshi elite without bowing his head in humility or fear. After his conversion to Islam, he went forth to where the leaders of Quraysh sat. Standing before them, he raised his voice and recited the Qur'an, with challenge and pride. The same can be said about Bilal, `Ammar, and other oppressed Muslims. Such are the power of faith and the light of truth that vanquish all falsehood and deception.

2. The Immense Love That `Abdullah ibn Mas`ud Had for the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH)

The Sandal-Bearer

Ibn Mas`ud remained constantly by the side of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH), whether he (PBBUH) was staying at home or on a journey.

The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) loved him dearly.

The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) admired his piety and sagacity. `Abdullah ibn Mas`ud attained what no one else did when the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) said to him: **"Your permission to come in is to find the veil (curtain) lifted."**[1] This was a special permission granted to `Abdullah ibn Mas`ud, which was that if he came to the Prophet's house and found the curtain raised, he could enter without any verbal permission. The Prophet (PBBUH) did not grant entrance to anyone else except with verbal permission.

`Abdullah ibn Mas`ud entered the Prophet's house more often than anyone else and sat with him more than anyone else. He would wake him up from his sleep, shield him with a garment when he (PBBUH) bathed, carry his staff and tooth-cleaning stick, and help him put on his sandals when he (PBBUH) wanted to go out and remove them from his feet when he (PBBUH) was about to enter.

`Abdullah ibn Mas`ud was therefore nicknamed 'The Sandal-Bearer,' and he liked to be called so.

[1] Reported by Ibn Majah, hadith no. 139.

The Keeper of the Prophet's Secrets

Many of the Companions thought that `Abdullah ibn Mas`ud was part of the Prophet's family because of his frequent visits to the Prophet (PBBUH). Abu Musa Al-Ash`ari said: "We thought for a while that `Abdullah ibn Mas`ud was no other than a member of the Prophet's household, due to his frequent visits to the Prophet (PBBUH)." His companions said of him: "He (`Abdullah ibn Mas`ud) was granted permission to enter when we were not allowed, and he was present when we were absent." He was even called 'The Keeper of the Prophet's Secrets'.

3. The Companion Most Noted for His Knowledge of the Qur'an in Terms of Both Recitation and Comprehension

"You are a learned young man." What the Prophet (PBBUH) foretold regarding Ibn Mas`ud came true. Indeed, the Almighty granted immense knowledge and comprehension of the Qur'an to Ibn Mas`ud. He thus became the scholar of the nation and the Imam of all Qur'an memorizers. It was as though Allah (Glorified be He) wanted to reward him for risking his life to proclaim the Qur'an and spread its message throughout Makkah during the years of hard persecution and torture of Muslims. Allah (the Most Exalted) bestowed upon Ibn Mas`ud the ability to recite the Qur'an beautifully along with a profound understanding and awareness of its meanings. Here are some examples of this:

- Ibn Mas`ud said: "By Allah, I learned over seventy chapters of the Qur'an directly from the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH)."[1]

[1] Reported by Al-Bukhari, hadith no. 5000.

– Ibn Mas`ud also said: "By Allah, besides Whom there is no other god, there is no chapter of the Qur'an that was revealed except that I know where it was revealed and the context in which it was revealed. And if I knew that there is somebody who knows Allah's Book better than I, and he is at a place that camels can reach, I would go to him."[1]

"Ask and It Will Be Given to You!"

`Umar ibn Al-Khattab narrated that he was with the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) and Abu Bakr when they entered the mosque. Ibn Mas`ud was standing and praying, so the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) stopped to listen to him. Then the Messenger (PBBUH) turned to them and said: "**Whoever would like to recite the Qur'an fresh as it was revealed, let him recite it according to the recitation of Ibn Umm `Abd (i.e., Ibn Mas`ud)."**[2]

`Abdullah ibn Mas`ud then sat and made supplication to Allah without seeing them. The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) kept saying: **"Ask and it will be given to you! Ask and it will be given to you".** `Umar said to himself: "By Allah, I shall go to him (`Abdullah ibn Mas`ud) tomorrow and give him the good news [that the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) responded 'Amen' to his supplication]. I went to him the next morning to tell him the glad tidings, but I found that Abu Bakr had already preceded me to him and given him the glad tidings. By Allah, I never competed with him (Abu Bakr) in doing something good except that he preceded me to it."[3]

[1] Reported by Muslim, hadith no. 2463.
[2] Reported by Ahmad, hadith no. 175.
[3] Reported by Ahmad, hadith no. 175.

The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) Weeps Upon Hearing the Qur'an Recited by Ibn Mas`ud

The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) loved Ibn Mas`ud dearly and considered him as one of his close followers. The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) often enjoyed listening to the Qur'an recited by Ibn Mas`ud. One day, he (PBBUH) summoned Ibn Mas`ud and said to him: **"Recite the Qur'an to me."** Ibn Mas'ud replied: "Shall I recite it to you when it was revealed to you, O Messenger of Allah?" The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) replied: **"I love to hear it from someone else."** Ibn Mas'ud began reciting from Surah Al-Nisa' until he reached the ayah saying: ﴿How then will it be when We [Allah] bring from every nation a witness and We bring you [O Muhammad] against these [people] as a witness?﴾ (translated meaning of Al-Nisa' 4:41). The Messenger (PBBUH) said: **"Enough!"** And behold, his eyes were overflowing with tears.[1]

"Is `Abdullah ibn Mas`ud Among You?"

Ibn Mas`ud's outstanding merit as a scholar of the Qur'an and its rulings is clear in the following account by `Umar ibn Al-Khattab when he met a group of travelers during one of his journeys. `Abdullah ibn Mas`ud was among the group, who were concealed in the deep darkness of the night.

`Umar ordered a man to call out to them: "Where are you from?" `Abdullah replied: "From the distant valley," [using a Qur'anic expression]. `Umar asked: "Where are you going?" `Abdullah replied: "To the Ancient House (the Ka`bah)," [again, using Qur'anic language]. `Umar said: "There is a scholar among them."

[1] Reported by Al-Bukhari, hadith no. 4582.

`Umar tested them further. He ordered the man to call out to them: "Which part of the Qur'an is the greatest?" `Abdullah replied: ﴿Allah, there is no god but He, the Ever Living, the One Who sustains and protects all that exists. Neither slumber nor sleep overtake Him. To Him belongs whatever is in the heavens and whatever is on earth. Who is he that can intercede with Him except with His permission? He knows what is before them [His creatures, in this world], and what is behind them [in the Hereafter]. And they will never encompass anything of His Knowledge except that which He wills. His Throne extends over the heavens and the earth, and He feels no fatigue in guarding and preserving them. And He is the Most High, the Most Great﴾ (translated meaning of Al-Baqarah 2:255).

`Umar ordered the man to call out to them: "Which part of the Qur'an is most decisive?" `Abdullah replied: ﴿Indeed, Allah orders justice and good conduct and giving to relatives and forbids immorality and bad conduct and oppression. He admonishes you that perhaps you will be reminded﴾ (translated meaning of Al-Nahl 16:90).

`Umar ordered the man to call out to them: "Which part of the Qur'an is most comprehensive?" `Abdullah replied: ﴿So whosever does good equal to the weight of an atom (or a small ant), shall see it. And whoever does evil equal to the weight of an atom (or a small ant), shall see it﴾ (translated meaning of Al-Zalzalah 99:7-8).

`Umar ordered the man to call out to them: "Which part of the Qur'an is the most frightening?" `Abdullah replied: ﴿It will not be in accordance with your desires (the Muslims) nor those of the people of the Scripture (the Jews and Christians), whosoever works evil, will have the recompense thereof, and he will not find any protector or helper besides Allah﴾ (translated meaning of Al-Nisa' 4:123).

`Umar ordered the man to call out to them: "Which part of the Qur'an is the most hopeful?" `Abdullah replied: ﴿Say: 'O My servants who have transgressed against themselves [by sinning], do not despair of the mercy of Allah. Indeed, Allah forgives all sins. Indeed, it is He Who is the Forgiving, the Merciful'﴾ (translated meaning of Al-Zumar 39:53).

`Umar ordered the man to call out to them: "Is `Abdullah ibn Mas`ud among you?"

4. The Thin Legs of Ibn Mas`ud Are Heavier in the Scales Than Mount Uhud

Ibn Mas`ud was a thin, short man; he was slightly taller than a seated person. He had thin, slender legs.

One day, Ibn Mas`ud climbed to the top of a tree to bring a *Miswak* (tooth-cleaning stick) from the arak tree for the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH).

His Companions looked at Abdullah's legs and laughed at how thin they were. The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) said to them: **"Why are you laughing? Abdullah's legs will be heavier in the scales on the Day of Resurrection than Mount Uhud."** [1]

5. Ibn Mas`ud Is Not Only a Scholar but Also a Fighter in Allah's Cause

`Abdullah ibn Mas`ud was not just a well-versed reciter of the Qur'an and a learned scholar. Despite his small stature and slender build, he was a courageous and valiant warrior when the situation demanded it.

[1] Reported by Ahmad, hadith no. 920.

- It is enough to say that `Abdullah ibn Mas`ud was the first Muslim on earth, after the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH), to recite the Qur'an aloud publicly—as was mentioned earlier.

- He participated in all the battles with the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH), without missing a single battle. He had a remarkable role on the day of Badr when he killed Abu Jahl, after the two sons of Afra' had struck him with severe blows.

- He participated in the victorious battles with the caliphs of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH), and he witnessed the downfall of the two greatest empires of his time—the Persian and the Byzantine—under the fluttering banners of Islam.

6. Humble and Pious, Despite His Grand Status

Although Ibn Mas`ud enjoyed many privileges due to his close relationship with the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) and Allah (Exalted be He) had bestowed knowledge and high status upon him, this only increased his humility and submission before Allah.

Here are some examples of Ibn Mas`ud's profound humility and piety:

- One day, Ibn Mas`ud went out and some people followed him. He asked them: "Do you need anything?" They replied: "No, but we want to walk with you." He said: "Go back, for that (what you are doing) is humiliation for the follower and causes temptation for the one being followed." He added: "If you knew what I know about myself, you would throw dust upon my head."

- Ibn Mas`ud said: "Whoever exalts himself out of an excessive sense of self-worth, Allah will humble. And whoever humbles himself out of devoutness, Allah will exalt."

- Ibn Mas`ud said: "If I were to stand between Paradise and Hell, and I were told, 'Choose! We will give you the choice: which of the two do you prefer, or [do you prefer] to be ashes?' I would prefer to be ashes."

- When eyes had calmed (closed in sleep), `Abdullah ibn Mas`ud would stand to pray in the dead of night with a sound like the buzzing of bees coming from him.

"I Wish I Were the Owner of This Hole (Grave)!"

Ibn Mas`ud narrated: "I rose up in the middle of the night while I was with the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) during the Battle of Tabuk. I saw a flame at one side of the camp, and I followed its glow to see what was happening. There I saw the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH), Abu Bakr, and `Umar. And behold, I saw that `Abdullah Dhul Bijadayn had died! The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) was digging his grave. When he (PBBUH) finished digging the hole, he said to Abu Bakr and `Umar: **"Bring your brother closer to me and be gentle with him."** They both held his body and lowered him to the Prophet (PBBUH), who, when he (PBBUH) had placed him in his burial niche, said: **'O Allah, I have entered the night pleased with him, so be pleased with him.'** Hearing this, Ibn Mas`ud said: 'I wish I were the owner of this hole (grave).'"

That was his wish. That was what he hoped for in this life. Such a wish could only come from a noble heart, filled with great faith and deep fear of Allah.

7. The Extensive Knowledge and Deep Understanding Ibn Mas`ud Possessed on Religion

Just as Allah (Glorified be He) bestowed upon Ibn Mas`ud piety and devoutness, He also granted him beneficial knowledge and a profound understanding of Islamic religion in its various branches.

1. In the Sciences of the Qur'an

Ibn Mas`ud was the most knowledgeable among the Companions of the Glorious Qur'an, in terms of both understanding of meaning and context and the perfect recitation of words—as was mentioned earlier.

2. Hadith Narration

Ibn Mas`ud narrated many hadiths. He loved and revered the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) deeply. Each time he narrated a hadith, he was filled with the fear that he might add or omit a word or even a single letter. Therefore, whenever he moved his lips to say: "I heard the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) say," he would tremble intensely and appear anxious and agitated, fearing that he might forget or add a single letter to what the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) had said.

Let us listen to his companions describing this point:

- Masruq narrated: "Ibn Mas`ud told us one day: 'I heard the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH)…,' and he trembled so much that his clothes shook. Then he added: 'Or something like that, or something similar to that.'"

- `Alqamah ibn Qays narrated: "`Abdullah ibn Mas`ud would stand every Thursday evening to give a talk. I never heard him say, 'The

Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) said,' except once, and when I looked at him then, as he leaned on a staff; his staff was shaking and unsteady."

Ibn Mas`ud's reverence and respect for the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) reached this high level. Having lived with the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) more than anyone else, he had a profound appreciation of the greatness of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH). His behavior toward the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH), both during his life and after his death, was therefore unique and unparalleled.

3. A Collection of His Wise Statements and Exhortations

Ibn Mas`ud possessed the ability to see into the depths of things and express them with elegance and eloquence. Springs of wisdom flowed from his tongue.

Let us listen to some of Ibn Mas`ud's wise sayings and exhortations:

- Ibn Mas`ud summarized the life of `Umar ibn Al-Khattab, saying: "His conversion to Islam was a victory, his emigration was a liberation, and his rule was a mercy."

- Ibn Mas`ud also said: "I despise a man when I see him idle, engaged in neither worldly nor religious pursuits."

- He further said: "Your Lord has neither night nor day; the light of the heavens and the earth is from the light of His Face."

- He also said: "The best wealth is contentment[1]. The best provision is piety[2]. The worst blindness is that of the heart. The greatest sin is lying.

[1] Being satisfied with what one has.

The worst gain is usury. The worst food is the wealth of orphans. Whoever pardons [others], Allah will pardon him. And whoever forgives [others], Allah will forgive him."

- He also said: "Hearts have periods of enthusiasm and keenness, and they have their periods of apathy and indifference. Seize the opportunity when they are enthusiastic and keen, and leave them alone when they are apathetic and indifferent."

- He also said: "Be content with what Allah has allotted you, and you will be among the richest. Avoid forbidden things, and you will be among the godliest. Fulfill your obligations, and you will be among the most devout."

8. The Place That Ibn Mas`ud Occupied in the Hearts of the Companions

Ibn Mas`ud remained constantly by the side of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH), whether the Messenger (PBBUH) was traveling or staying at home, until he (PBBUH) passed away while being pleased with him. The successors of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) and his Companions after him recognized Ibn Mas`ud's worth. They held him in high status and lofty esteem and treated him with genuine affection.

Here are some examples of the love and esteem that the Companions had for Ibn Mas`ud:

[2] A person's righteousness is the most valuable and important thing to have, more so than any physical provisions, for both the journey of life and for the journey of Hajj.

- `Umar ibn Al-Khattab appointed Ibn Mas`ud to the treasury post in Kufa and wrote to its people, when he dispatched him to assume his new position, saying to them:

> I have sent `Ammar to you as governor and Ibn Mas`ud as teacher and minister. These two are among the most distinguished Companions of Muhammad (PBBUH) and the people who fought at Badr. Listen to them and follow their example. I have preferred you over myself by sending `Abdullah to you; be guided by him and learn from him.

All the people of Kufa cherished Ibn Mas`ud with a love that surpassed any they felt for others before him.

- `Umar ibn Al-Khattab described him, saying: "He is a vessel brimming with knowledge and comprehension (of Islam)."

- One day, a group of the Companions gathered at the house of `Ali ibn Abu Talib and said to him: "O Commander of the Believers, we have never seen a man with a better character, gentler teaching style, more pleasant company, or greater piety than `Abdullah ibn Mas`ud." `Ali said: "I adjure you by Allah, is this (your statement about Ibn Mas`ud) truly from your hearts?" They said: "Yes." `Ali said: "O Allah, I bear witness that I say the same as they have said and even more. He (`Abdullah ibn Mas`ud) recites the Qur'an, treating as lawful whatever it declares to be lawful and unlawful whatever it declares to be unlawful. He is an expert in religion and a scholar of the Sunnah."

- Hudhayfah ibn Al-Yaman said: "I have not seen anyone more like the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) in his guidance, manner, and demeanor than Ibn Mas`ud. Those Companions of the Messenger of Allah

(PBBUH) who had memorized the Qur'an knew that Ibn Umm `Abd was the closest of them to Allah."

- Abu Musa Al-Ash`ari said: "I do not know of anyone whom the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) left more knowledgeable about Allah's Book than Ibn Mas`ud." He added: "Do not ask us about anything as long as this scholar is among you."

The Final Chapter of Ibn Mas`ud's Life

Ibn Mas`ud continued to exert every effort within his power to serve Allah's religion, dedicating his whole self, knowledge, and resources to the cause of Islam. He remained in charge of the treasury of Kufa until Caliph `Umar ibn Al-Khattab died.

"I Do Not Wish to Be the First to Open the Doors to Tribulations!"

During the reign of `Uthman, when conflict and disagreement started to emerge and `Uthman decided to relieve him of his post, the people of Kufa, out of their deep love for him, surrounded him and said: "Stay with us and do not leave. We shall protect you from anything you dislike." But Ibn Mas`ud replied: "I owe him (the Caliph) obedience, and there will be trials and tribulations. I do not wish to be the first to open the doors to tribulations [that might destabilize the community]."

The Wholesome Opposition

The answer that Ibn Mas`ud gave to the people of Kufa reflected his lofty standards and piety. A conversation took place between him and Caliph `Uthman ibn `Affan in which they had a disagreement that escalated into a conflict, yet Ibn Mas`ud remained true to his pledge and to the respect and esteem instilled in them by the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) toward people in charge, even while maintaining his 'wholesome' opposition—as we previously termed it. Ibn Mas`ud did not utter a single word of disrespect against `Uthman. Rather, when news reached him of the assassination attempts being

planned against the Caliph, he uttered his famous words: "If they kill him, they will not have anyone like him as a successor."[1]

"Do You Fear Poverty for My Daughters?"

The time of departure arrived, and Ibn Mas`ud lay on his deathbed after a life filled with knowledge and good efforts, as well as immense fear of Allah and humility before Him.

While Ibn Mas`ud was on his deathbed, preparing to depart, Caliph `Uthman ibn `Affan came to visit him—despite the disagreement between them. Their adherence to Islamic moral principles and the pursuit of elevated, noble goals triumphed over their disagreement, and they maintained compassion between them. Such sublime qualities and ethics were inculcated in them by their teacher and the teacher of entire humanity, the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH).

When `Uthman entered, the following conversation, overflowing with love and compassion, took place between them:

`Uthman asked him: "What ails you?"

Ibn Mas`ud replied: "My sins."

`Uthman asked: "What do you desire?"

Ibn Mas`ud replied: "My Lord's Mercy."

`Uthman asked: "Shall I order a physician to attend to you?"

[1] Please see the biography of `Uthman ibn `Affan in Part Two, *A Biography of the Ten Given Glad Tidings of Paradise*, by the same author

Ibn Mas`ud replied: "The physician has made me ill."

`Uthman asked: "Shall I assign an allowance for you [from the public treasury]?"

Ibn Mas`ud replied: "I have no need for it."

`Uthman said: "It will be for your daughters after you."

Ibn Mas`ud said: "Do you fear poverty for my daughters? I have instructed them to recite Surah Al-Waqi`ah every night. I heard the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) say: **'Whoever recites Surah Al-Waqi`ah every night will never suffer from poverty.'"**[1]

When night fell, Ibn Mas`ud's pure soul departed to its Creator, after actively praising, glorifying, and exalting Allah. At last, he joined the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) and the three highly respected groups: the righteous, the prophets, and the martyrs. He was buried in Al-Baqi` cemetery.

May Allah's Mercy and Blessings be upon you, O you were the first to recite the Qur'an aloud publicly after the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH).

O you whose legs will be heavier in the scales than Mount Uhud.

May Allah be pleased with you and please you, O `Abdullah ibn Mas`ud.

[1] Reported in *`Amal Al-Yawm wa Al-Laylah* by Ibn Al-Sunni.

18. Hamzah ibn `Abdul-Muttalib

May Allah Be Pleased with Him

18. Hamzah ibn `Abdul-Muttalib

Now, my dear readers, we are about to be honored with knowing 'The Best of Martyrs,' 'The Lion of Allah and the Lion of His Messenger,' whose conversion to Islam was a turning point in the history of the call to Islam. He was the paternal uncle of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) and his brother through breastfeeding, Hamzah ibn `Abdul-Muttalib.

Hamzah's Lineage and Upbringing

His full name was Hamzah ibn `Abdul-Muttalib ibn Hashim ibn `Abd Manaf. He was the paternal uncle of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) and his brother through breastfeeding. Hamzah grew up alongside the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH). They were close in age, of the same generation, having similar cultural and social experiences. They played together and took their steps in life together throughout their childhood. However, their periods of youth took different paths, and their life journeys diverged. The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) was preoccupied with the deviation of his people. His primary focus was on how to deliver the people from idolatry and sin. Through him, goodness reigned, and people were saved from disbelief and misguidance.

As for Hamzah, he was strong, agile, and an exceptionally skilled archer. He loved hunting intensely. He would go out into the valleys of Makkah to pursue his inseparable passion. At sunset, he would return to join his peers in enjoying life's pleasures and indulging in worldly desires.

Hamzah Embraces Islam

As the days passed, the call to Islam emerged, and divine revelations descended upon the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH). The nobles of Quraysh were gripped with anxiety and fear due to this call. Their anxiety and fear soon transformed into verbal and physical abuse.

Although Hamzah's youth had taken a different path than that of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH), he continued to esteem the Prophet's righteousness and virtuous character, which was something recognized by his enemies as well. He (PBBUH) was known among the people as *Al-Sadiq Al-Amin* (The Truthful and the Honest), loved and respected by all.

Hamzah often listened to what the leaders of Quraysh said about the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) and was astonished by their hostility toward him. He accused them of exaggeration and misjudgment, yet they persisted in their hostility. Hamzah would sometimes smile and sometimes scowl at this, but he remained a follower of his people's faith until the appointed day arrived.

Hamzah's Faith Becomes as Clear and Certain as Light Displacing Darkness

Hamzah not only possessed physical strength but also sound judgment and moral fortitude. So when the appointed day came, on which Allah willed that the lights of certainty and faith should shine upon his heart and highlight his path, he did not hesitate to make the right decision and join the ranks of the believers.

So come, my beloved readers! Let us enjoy the story of the conversion of 'The Lion of Allah and the Lion of His Messenger'.

"I Follow His Religion, and I Say What Muhammad Says"

One day, Hamzah went out to the desert to practice his hobby of hunting. He returned at the end of the day, and while he was on his way to the Ka`bah to circumambulate it, as was his custom before going back home, a woman (a female servant of `Abdullah ibn Jud`an) approached him and said: "O Abu `Umarah, if only you had seen what your nephew Muhammad suffered earlier at the hands of `Abul-Hakam ibn Hisham (Abu Jahl)! He found him sitting alone here and harmed and insulted him, saying things he disliked."

Hamzah became very angry and asked her: "Did anyone see this?" She replied: "Yes, by Allah, people saw it."

Girded with his bow, Hamzah set off quickly toward the Ka`bah. When he entered the mosque, he found Abu Jahl sitting in one of the gatherings of Quraysh. Before speaking a word to him, he struck his head with his bow, wounding him. Then he said to him: "Do you insult Muhammad while I follow his religion and say what he says? Hit me back if you can!"

Some men from Banu Makhzum rose to defend Abu Jahl, but Abu Jahl said: "Leave Abu `Umarah alone, for by Allah, I have said vile insults to his nephew."

Hamzah Adheres to Islam Out of Certainty Rather Than Impulse

Hamzah declared his profession of Islam in a moment of zeal, driven by passion and fueled by anger due to the harm inflicted upon his nephew. But

later when his emotions subsided, he began to reflect on what he had said and declared, thinking about how he could abandon the religion of his forefathers and his people for this new faith!

Hamzah, recounting his conversion to Islam, said: "I was overcome with regret for abandoning the religion of my forefathers and my people. I spent the night deep in doubt, unable to sleep. Then I went to the Ka`bah and beseeched Allah to open my heart to the truth and remove all doubt from me. Allah answered my supplication and filled my heart with certainty. The next morning, I went to the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) and told him what had happened to me. He (PBBUH) supplicated Allah to keep my heart steadfast in His religion." Thus, Hamzah embraced Islam with absolute certitude and inner peace.

The Lion of Allah and the Lion of His Messenger (PBBUH)

At Last Muslims Openly Practice Their Faith

With the conversion of Hamzah, and later `Umar ibn Al-Khattab, Islam obtained a strong shield that defended it from the plots and aggression of Quraysh. It did not prevent all harm, yet it encouraged the Muslims to go out, openly profess their faith, and offer worship at the Ka`bah itself.

It was then that the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) conferred upon Hamzah this great title: 'The Lion of Allah and the Lion of His Messenger'. Hamzah was truly worthy of this title, as proven by the events and situations he went through, as we will see shortly.

Hamzah Emigrates to Madinah

Hamzah was among the first to emigrate when the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) permitted his Companions to emigrate. He settled in Madinah, where the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) established a bond of brotherhood through faith between him and Zayd ibn Harithah.

Hamzah Is Assigned as the Commander of the First Expedition in Islam

In the month of Ramadan of the first year of the *Hijrah*, the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) dispatched the first expedition in Islam: Saif Al-Bahr Expedition. He (PBBUH) appointed Hamzah ibn `Abdul-Muttalib as its commander. He (PBBUH) sent him at the head of thirty men from the

Muhajirun to intercept a commercial caravan of Quraysh[1] coming from the Levant.

The caravan consisted of three hundred men, led by Abu Jahl ibn Hisham. The two parties met near the sea coast near Al-`Ais—a place near the Red Sea. When they lined up for battle, Majdi ibn `Amr Al-Juhani, who was an ally of both sides, intervened and succeeded in separating them, so they did not fight.

Hamzah Plays an Outstanding Role in the Battle of Badr

The day of Badr came, and 'The Lion of Allah and the Lion of His Messenger (PBBUH)' performed wonders.

Hamzah Ignites the Battle by Killing Ibn `Abdul-Asad

Before the battle fully began and both sides fully engaged in combat, Al-Aswad ibn `Abdul-Asad Al-Makhzumi emerged from the ranks of the polytheists. He was a fierce, ill-tempered man. He declared: "I swear by Allah that I will drink from their (the Muslims') cistern or I will destroy it, or I will die in the attempt."

Ibn `Abdul-Asad then dashed out of the lines, followed by Hamzah ibn `Abdul-Muttalib, who came forward against him and dealt him a blow that severed his leg. He fell on his back and then crawled towards the cistern, intending to plunge in and fulfill his oath, but Hamzah dealt him another blow that killed him. His death ignited the battle.

The Challenge to Single Swordfights

[1] This caravan contained the property and valuables of which the Muslims had been dispossessed in Makkah.

It was the custom of the Arabs during these times that before the start of a conclusive battle between any two armies, one or more of their chief fighters and leaders should fight a duel with their counterpart from the other side. The outcome of these duels had a significantly positive impact on the victorious side and, conversely, a negative impact on the defeated side. It either boosted or lowered the morale of their troops and their performance in the imminent battle. Leaders who engaged in such single swordfights insisted that their rival be their equivalent in social status as well as military skill and expertise.

Three notable horsemen stepped forward, all from one family: `Utbah ibn Rabi`ah, his brother Shaybah, and his son Al-Walid. They challenged the Muslims to duel combats. Three men from the Ansar, also from the same family, came out to duel with them: `Awf and Mu`awwidh, the sons of Al-Harith (and their mother `Afra'), and `Abdullah ibn Rawahah.

The polytheists asked them: "Who are you?" and the three young Ansari men replied: "A group of the Ansar." They arrogantly responded: "We have nothing to do with you. We want our cousins (i.e., tribesmen)." Then one of the Qurayshi fighters called out: "O Muhammad, send forth against us our peers from our own tribe."

Upon hearing this, the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) said: **"Stand up, O `Ubaydah ibn Al-Harith! Stand up, O Hamzah! Stand up, O `Ali!"** They were all members of Banu `Abdul-Muttalib—the Prophet's kindred. When they approached, the polytheists asked: "Who are you?" They told them. The polytheists replied: "Yes, you are worthy and honorable opponents."

The duels began in which Hamzah gave Shaybah no respite, immediately killing him. `Ali also gave Al-Walid no time and killed him at once.

`Ubaydah, who was the eldest of the group, dueled with `Utbah. They seriously injured each other and both fell. Hamzah and `Ali rushed to the side of `Ubaydah and helped him kill his opponent. The single combats thus ended with the deaths of all three skilled horsemen from Quraysh, which gave an ominous start to the *Mushrikin* army.

The Muslims, on the other hand, felt boosted and uplifted, despite the injury of `Ubaydah, who sustained mortal wounds that led to his martyrdom several days later.

It was a battle in which 'The Lion of Allah' fought valiantly, killing many of the polytheists and the leaders of Quraysh. Allah (Exalted be He) granted victory to the believers.

Hamzah in the Battle of Uhud

After the devastating defeat and overwhelming failure of Quraysh at the Battle Badr, in which they lost many of their leaders, Quraysh could not accept this defeat peacefully. They began preparing and mobilizing their forces for revenge.

The Qurayshi Leaders Pursue Hamzah as Their Second Main Target after the Prophet (PBBUH)

The Qurayshi leaders targeted two men in their new battle: the Prophet (PBBUH) and Hamzah ibn `Abul-Muttalib. The reason for targeting the Prophet (PBBUH) is well-known, but their targeting Hamzah, instead of other Companions, stemmed from the blows he had dealt them at Badr. He had killed many of their leaders. Anyone who listened to their conversations and plots before going to war knew that, after the Prophet (PBBUH), the one person they hated and wanted dead more than anyone else was Hamzah.

Inciting Wahshi to Kill Hamzah

To get their second targeted man, before going out to battle, Quraysh assigned the man who would kill Hamzah. He was an Abyssinian slave named Wahshi, who was an extraordinarily skilled javelin-thrower; his shot rarely missed its target. He was a slave of Jubair ibn Mut`im ibn `Adi, whose paternal uncle, Tu`aymah ibn `Adi, was slain by Hamzah in the Battle of Badr.

Jubair summoned Wahshi and said to him: "Go forth with the people (army), and if you kill Hamzah, Muhammad's paternal uncle, in revenge for my paternal uncle Tu`aymah, you will be free." Gratified by the offer that had been made to him, Wahshi accepted.

To further incite Wahshi to kill Hamzah, they sent him to Hind bint `Utbah. She was a woman who had lost her father, brother, uncle, and son in the Battle of Badr. She learned that Hamzah was the one who had killed some of them and finished off the rest. Hind, therefore, provoked Wahshi with forceful words to go forth, solely to bring her Hamzah's head.

Hind promised Wahshi that if he succeeded in killing Hamzah, she would give him all the jewelry she wore. This only intensified Wahshi's drive to kill Hamzah. His mouth watered, and his thoughts raced to the battle where he would win his freedom, never to become a slave or a captive again. He envisioned emerging with all the jewels Hind bint `Utbah had promised him.

The Lion of Allah Fights the Battle with Two Swords

The battle began, and the two armies clashed. Hamzah stationed himself at the center of the battlefield, moving courageously within the combat zone, making swift attacks, and charging through the enemy lines with valor and decisiveness. He delivered powerful blows at the polytheists, who scattered

before him like autumn leaves in a fierce wind; he successively killed the standard-bearers of Banu `Abdul-Dar, who were defending the standard of Quraysh.

Sa`d ibn Abu Waqqas narrated: "Hamzah was fighting on the day of Uhud in front of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) with two swords, saying: 'I am the Lion of Allah and the Lion of His Messenger.'" Hamzah alone killed thirty Qurayshi men. All Muslim forces pushed forward in the battle until they were on the verge of securing a decisive win.

The scattered and confused forces of Quraysh began to retreat in panic. Victory was very close to the Muslims, had the archers not abandoned their posts on the hill and descended onto the battlefield to collect the spoils—in disobedience to the Prophet's strict orders to hold their strategic position on Mount Rumah.

By disobeying orders and leaving their positions, the archers opened a wide gap for the Qurayshi cavalry; otherwise, the Battle of Uhud would have been a graveyard for all Quraysh. When Hamzah saw that a tougher fight had begun and Muslims were losing grounds after victory had been very imminent, he redoubled his efforts and vigor.

The Final Chapter of Hamzah's Life

As the winds of death blew over the battlefield, the moment came in which Allah Almighty had decreed that 'His Lion' would depart this world.

Wahshi Executes the Premeditated Plan to Kill Hamzah

Wahshi's sole focus during the battle was Hamzah. He had no other concern in this battle than him, so he looked sharply at him and kept observing his movements. As he watched him, fear filled Wahshi's heart because of Hamzah's formidable strength. He feared that the battle would end with the defeat of Quraysh without him having the chance to kill Hamzah, leaving him a slave forever.

But when the Muslims were no longer protected by the adjacent archer units, making them vulnerable to enemy attack, Wahshi seized the chance he had been waiting for. Wahshi recounted what happened, saying:

> "I went forth with the people. Being an Abyssinian (Ethiopian), I was adroit at throwing javelin, like all Abyssinians; I have never missed my target. When the two sides met in battle, I came out seeking Hamzah, searching for him until I spotted him in the middle of the people. He was like an ashen-colored camel (because of the battlefield dust), felling everybody with his sword so that nothing stood in his way. I shook (balanced) my spear and when I was perfectly satisfied with its position, I hurled it at him. It struck him in his groin—the area between the navel and the pubic bone—and came out between his legs. He tried to charge at me but was overcome (by the stroke of the javelin) and collapsed to the ground. I left my javelin lodged in him until he died and then retrieved it and headed

back to the camp. I stayed there as I had no other purpose [in fighting] than [to kill] him; I only killed him to be freed. When I arrived in Makkah, I was freed."

In this manner 'The Lion of Allah' fell a martyr while fighting on the front line, at the most dangerous point in the battle. He was not killed face to face, as adversary champions meet in the battlefield; he was cowardly assassinated, like most dignified men who are stealthily slain in the dead of night.

The Best of Martyrs

The enemies of Allah were not satisfied with just killing Hamzah, but they also mutilated his body.

When the battle ended and the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) went out to search for the wounded and the slain, he (PBBUH) found his uncle Hamzah among the dead, with his body mutilated. The Messenger (PBBUH) grieved deeply over him and wept profuse tears. He (PBBUH) said: **"I will never have a worse loss than you."**

The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) ordered that the martyrs be buried as they were [in their blood-stained clothes without washing or shrouding, as a testament to their sacrifice]. He (PBBUH) said: **"Hamzah will be 'The *Sayyid* (Best or Leader) of the Martyrs' on the Day of Resurrection."**[1]

After the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) finished burying the martyrs of Uhud, he (PBBUH) said: **"I shall be a witness for these [martyrs] on the Day of Resurrection."**[2] He (PBBUH) also said: **"There is no one who is wounded in Allah's Cause but he will come on the Day of Resurrection with his**

[1] Reported in *Sahih Al-Jami`* by Al-Albani, hadith no. 3158.
[2] Reported by Al-Bukhari, hadith no. 1353.

wounds looking as they did on the day he was wounded; their color will be the color of blood but their smell will be the fragrance of musk."[1]

And so 'The Lion of Allah and the Lion of His Messenger' departed this world, not merely as a martyr, but as 'The Leader of All Martyrs.'

Hamzah Remains in the Companions Memories

The Companions expressed heartfelt condolences and sadness following the death of 'The Lion of Allah.' The lasting impact that Hamzah made on their lives through his struggles for Islam kept him in their memories for as long as they lived.

It was narrated on the authority of `Abdul-Rahman ibn `Awf—one of the Ten Given Glad Tidings of Paradise—that when some food was brought to him while he was fasting, he said: "Mus`ab bin `Umair was martyred. He was better than I, yet he was shrouded in a cloak so that if his head was covered, his feet became bare, and if his feet were covered, his head became bare. Hamzah was martyred, and he was better than I. Then worldly goods were lavished upon us. We are afraid that the reward for our good deeds has been given to us in this world [and we will have no share in the Hereafter]." `Abdur-Rahman then started weeping so much that he left the food untouched.[2]

May Allah's Mercy and Blessings be upon you, O Lion of Allah and Lion of His Messenger, O Best of Martyrs.

May Allah be pleased with you and please you, O Hamzah ibn `Abdul-Muttalib.

[1] Reported by Ibn Majah, hadith no. 2795.
[2] Reported by Al-Bukhari, hadith no. 1275.

19. Hudhayfah ibn Al-Yaman

May Allah Be Pleased with Him

19. Hudhayfah ibn Al-Yaman

We are still enjoying our delightful and enlightening walk through the immersive and overwhelming gardens of the honorable Companions, appreciating every bloom in this rich landscape, learning something valuable about each, and gaining new perspectives on Islam.

We will explore these gardens to their fullest and try not to miss any flower. Let us now wander slowly and pay attention to this extremely vibrant flower that stands out with its unique beauty.

He was the keeper of the Prophet's secrets and the person most knowledgeable—after the Prophet (PBBUH)—about the trials and tribulations that will come upon people until the Day of Resurrection. He would be the Prophet's companion in Paradise. His concern over variations in the recitation of the Qur'an prompted the third Caliph, `Uthman ibn `Affan, to order the creation of a single, standard copy of the Glorious Qur'an.

He is the pious and virtuous Companion of the Prophet (PBBUH), Hudhayfah ibn Al-Yaman.

Hudhayfah's Lineage and Upbringing

His full name was Hudhayfah ibn Husail (Al-Yaman) ibn Jabir. His mother's name was Al-Rabab bint Ka`b Al-Ash'haliyah.

Originally from Makkah but Raised in Madinah

Hudhayfah's father was from Makkah—from the Banu `Abs tribe. He had shed unlawful blood among his people, and consequently he fled to Madinah and lived there, becoming an ally of Banu `Abdul-Ash'hal. His people named him 'Al-Yaman' after Yemen, since Banu `Abdul-Ash'hal were originally from Yemen.

There he married Al-Rabab bint Ka`b Al-Ash'haliyah, who bore him Hudhayfah. Thus Hudhayfah was originally from Makkah but raised in Madinah.

Hudhayfah Embraces Islam

Following the emergence of the light of Islam in the Arabian Peninsula, Al-Yaman came to the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) in Makkah along with ten of his people. They all embraced Islam in the presence of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH). Then Al-Yaman returned to Madinah, and all his family and children, including Hudhayfah, also embraced Islam.

Hudhayfah Meets the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH)

Hudhayfah grew up in a Muslim household, raised by parents who were among the first to embrace Islam. He became a Muslim before his eyes were graced by the sight of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH). However, a strong longing to meet the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) filled his heart. He traveled to Makkah with his father, and there, the right hand of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) met his. A wave of love and reverence for the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) took over his entire being.

The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) gave him the choice between being considered an emigrant or a supporter, saying to him: **"If you wish, you can be among the emigrants; and if you wish, you can be among the supporters. Choose for yourself what you prefer."** Hudhayfah replied: "Rather, I am an *Ansari* (Supporter), O Messenger of Allah." He returned to Madinah, eagerly awaiting the Prophet's emigration in order to be among those who would support him.

The Remarkable Deeds and Merits of Hudhayfah ibn Al-Yaman

After the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) emigrated to Madinah, Hudhayfah stayed next to him, just as one eye is always in close proximity to its twin.

1. The Battle of Badr: Fulfilling a Promise

Unexpected obstacles intervened to stop his participation in the Battle of Badr. Hudhayfah himself recounted the story of his absence from Badr, stating: "The only thing that prevented me from participating in Badr was that the disbelievers of Quraysh captured us when my father and I were outside Madinah.

They asked: 'Where are you going?'

We replied: 'To Madinah.'

They said: 'You are going to Muhammad.'

We said: 'We are only going to Madinah.'

They refused to release us until we made a pledge not to fight alongside the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH). Then they released us.

When we came to the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) and told him about the pledge we had made [to the Mushrikin], he (PBBUH) said: **'We fulfill a pledge made to them and seek Allah's Help against them.'"**[1]

A Necessary Pause

[1] Reported by Muslim, hadith no. 1787.

Regardless of circumstances or reasons, the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) teaches us to respect our pledges, fulfill our promises, and to follow through on what was agreed upon, to build trust and a good reputation. The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) greatly needed Hudhayfah and his father to fight in this battle, yet there was the resolute duty of Hudhayfah and his father to honor their promise and keep their word, even in difficult circumstances. The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) commanded them to fulfill their promises and pledges, even if they were made to disbelievers and polytheists.

2. The Battle of Uhud: Forgiveness from a Position of Strength[1]

In the Battle of Uhud, Hudhayfah performed a great act of piety that demonstrated his profound faith and magnanimous heart. He showed himself to be nobly generous, kind, and forgiving. Hudhayfah fought the battle alongside his father, Al-Yaman. Hudhayfah performed admirably. His father was martyred at the hands of fellow Muslims who mistakenly killed him, thinking he was one of the polytheists.

A Story with a Moral

On the day of Uhud, the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) had left Al-Yaman and Thabit ibn Waqsh, both elderly men, with the women and children (non-combatants) in the fortresses of the city. When the battle raged, Al-Yaman said to his companion: "May you be bereft of your father! What are we waiting for? By Allah, none of us has more time left than a donkey can go without water (a metaphor for the brevity of their lives, as donkeys cannot tolerate thirst). Let us take up our swords and join the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH), maybe Allah will grant us martyrdom."

[1] Choosing to forgive while having the ability to punish.

Each seized his sword and plunged into the thick of the battle. Thabit ibn Waqsh was killed by the polytheists, whereas Al-Yaman was struck down by the swords of the Muslims who did not recognize him. Hudhayfah cried out: "My father! My father!" but no one heard him. The old man was killed by the swords of his own companions. The Muslims were left speechless with sorrow when they learned what they had done to Al-Yaman, but Hudhayfah did no more than look at them with compassion and say: ﴿May Allah forgive you, for He is the Most Merciful of the merciful ones﴾ (translated meaning of Yusuf 12:92). Then he sprinted toward the battle to fulfill his duty.

The battle ended and news of what happened reached the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH), who ordered that blood money be paid to Hudhayfah for the accidental death of his father. Hudhayfah declined to take it, saying: "He finally got the martyrdom he was ardently seeking. O Allah, bear witness that I have given his blood money as charity to the Muslims." The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) loved and respected Hudhayfah even more after that incident.

"Those Who Repress Anger and Pardon People"

Perhaps we can learn a lesson from this noble Companion, Hudhayfah ibn Al-Yaman. He saw his father's accidental death, yet he did not become resentful or rebellious. Instead, he showed compassion to those who killed his father unintentionally due to the chaos of the battle, and he forgave them.

If only we could learn to pardon and forgive one another and foster empathy, healing and harmony to win Allah's Good Pleasure and Forgiveness and be among those of whom Allah Almighty says: ﴿Those who spend [in Allah's Cause] in prosperity and in adversity, who repress anger, and who pardon people. Verily, Allah loves the good-doers﴾ (translated meaning of Al `Imran: 3:134).

3. The Battle of the Trench: Hudhayfah Becomes the Prophet's Companion in Paradise

During the Battle of the Trench (also known as the Battle of the Confederates), Quraysh and their allies encircled the Muslims. The tight siege dragged on. Suffering escalated and reached a peak until eyes grew wide with fear and hearts reached to the throats.

The disbelievers of Quraysh and their allies were in no better condition than the Muslims. Defeat had crept into their ranks, undermining the entire army's performance. Allah poured His Wrath upon them, sending a violent wind that uprooted their tents, overturned their cooking pots, and extinguished their fires.

In these decisive moments of warfare, the losing side is the one that groans first, while the victorious side is the one that maintains its composure and endures, even just for a moment longer, than its adversary. In these critical moments when the fate (outcome) of the battle is decided, military intelligence plays a crucial role in assessing the situation and providing sound advice. Who then possessed the strength to venture into the enemy's camp amid such high-risk dangers and gather intelligence?

"My Companion in Paradise"

The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) wanted to send someone deep into enemy territory, for him to operate inside the enemy army and bring him news under the cover of darkness before any decision was made. Who would be the hero of this difficult (and highly challenging), decisive (potentially war-winning or war-losing), and sensitive (requiring careful handling) mission?

Let us hear Hudhayfah's account of that critical mission. Hudhayfah said:

"That night, we sat in rows, with Abu Sufyan and his Makkan fellow polytheists above us and the Jewish tribe of Banu Qurayzah below us, fearing the Jewish tribe might harm our women and children. Never had a night been darker or windier than that one. The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) turned toward us and said: **'Who among you will rise to see what the people have done and then return [to me]? I ask Allah (the Exalted) to make him my companion in Paradise.'** The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) passed by us one by one until he came to me. I had nothing to protect me from the cold except a simple, unstitched garment which reached only to my knees. He (PBBUH) said: **'O Hudhayfah, go and infiltrate the people. See what they are doing and bring me news of them. Do nothing else while among them until you return to me.'** I went out, feeling more terrified and colder than all the others. The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) supplicated: **'O Allah, protect him from in front of him and from behind him, and from his right and from his left, and from above him and from below him.'** By Allah, The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) had not yet finished his supplication when Allah removed all fear from my heart and all cold from my body.

Inside the Enemy Camp

Hudhayfah continued: "I moved stealthily in the dark until I entered the ranks of the polytheists. It was not long before Abu Sufyan stood up to address them and said: 'O people of Quraysh, I am about to make a statement to you which I fear may reach Muhammad. Let each of you look and make sure who is sitting next to him.' On hearing this, I immediately grasped the hand of the man next to me and asked: 'Who are you?'" (thereby putting him on the defensive and clearing myself).

"Start moving! For Myself, I Am Leaving!"

Hudhayfah narrated: "When Abu Sufyan was certain that there was no stranger among them, he proceeded: 'O people of Quraysh, by Allah, you are not in a place where you can stay. Our horses and camels have perished, and Banu Qurayzah have betrayed us; we have heard unpleasant news about them. We have suffered from such a fierce wind that you can see how our cooking pots cannot remain still, our fires cannot be lit, and our tents cannot stand upright. So start moving. For myself, I am leaving.' Then he went to his camel, which he untethered and mounted. He then struck it, and it jumped up. Had it not been for the orders I received from the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH): '**Do nothing else while among them until you return to me**,' I would have killed him with an arrow."

Hudhayfah said: "I returned to the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) and told him the news, and he (PBBUH) was overjoyed. He (PBBUH) praised and thanked Allah."

Through this noble deed, Hudhayfah earned the love of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH), who recognized and appreciated his intelligence, his quick wit, and how he safeguarded the confidence of others. Above all, Hudhayfah won the honor of being the companion of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) in Paradise. What a great distinction Hudhayfah ibn Al-Yaman attained!

4. Eagerness and Keenness to Know Future Trials and Temptations

Hudhayfah possessed such wisdom that he realized that good in this life is clear to those who seek it. Evil, on the other hand, is deceptive; it disguises and conceals itself behind a facade of good intentions. Therefore, any wise person carefully studies evil and its sources. For this reason, Hudhayfah dedicated himself to understanding the nature of evil, evildoers, hypocrisy and hypocrites, as a practical method of self-preservation and avoidance of harm.

Hudhayfah transformed vulnerability into strength by adopting the knowledge of harmful behaviors and individuals as his primary defense mechanism. Let us listen to this conversation that took place between Hudhayfah and the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH), discussing periods of goodness and periods of turmoil and evil. Hudhayfah narrated: "The people used to ask the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) about good, but I used to ask him about evil lest I should be affected by it.

I said: 'O Messenger of Allah! We were living in ignorance and evil, then Allah bestowed upon us the present good (i.e., Islam). Will there be any evil after this good?'

He (PBBUH) replied: **'Yes.'**

I said: 'Will there be any good after this evil?'

He (PBBUH) replied: **'Yes, but it will be tainted (not pure).'**

I asked: 'What will it be tainted with?'

He (PBBUH) replied: '**(There will be) some people who will guide others (in ways) not according to my guidance (teachings)? You will approve of some of their deeds and disapprove of some others.'**

I asked: 'Will there be any evil after this good?'

He (PBBUH) replied: **'Yes, (there will be) some people calling [others] at the gates of Hellfire, and whoever will respond to their call will be thrown by them into the Hellfire.'**

I said: 'What do you order me to do if I happen to live in that time.'

He (PBBUH) replied: **'Stick to the main group of the Muslims and their Imam (ruler).'**

I said: 'If they (the Muslims at that time) have no main group and have no Imam [what should I do]?'

He (PBBUH) replied: **'Then seclude yourself from all these sects, even if you have to bite (i.e., eat) the root of a tree until death comes to you while you are in that state.'"**[1]

At the present time, my beloved readers, trials and tribulations encircle us from every side, coming at us from every direction. We need to pay attention to this important conversation between the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) and Hudhayfah. Let us pay attention to it attentively with open hearts. May Allah protect us from all trials (difficulties, hardships, and temptations), both apparent (visible challenges) and hidden (struggles that are internal, such as doubts, fears, or temptations).

5. The Keeper of the Prophet's Secrets

The Prophet (PBBUH) knew the individual strengths of his Companions and how to motivate them to achieve their full potential. Therefore, he (PBBUH) always placed the right person in the right position. A person placed in a job, role, or situation where their specific skills, personality, and talents are a perfect match for the requirements and challenges of that position leads to success, progress, and efficiency.

As mentioned earlier, the Prophet (PBUH) observed that Hudhayfah possessed three important qualities: intelligence that aided him in solving complex problems, a quick wit that enabled him to handle the most difficult

[1] Reported by Al-Bukhari, hadith no. 7084.

situations and crises with ease, and discretion, ensuring that no one could ferret out his secrets or make him divulge them under any circumstances.

The greatest problem that faced the Prophet (PBBUH) in Madinah was the presence of hypocrites from among the allies of the Jews, who, all the while, kept hatching plots and intrigues against the Muslims. This was especially the case after Banu Qurayzah committed treachery and breached their covenant with the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH). The Prophet (PBBUH), therefore, wanted to confide in one of his Companions the names of the hypocrites. That was a secret he (PBBUH) had not shared with anyone before. He (PBBUH) found no one more suitable than Hudhayfah ibn Al-Yaman. Consequently, the Messenger (PBBUH) confided in him the names of the hypocrites and entrusted him with monitoring their movements, tracking their activities and protecting Islam and the Muslims from their danger. From that day forward, Hudhayfah ibn Al-Yaman was called 'The Keeper of the Prophet's Secrets.'

The Rightly Guided Caliphs Consult Hudhayfah about Important Matters and Concerns

Hudhayfah remained entrusted with keeping the names of the hypocrites secret for the rest of his life. The Rightly Guided Caliphs (PBBUH) showed continued trust in him and consulted him on matters of importance to the state. Caliph `Umar ibn A-Khattab, although he was outstandingly insightful and astute, often sought Hudhayfah's opinion regarding selecting workers and understanding men. It was `Umar who entreated Hudhayfah, when he learned that the Prophet (PBBUH) had confided in him the names of the hypocrites, asking him: "Am I one of the hypocrites?" Hudhayfah replied: "No, and I will not absolve anyone else after you."

Whenever a Muslim died, `Umar ibn Al-Khattab would ask: "Was Hudhayfah present to pray the Funeral Prayer over him?" If people said yes, `Umar would lead the Funeral Prayer. If they said no, he would have doubts about the deceased and refrain from leading the prayer.

Moreover, `Umar once asked Hudhayfah: "Are there any hypocrites among my workers?"

Hudhayfah replied: "One."

`Umar said: "Guide me to him."

Hudhayfah replied: "I will not."

But `Umar soon dismissed that worker, as though he had been told who that man was.

6. The Remarkable Deeds That Hudhayfah Performed During the Era of the Caliphs

Time passed, and the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) passed away while being pleased with Hudhayfah, who grieved deeply over him. Hudhayfah remained a figure of love, respect, and esteem for the Caliphs of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH).

Here are some of the praiseworthy deeds that Hudhayfah did during the era of the Caliphs.

First: Hudhayfah Participates in the Islamic Liberation of Lands

In the Wars of Apostasy and the subsequent victories:

Hudhayfah played a leading role in the liberation of Iraq, Hamadan, Rayy, and Dinawar[1].

In the Battle of Nahavand

The Persians amassed a huge army of 150,000 fighters. Responding to this challenge, the Commander of the Believers, `Umar ibn Al-Khattab, assigned Al-Nu`man ibn Muqrin to lead the Muslim army. He then wrote to Hudhayfah, instructing him to march to Al-Nu`man at the head of an army from Kufa. The Commander of the Believers also wrote orders to the fighters to place Al-Nu`man ibn Muqrin as the commander of the armies, saying: "If he (Al-Nu`man ibn Muqrin) is martyred, Hudhayfah ibn Al-Yaman should take the banner (i.e., assume leadership). If he is martyred, then Jarir ibn `Abdullah…" The Commander of the Believers proceeded to name the substitute commanders for the battle until he named seven.

The Companions acted just as the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) had taught them. They planned and took all necessary precautions to manage their affairs and ensure success, while maintaining strong certainty in Allah and reliance upon Him.

The two armies met: the Persians had a strength of one hundred and fifty thousand men, and the Muslims had a strength of only thirty thousand men. The fighting began, and a fierce and violent battle ensued in which the Muslim soldiers showed deep dedication and selfless sacrifice. The army commander, Al-Nu`man ibn Muqrin, fell a martyr, and before the banner could fall from his hand, the new commander, Hudhayfah ibn Al-Yaman, had already taken it up with his right hand. He instructed that the news of Al-Nu`man's death must not be announced until the battle was over. He summoned his brother, Al-

[1] Hamadan, Rayy, and Dinawar were significant historical cities in ancient and medieval Iran (Persia).

Nu`aym ibn Al-Muqrin, and appointed him standard-bearer as a token of recognition.

The fighting continued, in which the Muslims and their commander, Hudhayfah ibn Al-Yaman, fought valiantly. The battle ended with a great victory for the small force (thirty thousand men) and an overwhelming defeat for the large force (one hundred and fifty thousand men), all by Allah's Will.

Second: Hudhayfah Displays Genius in Several Situations

Hudhayfah ibn Al-Yaman was not only a brilliant commander on the battlefield and a wise sage in his hermitage, but he also showed himself to be a genius in every task entrusted to him. He possessed vast intelligence and diverse experience in various areas of life.

The climate of Al-Mada'in (Ctesiphon) proved to be detrimental to the health of the Arabs. Caliph `Umar ibn Al-Khattab ordered Sa`d ibn Abu Waqqas to evacuate the Arabs and find them the most suitable location. Sa`d assigned this mission to Hudhayfah ibn Al-Yaman, due to his genius and sagacity. He entrusted Hudhayfah with choosing the most healthy and advantageous spot to the nature of the Arabs. Hudhayfah searched all the places until he reached Kufa, which was a barren, sandy, and rocky area. He sensed there a pleasant, healing atmosphere and said: "This is the place to stay, Allah willing." The city of Kufa was planned and built, and no sooner had the Muslims moved there than the sick among them recovered from their illnesses and the weak gained strength and vigor.

Third: As Governor of Mada'in: Hudhayfah Sets the Finest Example of Humility

Whenever the Commander of the Believers, `Umar ibn Al-Khattab, sent a governor to a people, he would write to them: "I have sent so-and-so to you and commanded him to do such-and-such, so listen to him and obey him." When he sent Hudhayfah ibn Al-Yaman to Al-Mada'in, he wrote to the people: "I have sent so-and-so to you, so obey him." The governorship of Al-Mada'in was a high position...so let us see, my dear readers, how the new governor (Hudhayfah) handled this prestigious post.

The people of Al-Mada'in went out to welcome their new governor, whom the Commander of the Believers, `Umar ibn Al-Khattab, had chosen for them: Hudhayfah ibn Al-Yaman. Feelings of joy and longing surged through their hearts as they walked with eager steps to meet this honorable Companion. They had heard much about his piety and devotion as well as his great service in the liberation of Iraq and elsewhere.

As the people waited, they saw a man approaching, riding a donkey with an old saddle on its back. His legs were hanging down the sides of the donkey, and he held a loaf of bread in his hand, eating and chewing his food while riding.

Once Hudhayfah reached the center of the crowd that awaited him and they recognized him as Hudhayfah ibn Al-Yaman, they were astonished by his simplicity and profound humility. Their land had never known a governor of such a distinguished character, neither during nor before the Persian era.

They said: "Ask us for whatever you wish, O Emir." He replied: "I ask you for food to eat and fodder for my donkey, as long as I am among you."

"Beware of Situations and Behaviors That Incur Trials"

Hudhayfah then intently looked at the people of Al-Mada'in and said: "Beware of situations [and behaviors] that incur trials." They asked: "What are

the situations that incur trials, O Abu `Abdullah?" Hudhayfah replied: "The doors of rulers [i.e., negative behavior in the presence of authority]. One of you enters upon the ruler [or an influential figure] and flatters him by agreeing with his falsehoods and by praising him for virtues he does not actually possess."

This opening statement was the truest expression of the new ruler's character and his approach to governance. What kind of men have you brought up, O Messenger of Allah (PBBUH)? Truly, they were pinnacles of wisdom, of selflessness, and above all, of humility.

Fourth: The Prompting Role Hudhayfah Played in Standardizing the Qur'an into a Single Official Written Version

Among the praiseworthy deeds that history will never forget about Hudhayfah ibn Al-Yaman was his being the direct reason for unifying the Muslims around a single written text of the Qur'an, which is the *Mushaf* (copy of the Qur'an) used by Muslims worldwide today.

When Hudhayfah was fighting with the people of Iraq in Armenia and Azerbaijan, he was alarmed by their differences in recitation style. As soon as he returned to Madinah, before even entering his house, he went directly to the Caliph, `Uthman ibn `Affan, and brought this issue to his attention. He said: "O Commander of the Believers, save this nation before they differ over the Book (the Qur'an) as the Jews and Christians differed (over their own scriptures)."

Caliph `Uthman sent word to the Mother of the Believers, Hafsah bint `Umar, saying: "Send us the manuscripts [the master copy of the Qur'an] so that we may make multiple identical copies of them and then return them (the pages) to you." Hafsah sent them to `Uthman. He then ordered Zayd ibn Thabit and a group of Qur'an memorizers, renowned for their knowledge and

righteousness, to create several identical copies from that original manuscript of the Qur'an. When they finished copying, `Uthman returned the manuscripts to Hafsah and sent a copy of this standard version of the Qur'an to every major city. Finally, he ordered all personal copies to be burned.

7. A Glimpse into the Insights and Eloquence of Hudhayfah

Hudhayfah's words and actions show that he possessed keen insight into the origins of human suffering, difficulties, and challenges in life, as well as the pathways of evil and sin. His knowledge of evil and trials enabled him to steer clear of them and caution others to do the same.

Strong awareness of the sources of evil and suffering endowed Hudhayfah with profound understanding of this world and a deep knowledge of people. He pondered matters with the wisdom of a philosopher and the discernment of a sage, as evident in many of his statements and actions.

Here are some of Hudhayfah's sayings, which deserve to be written in letters of gold:

- Hudhayfah said: "Hypocrisy is to speak about Islam but not act upon it."[1]

- He said: "Allah Almighty sent Muhammad (PBBUH) [as a Prophet] who called (led) people away from error and toward guidance and away from disbelief and toward faith. There were those who responded to him; those who were 'dead'—meaning misguided and ignorant—responded to the call of truth and became 'alive' through faith. Conversely, those who were 'alive' but followed their desires and

[1] That is, speaking about the faith but failing to act upon its principles, emphasizing the critical role of actions and practice in demonstrating genuine faith.

whims—meaning on the wrong path—'died' in falsehood (i.e., they persisted in their error, and their hearts and minds 'died' by following falsehood and their desires)."

- Speaking about hearts and the spiritual condition of guidance and misguidance within them, he said: "Hearts are of four kinds:

  - A veiled heart—that is, one that is unable to comprehend matters, as if it were veiled from understanding. That is the heart of the disbeliever.

  - A two-faced heart—that is, one that has two faces, meeting disbelievers with one face and believers with another. That is the heart of the hypocrite.

  - A heart that is pure and radiant—that is, one that contains no malice or deceit. That is the heart of the believer.

  - A heart containing both hypocrisy and faith. The example of faith is like a tree nourished by pure water, and the example of hypocrisy is like a sore nourished by pus and blood. Whichever prevails, will have the upper hand [on the personality]."

- He also said: "The best of you are not those who abandon this world for the Hereafter or those who abandon the Hereafter for this world. Rather, they are those who take a share from both."[1]

[1] That is, the most virtuous people are those who find a middle ground between worldly pursuits and spiritual or eternal considerations. His statement highlights the importance of moderation in life, where an individual fulfills their responsibilities and enjoys the lawful aspects of this life without neglecting their obligations toward the Hereafter, and vice versa. A complete life involves both material engagement and spiritual devotion.

- He said: “O reciters of the Qur’an, follow the straight path! If you follow it, you will have gone far ahead. But if you deviate to the right or the left, you will have gone far astray.”

- Moreover, he said: “The two things I fear most for people are: that they will prefer what they see to what they know, and that they will go astray without realizing it.”

This is Hudhayfah, the enemy of hypocrisy and the friend of clarity.

The Final Chapter of Hudhayfah's Life

After living a life oriented toward pleasing Allah by giving to others and by struggling and sacrificing in Allah's Cause, 'The Keeper of the Prophet's Secrets' lay on his deathbed.

"I Seek Refuge in Allah from a Morning That Leads to Hellfire!"

On the day Hudhayfah passed away, some of his companions came to visit him.

He asked them: "What time is it?"

They replied: "It is almost dawn."

He said: "I seek refuge with Allah from a morning that leads to Hellfire!"[1] He repeated this three times.

"Have You Brought My Shroud?"

Hudhayfah then looked at his companions and asked: "Have you brought shrouds with you?"

They replied: "Yes."

When Hudhayfah saw them, he found them new and expensive. He said: "These are not [suitable] shrouds for me. Two white garments are sufficient, for

[1] An earnest supplication that expresses fear of the consequences of worldly deeds and a desire to seek divine protection from anything that might lead to punishment or a bad end.

I will not be left in the grave for long until I am given something better in return or they are taken away from me."[1]

Hudhayfah Utters a Final Supplication

Hudhayfah turned to the heavens and made an earnest supplication: "O Allah, You know that I loved poverty over richness, humility over honor, and death over life. Welcome to the beloved one who has come after I longed for it. He who regrets will not prosper."[2] Then his pure soul departed to its Creator. This was in the thirty-sixth year of the *Hijrah*, forty days after the death of `Uthman ibn `Affan.

May Allah's Mercy and Blessings be upon you, O Companion of the Prophet (PBBUH) in Paradise.

O Keeper of the Prophet's Secrets.

May Allah be pleased with you and please you, O Hudhayfah ibn Al-Yaman.

[1] This statement signifies that a person is only left in their grave for a short time before Allah changes their state, either for the better, by replacing what is in the grave (the shroud or other items) with something better, or for the worse.

[2] That is, focusing on past mistakes (regret) can hinder future success (prosperity). Instead of dwelling on what cannot be changed, it is more productive to learn from experiences and move forward with a positive and proactive mindset.

20. The Family of Yasir

May Allah Be Pleased with Them

20. The Family of Yasir

(Yasir ibn `Amir—Sumayyah bint Khibbat—`Ammar ibn Yasir)

Now, my dear friends, we are about to meet a very distinguished family of believers with a long-standing, honorable history. A family that was poor in material possessions but rich in lasting impact. How many families and names have come into this world and departed without anyone remembering them afterwards? Here is a humble, poor Muslim family that history honors to this day, and indeed, will honor until the Day of Judgment.

So, who is this family? What is the secret behind their enduring legacy?

Come, my beloved readers, let us learn together about this blessed family.

The Father

His full name was Yasir ibn `Amir Al-Kinani. He came to Makkah from Yemen with his two brothers, Al-Harith and Malik, searching for a lost sibling who had been missing for years.

When they despaired of finding him, their paths diverged. Al-Harith and Malik returned to Yemen, while Makkah attracted Yasir. He decided to make it his home and place of residence. Little did Yasir know that when he made this decision, he was entering history through its widest and most honorable gates.

As was the custom among the Arabs, if a stranger (thus lacking tribal protection) entered a land and settled in it, he must form an alliance with one of its leaders to protect him from harm and to ensure his safety and security

during his stay. Thus, Yasir formed an alliance with Abu Hudhayfah ibn Al-Mughirah Al-Makhzumi.

The Mother

Her name was Sumayyah bint Khibbat, a slave of Abu Hudhayfah ibn Al-Mughirah Al-Makhzumi. Abu Hudhayfah admired Yasir's noble character and virtuous qualities and, wishing to draw closer to him, arranged his marriage to his female slave, Sumayyah bint Khibbat.

The Son

His name was `Ammar ibn Yasir, the fruit of this marriage and the source of his parents' joy and delight. Their joy increased when Abu Hudhayfah freed him.

The family of Yasir lived a happy and contented life under the protection of Banu Makhzum. Years passed, and Yasir and his wife Sumayyah grew old and frail, while `Ammar became a handsome, upright young man.

The Blessed Family of Yasir Embraces Islam

Finally, the earth was illuminated by the divine light; Allah's Message was sent down to His Prophet Muhammad (PBBUH), who rose up to call people to that which brings worldly honor as well as the bliss of the Hereafter.

`Ammar ibn Yasir was eagerly following the news of the new call with open ears, heart, and mind. However, this did not quench his thirst, so he went to the house of Al-Arqam ibn Abu Al-Arqam[1]. There, he was blessed to meet the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH). Deeply moved by the Prophet's words about Islam, `Ammar directly extended his hand to him and said: "I bear witness that there is no god but Allah, and I bear witness that you are His slave and Messenger."

`Ammar returned to his mother, Sumayyah, and invited her to Islam. She quickly responded to his invitation and accepted Islam. He then went to his father, Yasir, and invited him to Islam. His father was no less responsive than his mother. Thus, the whole blessed family embraced Islam. Their conversion was early, as is the way of the righteous whom Allah guides. Not only that, but they were among the first to openly declare their faith in Islam.

`Abdullah ibn Mas`ud said: "The first seven to openly declare their Islam were: the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH), Abu Bakr, `Ammar, his mother Sumayyah, Suhayb, Bilal, and Al-Miqdad."[2]

[1] A secret gathering place for early Muslims in Makkah, serving as a sanctuary for prayer, education, and the strengthening of faith during a period of intense persecution.
[2] Reported by Ibn Majah, hadith no. 150.

"Have Patience, O Family of Yasir, for Your Meeting Place is Paradise"

As happened to all early believers, the family of Yasir faced intense persecution. Being vulnerable and defenseless, they received the largest and worst portion of the torment and horrors inflicted by Quraysh upon the first Muslims. No sooner had news of their conversion spread than Banu Makhzum flew into a rage.

They would take the family of Yasir to the valley of Makkah, dress them in iron armor, and expose them to the scorching sun. They would deny them water and take turns beating them until their throats were parched, their veins dried up, their skin cracked, and their blood flowed. Then they would leave them that day, only to repeat the same relentless punishment the following day.

The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) would go to the place where he (PBBUH) knew the family of Yasir were being tortured, showing them solidarity and strengthening their steadfastness and perseverance in the face of oppression. At that time, the Prophet (PBBUH) had no means to resist or repel the harm from believers. One day, while visiting them, `Ammar called out to him: "O Messenger of Allah, the torture has reached its peak!" The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) replied: **"Have patience, O family of Yasir, for your meeting place is Paradise."**

Hearing this, their tortured souls found peace, and their anxious eyes were comforted. The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) was not merely offering them solace when he (PBBUH) said this; rather, he (PBBUH) was affirming something certain and describing a current reality he (PBBUH) was observing.

Sumayyah Becomes the First Martyr in Islam

The parents' suffering did not last for long.

Abu Jahl passed by Sumayyah while she was being tortured and hurled the vilest insults at her. On that day, she took a firm stand that made her worthy of an everlasting honor and a glory that shall never cease. She taught humanity an unforgettable lesson when she paid her tormentor no heed despite her suffering. His folly increased, and he drew his spear and stabbed her. She fell a martyr, inscribing with her blood and bravery lines of light upon the memory of history. She thus became the first martyr in Islam and a permanent and inspiring part of human memory.

Her husband, Yasir, soon died as a martyr under brutal torture, bearing witness that there is no god but Allah and that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah.

"O Fire, Be Cool and Peaceful for `Ammar!"

After the martyrdom of his mother followed by that of his father, only `Ammar remained from this family. His witnessing both his parents being brutally killed before his eyes did not spare him; the polytheists only inflicted upon him severer forms of torture. `Ammar's companions described some of the torture he endured on many occasions.

- `Amr ibn Maymun said: "The Mushrikin tortured `Ammar ibn Yasir with fire. The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) would visit him, passing his hand over his head and saying: **'O fire, be cool and peaceful for `Ammar, as you were cool and peaceful for Ibrahim (Abraham).'"**

- `Amr ibn Al-Hakam said: "`Ammar was subjected to such a severe degree of torture that he did not know what he was saying."

"If They Do This to You Again, Say It Again! [If They Torture You Again, Say What You Said Again!]"

All this torture, from being branded with fire to being exposed to scorching sand, to being submerged in water until he was nearly suffocated, did not make `Ammar waive. He did not truly feel ruined until the day he lost consciousness under the weight of the horrific torture. His tormentors said to him: "Speak ill of Muhammad and praise our gods." `Ammar began repeating their words unconsciously. When he awoke from the stupor of intense torture, he remembered what he had said. He was much agitated and broke down in regret.

`Ammar hurried to the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH), downcast and sorrowful. He could not look the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) in the eye. When the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) saw him in this state, he (PBBUH) asked him: **"What is the matter, O `Ammar?"** He replied: "Widespread evil, O Messenger of Allah." He (PBBUH) asked him: **"What is it?"** `Ammar replied: "I was tortured yesterday until I suffered such hardship that, were it to befall a mountain, it would cleave it apart. They were not content with what they had already inflicted upon me, but they burned my body with fire until the torment reached its peak. I no longer knew what I was saying. They kept forcing me to speak ill of you and to praise their gods until I did so." Then `Ammar began to weep bitterly.

The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) asked `Ammar: **"How is your heart, O `Ammar [in such a stressful situation]?"** He replied: "It is at peace with faith."

He (PBBUH) said: **"Do not worry! If they do this to you again, say what you said again."**

Allah (Exalted be He) perfected His favor upon `Ammar by revealing an ayah concerning him from above the seven heavens [that applies to all persecuted Muslims]. In this ayah Allah states: ﴿Whoever disbelieves in Allah after having believed, except for one who is forced [to renounce his faith] while his heart is secure in faith. But those who willingly open their breasts to disbelief, upon them is wrath from Allah, and for them is a great punishment﴾ (translated meaning of Al-Nahl 16:106).

`Ammar kept enduring intense persecution and pain with unwavering faith and extraordinary patience and determination until his tormentors became exhausted. All their efforts and goals were defeated, and so they left him alone.

The Remarkable Deeds and Merits of `Ammar

1. The *Hijrah*: The First Mosque Built in Islam

`Ammar ibn Yasir was among the first to embark on this pivotal journey, after the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) permitted his Companions to emigrate to Madinah. Upon reaching Quba' [on the outskirts of Madinah], where emigrants were staying [while en route to their final destination], `Ammar called upon them to build a mosque in which to perform their prayers. They responded to his call. Thus, the mosque initiated by `Ammar ibn Yasir became the first mosque in Islam.

A Blessed Family with an Enduring Legacy

Dear readers, have you found the answer to the question: How could this poor family, with little resources and a humble lineage, gain eternal fame and create a lasting legacy, while large and prestigious families have vanished into oblivion? It is faith, obedience to Allah, and unwavering dedication to a cause beyond personal interests.

Let us consider the accomplishments of this blessed family:

1. It was the first family all of whom embraced Islam on one single day.
2. It was the first family all of whom openly declared and proclaimed their Islam.
3. It was the first family all of whom were tortured together, at the same time.

4. It was the first family in which both parents were martyred, right before their son's eyes and ears.

5. The first mosque established in Islam was inspired by their son, `Ammar ibn Yasir.

What a magnificent family! What a memorable impact they have made on every Muslim! And what a noble honor has been bestowed upon them! Their place of reunion is Paradise itself!

The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) emigrated to Madinah and settled there. `Ammar remained with him, almost never leaving his company, day or night.

2. `Ammar's Deeds During the Life of the Prophet (PBBUH)

`Ammar participated in the Battle of Badr with the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH), fighting under his banner. When he fought this battle, he was the only Muslim whose parents were both believers and martyrs. The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) said to him, when Abu Jahl was killed: **"Rejoice, O `Ammar! Allah has avenged the death of your parents."** `Ammar participated in all the battles alongside the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) after that.

3. A Collection of `Ammar's Merits

The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) reciprocated Ammar's love and boasted to his Companions about his righteousness and strong faith.

Here is a collection of Ammar's merits, written in letters of gold:

1. `Ali ibn Abu Talib narrated: "`Ammar ibn Yasir came seeking permission to enter upon the Prophet (PBBUH) so he (PBBUH) said: **'Permit him [to enter]! Welcome to the pure and purified one.'"**[1]

2. Anas narrated that the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) said: **"Paradise longs for three: `Ali, `Ammar, and Salman."**[2]

3. `Ali ibn Abu Talib narrated that the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) said: **"`Ammar is filled with faith up to the marrow (bones)."**[3]

4. Khalid ibn Al-Walid narrated: "`Ammar ibn Yasir and I had a disagreement, so `Ammar went to complain to the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH). I only became harsher toward `Ammar, while the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) remained silent. `Ammar then wept and said: 'O Messenger of Allah, do you not hear him?' The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) raised his head toward me and said: **'Whoever is hostile to `Ammar, Allah will be hostile to him. Whoever hates him, Allah will hate him.'** I went out, and nothing was dearer to me than Ammar's satisfaction. I then met him, and he was satisfied [with me].'"[4]

5. Ibn Mas`ud narrated that the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) said: **"Take as an example two after me from my Companions: Abu Bakr and `Umar. Act upon the guidance of `Ammar, and hold fast to the advice of Ibn Mas`ud."**[5]

6. While building the Prophet's Mosque, the people would carry one mud brick at a time, but `Ammar would carry two. The Prophet (PBBUH)

[1] Reported by Al-Tirmidhi, hadith no. 3798.
[2] Reported by Al-Tirmidhi, hadith no. 3797.
[3] Reported by Ibn Majah, hadith no. 147.
[4] Reported by Ahmad, hadith no. 16814.
[5] Reported by Al-Tirmidhi, hadith no. 3805.

saw him. He (PBBUH) started removing the dust from his body and said: **"May Allah be merciful to `Ammar. He will be killed by the transgressing group. He will be calling them (i.e. his murderers, the transgressing group) to Paradise, and they will be calling him to Hellfire."**[1]

Indeed, my beloved readers, the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) could not have loved a Muslim to this extent unless his faith, his perseverance in the face of adversity, and his spiritual elevation had reached a peak of excellence.

Later, the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) passed away to the Highest Companion, pleased with `Ammar ibn Yasir.

4. `Ammar's Deeds During the Era of the Caliphs

Most of the Arabs apostatized from Islam after the death of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH). Caliph Abu Bakr fought the apostates. On the day of the Battle of Yamamah [a pivotal military engagement in the Wars against Apostasy], `Ammar ibn Yasir took an honorable stand which was courageous enough to be remembered over time. When the fighting intensified against the Companions of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH), death quickly snatched away the memorizers of the Qur'an, and the earth shook beneath the feet of the Muslims, `Ammar, observing a general collapse in fighting performance, called out to the Muslims. He stood on a rock overlooking the battlefield, with his ear almost slashed off and dangling from his head, and said: "O Muslims, are you fleeing from Paradise? I am `Ammar ibn Yasir, come to me!" Then he rushed ahead of them, his ear dangling against his cheek. His courage was contagious. All the Muslims were moved to emulate him and take action themselves, rushing forth like arrows until Musaylimah the Liar was killed.

[1] Reported by Al-Bukhari, hadith no. 447.

`Ammar ibn Yasir was always there, in the front line, in the several Muslim conquests and battles that took place with the Persians and the Byzantines. He was a skilled, valiant and trustworthy soldier, neither fearing nor dreading death.

`Ammar Assumes the Position of the Governor of Kufa

Caliph `Umar ibn Al-Khattab chose his governors with meticulous care and discretion. He chose `Ammar ibn Yasir as governor of Kufa and appointed `Ibn Mas`ud to manage the treasury. He wrote a letter to inform its people of the new assigned officials, stating: "To proceed, I have sent `Ammar to you as governor and Ibn Mas`ud as teacher and minister. These two are among the most distinguished Companions of Muhammad (PBBUH) and the people who fought at Badr. Listen to them, obey them, and follow their example."

`Ammar Carrying His Food on His Back

Holding the position of governor made `Ammar even more humble, pious, and ascetic in his lifestyle. One of his contemporaries in Kufa, `Abdullah ibn Al-Hudhayl, said about him: "I saw `Ammar ibn Yasir, when he was governor of Kufa, buying cucumbers for a dirham and then tying them with a rope and carrying them on his back to his house."

"My Ear Was Injured in Allah's Cause"

While `Ammar was the governor of Kufa, he was insulted by a man who said to him: "O you with an ear cut-off!" The man mocked him because of his ear, which had been cut off during the Battle of Yamamah. The governor, who

held power and authority, did no more than say to the man who insulted him: "You insulted my best ear! It was injured in Allah's Cause."

`Ammar Viewing the Responsibilities and Burdens of Governorship as a Trial Rather Than a Privilege

After the people of Kufa complained of `Ammar to `Umar, the Commander of the Believers, the Caliph dismissed him without blaming him for anything.

When `Umar met him, he asked him: "Are you displeased by what I did to you, O `Ammar?" He replied: "By Allah, governorship itself displeased me more than being dismissed from it."

The Final Chapter of `Ammar's Life

"Do You Forbid a Man from Drinking of the Well of Rumah Which He Had [Earlier] Bought?!"

The sedition reared its ugly head among the Muslims during the caliphate of `Uthman ibn `Affan. `Ammar was one of those who opposed Caliph `Uthman's policies. However, `Ammar offered 'wholesome opposition,' which was aimed to improve, not destroy. It carried with it no menace to the stability of the caliphate, and most importantly, it did not spoil the love and respect between `Ammar and the Caliph.

In those critical hours when the conspirators were besieging the house of Caliph `Uthman, the mistreatment of the Caliph escalated to the point of denying him water. `Ammar took a memorable stance to address the situation and lift injustice from the Caliph.

Despite his deep disagreement with Caliph `Uthman's policies, `Ammar was enraged when the conspirators cut off his water supply. He cried out angrily to them: "Glory be to Allah! Do you forbid a man from drinking of the Well of Rumah which he had [earlier] bought and gifted to the Muslims?!" `Ammar defied the siege, ignoring personal risks, and himself carried the water skin to the Caliph's house.

`Ammar brought water to the Caliph daily so he could drink and perform ablution. He continued in this manner, prioritizing the safety and well-being of `Uthman above his own safety, until `Uthman was martyred.[1]

The Day of Siffin

`Ammar sided with `Ali ibn Abu Talib in the conflict that broke out between `Ali and Mu`awiyah ibn Abu Sufyan [over administering immediate justice for `Uthman's murder and meting out punishment on the murderers]. He was ninety-three years old at the time.

"Today We Meet Our Beloved Muhammad"

On the day of the Battle of Siffin, when the fighting flared up and `Ammar sensed his impending death, he said: "Bring me a drink of milk." He drank it and then said: "The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) told me: **'The last drink you will have in this world will be a drink of milk.'**"[2] Then he advanced into the battle, shouting: "Today we will meet our beloved Muhammad!"

`Ammar Attains Martyrdom

It was only moments before `Ammar ibn Yasir was martyred. His blood, saturated with love for Allah and His Messenger (PBBUH), flowed from his wounds. It had always burned with powerful longing to support and exalt Allah's religion; this single dominant motivation directed his life until the end.

[1] For more information on this subject, please see: '*A Biography of the Ten Given Glad Tidings of Paradise*' by the same author.
[2] Reported by Ahmad, hadith no. 18880.

Imam `Ali carried `Ammar's body on his chest to where the Muslims prayed over him. Then he was buried in his clothes.

Imam `Ali stood and expressed deep sadness at the death of `Ammar. He praised his legacy, saying: "May Allah have mercy on `Ammar from the day he embraced Islam [until his death]. None of the early Companions of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) doubted that Paradise became certain for `Ammar [i.e., he became deserving of Paradise through his work and merit]. Congratulations to `Ammar on Paradise!"

And thus `Ammar will join his parents and the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) in Paradise.

Congratulations to you, O `Ammar, on earning the love of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH).

Congratulations to you on entering Paradise, which yearns for you.

May Allah be pleased with you and with the entire family of Yasir. Surely, your place of reunion is Paradise.

21. Sa`d ibn `Ubadah

May Allah Be Pleased with Him

21. Sa`d ibn `Ubadah

We come to another exceptionally bright flower, shining like sunshine and warming the hearts of those around it. He was the only one of the Ansar (the Supporters of the Prophet from the local inhabitants of Madinah) who suffered persecution at the hands of Quraysh, just like his fellow believers from the Muhajirun (the Emigrants from Makkah).

He was among those who pledged allegiance to the Prophet (PBBUH) at Al-`Aqabah. He was also one of the twelve clan leaders of Madinah who were selected by the Prophet (PBBUH) to be representatives of their communities and to take responsibility for themselves and their people.

He was the leader of the Khazraj tribe and the standard-bearer of the Ansar, Sa`d ibn `Ubadah.

Sa`d's Lineage and Upbringing

His full name was Sa`d ibn `Ubadah ibn Dulaym ibn Harithah Al-Khazraji. Sa`d was skilled in writing, archery, and swimming. According to the Arabs, when these three skills are possessed by a person, they earn him the title of 'The Perfect One.'

Sa`d Embraces Islam

During the Hajj season of the thirteenth year of the Prophethood, seventy-three men and two women from Yathrib came to the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) to pledge allegiance to him. Among them was Sa`d ibn `Ubadah. After the pledge of allegiance was given, the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) chose

twelve clan leaders from among them to be guardians of the pledge and act as representatives of their respective communities [who would uphold the terms of the Second Pledge of Al-`Aqabah]. One of these clan leaders was the chieftain of the Khazraj, Sa`d ibn `Ubadah.

Sa`d Takes His Share of Affliction

It was not unusual for Quraysh to inflict torture on those living among them, but for them to subject a man from Yathrib to such torture was strange indeed. That person was not just an ordinary man, but a leader and a chief among the people of Yathrib. He was Sa`d ibn `Ubadah.

Enduring this experience was painful and challenging, but it later became a distinction, which was a mark of pride bestowed upon Sa`d ibn `Ubadah alone among all other Ansar.

After the pledge of allegiance was given in secret and the Ansar were preparing to depart, Quraysh learned of this pledge and support given to the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH). They exploded with rage and malice [at the prospect of attracting believers outside Makkah] and acted on these wild emotions, without thinking of the consequences. They hotly pursued the group of pledge-takers, who were traveling back to Yathrib, but they only caught Sa`d ibn `Ubadah. The polytheists seized him and tied his hands around his neck. They brought him to Makkah, beating him and inflicting upon him every kind of torture. Those who beat and tortured him did not know his standing among his people. Even if they had known this, it would not have deterred them at all, for they were consumed by the flames of their own wrath and hatred.

They had already inflicted much suffering on the notables of Makkah who had embraced Islam. However, at that time, Quraysh had lost their minds; they

made hasty decisions without proper consideration, knowing no other way to vent their hatred than through torture.

"Do You Have Any Right of Good Neighborliness Between You and Anyone of Quraysh?"

Narrating the suffering he was put through by Quraysh, Sa`d said: "By Allah, I was [a prey] in their hands when a group of Quraysh appeared before us. Among them there was a bright-faced man (meaning Suhayl ibn `Amr). I said to myself: 'If there was good in anyone of them, it would be this man.' But when he came close to me, he raised his hand and punched me hard, as a result of which I said to myself: 'No, by Allah, there is no good left in them after this.'"

"By Allah, I was [a prey] in their hands and they were dragging me when a man who was with them approached me and said: 'Woe to you! Do you not have any right of good neighborliness between you and anyone of Quraysh?' I replied: 'Yes, I used to protect the merchants of Jubayr ibn Mut`im ibn `Adi. I would defend them from any injustice being committed against them in my territory. The same is true of Al-Harith ibn Harb ibn Umayyah.' The man said: 'Woe to you! Call out the names of the two men and mention they owe you the right of good neighborliness.' So I did that."

"The same man then went to them and found them at the Ka`bah. He told them that a man from the Khazraj was being beaten in Al-Abtah, and he called their names and mentioned that there was a right of good neighborliness between the Khazraji man and them. They asked him about my name, and they were told that it was Sa`d ibn `Ubadah. They said: 'He has told the truth, by Allah.' They then came and rescued me from their hands."

Sa`d left Makkah after this attack, having personally witnessed the extent to which Quraysh resorted to violence against unarmed people calling for goodness, truth, and peace. This aggression strengthened his resolve to dedicate himself to supporting the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) and the religion of Islam.

The Remarkable Deeds and Merits of Sa`d ibn `Ubadah

1. Sa`d Dedicates His Wealth to Serving the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) and the Muhajirun

The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) emigrated to Madinah to join his Companions who emigrated before him. Sa`d was overwhelmed with joy about the arrival of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) and his Companions. Sa`d was generous by nature, stemming from an inherited spirit of generosity. He dedicated his wealth and resources to serving the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) and the Muhajirun.

Here are some instances of Sa`d's generosity and hospitality:

- Sa`d ibn `Ubadah would send a large bowl of *Tharid* (a dish of meat broth with pieces of bread) to the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) every day. Wherever the Prophet (PBBUH) went, Sa`d was careful that this bowl was presented to him.

- Every night, a man from the Ansar would invite to his home one, two or three persons of the Muhajirun. As for Sa`d ibn `Ubadah, he would invite eighty.

The Prophet (PBBUH) Makes a Special Supplication for Sa`d

For this reason, Sa`d ibn `Ubadah constantly asked Allah for more of His abundant bounty and provision. He would say: "O Allah, grant me wealth with

which I may assist my actions, as it is with wealth that actions are done properly."[1]

Consequently, Sa`d was honored by the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) making a special supplication for him, saying: **"May Allah reward the Ansar well on our behalf, especially `Abdullah ibn `Amr ibn Haram and Sa`d ibn `Ubadah."**

2. Sa`d Strives in Allah's Cause and Performs Admirably on Battlefields

Sa`d ibn `Ubadah did not only dedicate his wealth and riches to the service of Islam and the Muslims, but he also dedicated his strength, skill, and life to Allah and His Messenger (PBBUH). He was a skilled archer and performed many acts of self-sacrifice alongside the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH), in every battle.

Sa`d ibn `Ubadah and Sa`d ibn Mu`adh

Sa`d ibn `Ubadah is never mentioned without Sa`d ibn Mu`adh being mentioned alongside him, for they were the two chiefs of the people of Madinah. Sa`d ibn Mu`adh was the chief of the Aws tribe, and Sa`d ibn `Ubadah was the chief of the Khazraj tribe.

They remained together in the service of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) and the religion of Islam until Sa`d ibn Mu`adh was martyred.

[1] Wealth facilitates good deeds and supports the community. Sa`d emphasizes that good deeds cannot be completed or perfected without money, indicating the importance of money as a means, not an end.

The Admirable Stance That Sa`d Takes on the Day of Badr

When the Battle of Badr drew near, the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) consulted his Companions before embarking on that decisive battle. Abu Bakr, `Umar, and Al-Miqdad, all three from the Muhajirun, spoke in favor of fighting. The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) wanted to know the opinion of the Ansar, so he (PBBUH) said: **"Advise me, O people."**

Sa`d ibn Mu`adh and Sa`d ibn `Ubadah responded: "It seems you mean us (the Ansar), O Messenger of Allah?" He (PBBUH) replied: **"Yes."**

Sa`d ibn `Ubadah expressed absolute loyalty, obedience, and readiness for sacrifice, saying: "By Him in Whose Hand is my soul, if you were to command us to plunge into the sea, we would plunge into it."

Those memorable words of Sa`d ibn `Ubadah, and before him Sa`d ibn Mu`adh, had a great impact on raising morale. The battle took place, and Allah (Exalted be He) granted victory to the believers.

The Standard-Bearer of the Ansar

Ibn `Abbas said: "In all battles, the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) had two standards: the standard of the Muhajirun carried by `Ali ibn Abu Talib, and the standard of the Ansar carried by Sa`d ibn `Ubadah."

Sa`d Gains Clarity on the Situation in the Battle of the Trench

During the Battle of the Trench, when the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) learned of the treachery of Banu Qurayzah and wanted to verify it, he (PBBUH) dispatched both Sa`d ibn Mu`adh and Sa`d ibn `Ubadah to investigate the

reported news. They became certain, through the confession and aggressive behavior of Banu Qurayzah, that treachery had occurred. They both returned to the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) to inform him of the situation.

Sa`d Participates in All Battles Alongside the Prophet (PBBUH)

Sa`d ibn `Ubadah witnessed all the battles with the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH), and he performed admirably in them.

3. Sa`d's Strong and Firm Personality

Besides his commanding presence as the chief of the Khazraj tribe, Sa`d ibn `Ubadah was characterized by strength, firmness, and consistency in different situations, showing steadiness, reliability, and a lack of contradictions in his values and actions. He was unwavering in his commitment to the truth and steadfast in his adherence to what he considered to be his right. He was both uncompromising and interacted in a direct and sincere manner, without resorting to manipulation or flattery. Many situations demonstrated the nature of this straightforward personality.

"Today Is the Day of the Slaughter!"

On the day of the Liberation of Makkah, Sa`d ibn `Ubadah was carrying the standard of the Ansar. Upon entering and seeing Makkah subdued and surrendering, he remembered all the forms of torment its people had inflicted upon the believers and upon him personally. He recalled the wars they had waged against the Muslims, and his resolute nature drove him to threaten Quraysh in retribution for what they had done. Consequently, he declared: "Today is the day of the slaughter! Today, Allah will humiliate Quraysh." When

Abu Sufyan heard this, he rushed to the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) and said: "Have you ordered your people to be killed? Sa`d claims that you will fight us," repeating what Sa`d had said. The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) replied: **"Rather, today is a day of mercy! Today, Allah will honor Quraysh."** He (PBBUH) then took the standard from Sa`d and gave it to his son, Qays.

"Where Do You Stand on This (Issue), O Sa`d?"

In keeping with the frankness and clarity that characterized Sa`d ibn `Ubadah was the straightforward stance he took before the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) following the Battle of Hunayn.

After the Muslims emerged victorious from that battle and acquired much booty, the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) began distributing the spoils, paying special attention to *Al-Mu'allafatu Qulubuhum* (those whose hearts needed to be won over to Islam, including new and potential converts).[1] The wisdom of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) lay in winning over the hearts of those who had been his enemies the previous day, especially the nobles who had recently embraced Islam. He (PBBUH) also gave to the needy among the fighters.

As for the Ansar (the Supporters of the Prophet from the local inhabitants of Madinah), they received nothing from these gifts. They began to protest among themselves, until one of them said: "This is truly astonishing! He (PBBUH) gives to Quraysh and leaves us out, while our swords are still dripping with their (i.e. the enemies') blood?" When the leader of the Ansar, Sa`d ibn `Ubadah, heard these whispers of discontent among the Ansar, he was displeased. True to his straightforward nature, Sa`d went immediately to the

[1] A specific eligible category of beneficiaries of *Zakah* (obligatory charity) mentioned in the Qur'an (Surat Al-Tawbah 9:60). They are individuals whose conversion to Islam or increased commitment to it can be secured by receiving financial assistance.

Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) and said: "O Messenger of Allah, this group of the Ansar are displeased with you because of what you have done with this booty. You have distributed it among your people and given generous gifts to the Arab tribes, but this group of the Ansar received nothing."[1] The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) asked him: **"Where do you stand on this (issue), O Sa`d?"** He replied with the same bluntness: "O Messenger of Allah, I am but one of my people."

Thus, Sa`d communicated his emotions and the sentiments of his community in a direct and clear manner, giving the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) a true picture of the situation.

"We Are Content with the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) as Our Portion and Lot"

Then the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) ordered that the Ansar alone be assembled for him. When all the members of the Ansar were assembled, the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) came to them, and the following dialogue took place between him and them:

The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) said: **"O Ansar, some words have been conveyed to me about you, (about) a sense of anger against me inside yourselves? Did I not come to you when you were misguided, and Allah guided you (through me); poor, and Allah made you rich; enemies, and Allah united your hearts?"**

The Ansar replied: "Yes, to Allah and His Messenger belong all favor and grace."

[1] The Ansar were displeased because Prophet Muhammad (PBBUH) had given large shares of the booty to Quraysh and other Arab tribes, many of whom were recent converts or even former enemies, while the Ansar received nothing.

The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) asked: **"Will you not answer me, O Ansar?"**

The Ansar replied: "How can we answer you, O Messenger of Allah? To Allah belongs all favor and grace."

The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) said: **"By Allah, if you wished, you could have said—and you would have been truthful and believed: 'You came to us rejected [by your people], and we believed you; forsaken, and we supported you; driven out [from your homeland], and we sheltered you; in need, and we consoled you."**

"O Ansar, you have felt anger inside yourselves against me because of some trifle things of life by which I reconciled the hearts of some people so that they may become Muslims, and I entrusted you to your Islam (i.e., to your strong faith)."

"O Ansar, are you not satisfied that people should go away with sheep and camels, while you take back with you the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) to your homes? By Him in Whose Hand is the soul of Muhammad, had it not been for the *Hijrah* (the Prophet's emigration from Makkah to Madinah), I would have been one of the Ansar. And if the people were to take one path and the Ansar another, I would take the path of the Ansar. O Allah, have mercy upon the Ansar, and upon the children of the Ansar, and upon the offspring of the children of the Ansar."

Thereupon, the Ansar wept until their beards were soaked with tears, and they all cried out, with Sa`d ibn `Ubadah among them: "We are content with the Messenger of Allah as our portion and lot."

The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) and the Ansar returned to Madinah. Sa`d ibn `Ubadah remained in the service of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH), loyal to him and to his faith, until the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) passed away while he (PBBUH) was pleased with him.

The Final Chapter of Sa`d's Life

After a long life filled with generosity, sacrifice, and struggle, Sa`d ibn `Ubadah lay on his deathbed. His pure soul ascended to its Creator, to meet the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) and join the righteous, the prophets, and the martyrs.

This occurred during the caliphate of `Umar ibn Al-Khattab.

May Allah's Mercy and Blessings be upon you, O supporter of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH),

O you who were sincere to Allah in your faith and actions, so He elevated you to the status of the prophets and the righteous.

May Allah be pleased with you and please you, O Sa`d ibn `Ubadah.

22. `Abdullah ibn Salam

May Allah Be Pleased with Him

22. `Abdullah ibn Salam

And now, my beloved readers, let us welcome this noble Companion, who believed twice and about whom glorious ayahs were revealed that will be recited until the Day of Judgment. The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) testified that he would be among the inhabitants of Paradise. He is `Abdullah ibn Salam.

A Jewish Scholar

Husayn ibn Salam was a Jewish scholar who lived in Yathrib (the ancient name used for Madinah before the arrival of the Prophet, PBBUH). The people of Madinah, regardless of their religious affiliations, revered and respected him for his piety, truthfulness, and righteousness. Husayn divided his time into three parts:

1. One part he spent in the synagogue for preaching and worship.
2. One part he spent in the orchard, caring for date palms and other trees.
3. One part he spent in studying the Torah to deepen his understanding of Judaism.

Whenever Al-Husayn read the Torah and his eyes fell upon the verses foretelling and heralding the coming of the last of all the Prophets, his longing to see this Prophet would intensify. He was especially overjoyed when he learned that the Prophet (PBBUH) would leave his homeland (Makkah), where he was first commissioned with the prophethood, and emigrate to Yathrib (Madinah), which would become his permanent home.

Al-Husayn began to inquire about the characteristics and signs of this awaited Prophet. He constantly prayed to Allah (Exalted be He) to prolong his life so that he might witness the time when this Prophet would emerge. He hoped to have the pleasure of seeing him and the privilege of meeting him personally and being among the first to believe in him.

Husayn Embraces Islam

Allah (Exalted be He) responded to Al-Husayn's supplication and prolonged his life until He sent the Messenger of Guidance and Mercy (PBBUH). The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) emigrated to Madinah, so Al-Husayn was able to meet him, be in his company, and be among the first to believe in him.

Now, dear readers, let us listen to Al-Husayn, `Abdullah ibn Salam, as he recounts the story of his conversion to Islam.

`Abdullah ibn Salam said: "When I heard of the appearance of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH), I began to investigate his name, lineage, and attributes, as well as the time and place (of his emergence). I compared them with what was written in our scriptures until I became certain of the truth of his prophethood. I kept this [information] secret from the Jews until the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) arrived in Madinah and stayed in Quba."

"A man came through the town announcing his (the Prophet's) arrival. At that moment, I was at the top of a palm tree caring for it, and my aunt Khalidah bint Al-Harith was seated beneath the tree. When I heard the news, I cried out: '*Allahu Akbar*! *Allahu Akbar* (Allah is Greater [than anything])!'"

"My aunt exclaimed: 'May Allah disappoint you! By Allah, if it had been Prophet Musa (Moses, PBBUH) himself coming to us, you could not have been

more excited.' I said to her: 'O my aunt, I swear by Allah, he is the brother of Musa, son of `Imran, follows his religion, and was sent with what he was sent with (i.e., he preaches the same beliefs held by Musa, PBBUH).' She fell silent, then said: 'Is he the one of whom you used to tell us, who would be sent confirming what came before him and completing the messages of his Lord?' I replied: 'Yes.' She said: 'So be it.'"

"The First Thing I Heard from the Prophet (PBBUH)"

`Abdullah ibn Salam continued: "I went immediately to the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH). I saw people crowding at his door, so I pushed my way through until I was close to him. The first thing I heard him say was: '**O people, spread peace, feed the hungry, and pray at night while people are asleep; you will enter Paradise in peace.**'"

The Prophet (PBBUH) Changes Al-Husayn's Name to `Abdullah

`Abdullah ibn Salam said: "I scrutinized him (the Prophet, PBBUH) at close quarters until I became certain that he (PBBUH) was the awaited Prophet and that his face was not that of a liar. I drew closer to him and pronounced the declaration of faith that there is no god but Allah and that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah. He (PBBUH) turned to me and asked: **'What is your name?'** I replied: 'Al-Husayn ibn Salam.' He (PBBUH) said: **'Rather, `Abdullah ibn Salam.'** I responded: 'Yes, `Abdullah ibn Salam. By the One Who sent you with the truth, I do not wish to have any other name from this day forward.'"

"The Jews Are a People of Lies"

`Abdullah ibn Salam continued: "I returned to my family and invited them to Islam, and they all embraced it, including my aunt Khalidah, but I kept my conversion secret from the Jews. Then I returned to the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) and said to him: 'O Messenger of Allah, the Jews are a people of lies and falsehood. I would like you to hide me from them in one of your rooms and then ask them about my standing among them before they know of my conversion to Islam. If they were to know that I have become a Muslim, they would slander and criticize me.' So the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) took me into one of his rooms."

"When the Jews entered upon the Prophet (PBBUH), they questioned and argued with him. When he (PBBUH) despaired of their (accepting) faith, he (PBBUH) said to them: **'What is the status of Al-Husayn ibn Salam among you?'** They replied: 'He is our master and the son of our master, the best among us and the son of the best among us, and our scholar and the son of our scholar.' He (PBBUH) said: **'What if he were to embrace Islam, would you then embrace Islam?'** They replied: 'Allah forbid! He would never embrace Islam. May Allah protect him from ever embracing Islam!'"

"When they had finished speaking, I went out to them and said: 'O Jews, fear Allah and follow what Muhammad has brought you. By Allah, you know that he is the Messenger of Allah. You find him written in the Torah by name and description. I bear witness that he is the Messenger of Allah. I believe in him. I affirm his truthfulness, and I know him.' They said: 'You lie! By Allah, you are the worst among us and the son of the worst among us, and the most ignorant among us and the son of the most ignorant among us,' and they left no defect without attributing it to me. I said to the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH):

‘Did I not tell you that they are a people of lies and falsehood and that they are a people of treachery and immorality?’”

The Remarkable Deeds and Merits of `Abdullah ibn Salam

`Abdullah ibn Salam immersed himself in the companionship of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH), hardly ever leaving his side. He was eager to imbibe from the Messenger's knowledge and character and be blessed by his supplications.

Here are some of the accolades bestowed upon `Abdullah ibn Salam by the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) and some of his virtues:

1. `Abdullah ibn Salam Receives Glad Tidings of Paradise

Holding Firmly to the Most Trustworthy Handhold

Sa`d ibn Abu Waqqas said: "I never heard the Prophet (PBBUH) say to anyone walking on the earth that he is from the people of Paradise except for `Abdullah ibn Salam,"[1] meaning, other than the ten given glad tidings of Paradise.

The glad tidings that `Abdullah ibn Salam would be in Paradise has a story. Kharashah ibn Hurr narrated that he was sitting in a circle [of knowledge] in the mosque of Madinah and an old man, who was quite handsome, was among them. He was `Abdullah ibn Salam. He was saying beneficial words to the people [sitting in that gathering]. As he stood up [to depart], the people said: "Whoever would be pleased to look at a man from the people of Paradise, let him look at this [man]." Kharashah continued, stating that he said (to himself):

[1] Reported by Al-Bukhari, hadith no. 3812.

"By Allah, I will follow him and try to know where his home is." He followed him. `Abdullah walked on until he reached the outskirts of Madinah. He then entered his house. Kharashah sought his permission to enter, and `Abdullah granted him permission. He then asked: "O my nephew, what do you need?" Kharashah said to him: "As you stood up, I heard people say about you: 'Whoever would be pleased to look at a man from the people of Paradise, let him look at this [man].' I became desirous of accompanying you." `Abdullah ibn Salam said: "Allah knows best about the people of Paradise.[1] I will, however, narrate to you why they said this.

"[The story is] while I was asleep, there came to me a man [in a dream] who asked me to stand up. He caught hold of my hand, and I walked along with him. Behold, I found some clear paths on my left! I was about to set out upon them when he said to me: 'Do not set yourself on them for these are the paths of the people of the left (inhabitants of Hellfire).' Then there were clear paths leading to the right side, whereupon he said: 'Set yourself on these paths.' When we came across a mountain, he told me: 'Climb up!' Every time I tried to climb up, I fell on my buttocks. I made several attempts without success. He then took me until he brought me to a pillar whose top was in the sky and whose base was on the earth. There was a handhold at its top. He told me: 'Climb over it (the pillar).' I said: 'How can I climb over it when its upper end touches the sky?' He caught hold of my hand and pushed me up strongly. I found myself suspended by the handhold. He then struck the pillar, and it fell. I remained attached to that handhold until it was morning [and the dream was thus over]."

"I went to the Prophet (PBBUH) and narrated it (my dream) to him. He (PBBUH) said: **'The paths which you saw on your left are the paths of the**

[1] That is, while certain actions are known to lead to Paradise, the ultimate judgment of who enters is a matter of divine knowledge. This serves as a reminder that the criteria for entering Paradise are clear—faith and righteous deeds—but the final decision for each soul rests solely with the Creator.

people of the left (the inhabitants of Hell). The paths which you saw on your right are the paths of the people of the right (the inhabitants of Paradise). The mountain [which you saw] is the abode of the martyrs, which you will never attain. The pillar which you saw is the pillar of Islam. The handhold [which you saw] is the handhold of Islam, and you will hold fast to it until you die.""[1]

"A Man from Paradise Will Eat These Leftovers"

Sa`d ibn Abu Waqqas narrated: "The Prophet (PBBUH) was brought a bowl of *Tharid* (a dish of meat broth with pieces of bread). He (PBBUH) ate some, and some of it remained, so he (PBBUH) said: **'A man from the people of Paradise will enter through this opening and eat these leftovers.'**" Sa`d said: "I had left my brother, `Umayr ibn Abu Waqqas, preparing to come to the Prophet (PBBUH). I had hoped that it would be him, but then `Abdullah ibn Salam came and ate them (the leftovers)."[2]

2. The Immense Knowledge That `Abdullah Possessed

Just as `Abdullah ibn Salam was a prominent rabbi among the Jewish rabbis, he was also a prominent scholar and jurist among the Muslim scholars.

When Mu`adh ibn Jabal was about to die, he said: "Seek knowledge from four persons: Abu Al-Darda', Salman Al-Farisi, `Abdullah ibn Mas`ud, and `Abdullah ibn Salam, who was a Jew who embraced Islam."

[1] Reported by Muslim, hadith no. 2484.
[2] Reported in *Takhrij Siyar A`lam Al-Nubala'* by Shu`ayb Al-Arna'ut.

`Abdullah ibn Salam Will Receive a Double Reward

The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) said: "**Three persons will have a double reward: A person from the People of the Book (Jews or Christians) who believed in his prophet (Jesus or Moses) and then believed in Muhammad (PBBUH)…"**[1]

What an exceptional gift conferred by the Almighty upon `Abdullah ibn Salam!

3. Despite Greatness, Humility Was One of `Abdullah's Defining Virtues

`Abdullah ibn Salam, like most of the Companions, was the epitome of humility as well as other virtues which he acquired directly from the teachings and example of the Prophet (PBBUH).

`Abdullah ibn Hanzalah narrated: "`Abdullah ibn Salam passed through the market carrying a bundle of firewood. He was asked: 'Allah has made you in no need [i.e., granted you sufficient resources], so what makes you do this (carry firewood)?' He replied that he wanted to suppress the feelings of pride within himself, for he heard the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) say: **'He who has in his heart the weight of a mustard seed of pride will not enter Paradise.'**"

[1] Reported by Al-Bukhari, hadith no. 97.

The Final Chapter of `Abdullah's Life

After a life dedicated to the pursuit of knowledge and teaching which was filled with continued work as a scholar, a worshipper, a fasting person, and a nighttime supplicant, `Abdullah ibn Salam lay on his deathbed. His pure soul departed to its Creator, holding fast to the trustworthy handhold, as the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) had foretold, to join him in the Gardens of Paradise.

Congratulations to you, O you who believed twice and received a double reward,

O you who were given glad tidings of Paradise.

May Allah be pleased with you and please you, O `Abdullah ibn Salam.

23. Abu Ayyub Al-Ansari

May Allah Be Pleased with Him

23. Abu Ayyub Al-Ansari

Imagine, dear readers, that the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) were to arrive as a cherished guest in your city. In such a case, how happy, proud, and joyful would be the person who would win the honor of hosting the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) at his home, out of all homes?!

Many residents offered the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) hospitality upon his arrival at Madinah, but our hero, Abu Ayyub Al-Ansari, was the man chosen to host the Messenger (PBBUH), and his home was that chosen home.

So let us delve deeper into the life of this noble Companion.

Abu Ayyub's Lineage

His full name was Khalid ibn Zayd ibn Kulayb from the Banu Najjar tribe. His nickname was Abu Ayyub Al-Ansari, referring to the Ansar—the citizens of Madinah who welcomed and aided Prophet Muhammad (PBBUH).

Abu Ayyub Embraces Islam

Abu Ayyub Al-Ansari was among the first to embrace Islam. He became a Muslim before his eyes had seen the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH). He was among those who pledged allegiance to the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) at the Second Pledge of `Aqabah. His hand firmly clasped the Prophet's hand, pledging his support and loyalty to him (PBBUH).

The Remarkable Deeds and Merits of Abu Ayyub

1. Abu Ayyub Attains the Honor of Hosting the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH)

The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) entered Madinah, after concluding his blessed emigration journey. A special honor and privilege were in store for Abu Ayyub Al-Ansari. Allah (Exalted be He) elevated his status among humankind when He chose his house, above all the houses of the Muslims, for His Messenger (PBBUH) to stay in upon his arrival in Madinah. This alone was a great distinction for Abu Ayyub.

The Prophet's stay in Abu Ayyub's house has a story behind it that is truly wonderful.

"A Person Should Be Where His Luggage Is"

The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) entered Madinah riding his she-camel with people crowded around its reins to take them, each wanting the honor of hosting him. The chieftains of the city took turns leading the Prophet's she-camel, one after another, saying: "Stay with us, O Messenger of Allah, for we are numerous in numbers, in resources, and in offering protection." Every time, the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) replied: **"Let the she-camel go, for she is divinely commanded!"**

The she-camel continued walking to the destination set for it (by Allah), closely followed by the eyes and hearts of the people of Madinah. Whenever it

went past a house, leaving it behind, its owner would feel sad and dejected, but hope would rise in the hearts of others still on the route.

The Prophet's she-camel continued on its way, with people following it, until it reached an uncultivated plot of land in front of the house of Abu Ayyub Al-Ansari, where it knelt down. Abu Ayyub rushed to the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) to welcome him and quickly carried his belongings into his house. The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) entered with Abu Ayyub and excused himself from all those who asked him to stay with him by kindly saying: **"A person should be where his luggage (belongings) is."**

"You Should Stay on the Upper Floor, O Messenger of Allah"

Abu Ayyub's house consisted of two floors. He vacated the upper floor for the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) to stay in. However, the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) preferred the lower floor, and Abu Ayyub complied with his request.

But when night fell and the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) retired to his bed, and Abu Ayyub and his wife went up to the upper room, Abu Ayyub realized that they were thus above the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH). He said to his wife: "Are we walking above the head of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH)?!" They had no peace of mind until they moved to the side of the upper room that was not directly above the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH), and they stayed there.

When morning came, they said to the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH): "By Allah, we did not sleep a wink last night." The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) asked: **"Why is that O Abu Ayyub?"** He replied: "I realized that my wife and I were on the roof of a house where you were, and if we moved, dust would fall on you. So you should stay on the upper floor, O Messenger of Allah, and we will stay on the lower floor."

The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) said to him: **"Take it easy O Abu Ayyub! It is easier (i.e., more convenient) for us and for those who visit us [for me] to be on the lower floor."** Abu Ayyub said: "I complied with the wish of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) until one cold night, when our jar broke and its water spilled in the attic. Umm Ayyub (my wife) and I hurried to (dry) the water. We had nothing but a velvet blanket, which we used as a quilt. We used it to wipe up the water, fearing it might drip on the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH)."

Abu Ayyub continued: "When morning came, I went to the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) and told him about the jar [that accidently broke during the night]. I kept pleading with him to stay in the attic until he agreed (PBBUH) and went up there. Umm Ayyub and I went downstairs."

Seven Months as a Guest in Abu Ayyub's House

The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) stayed in Abu Ayyub's house for about seven months until the Messenger's Mosque was completed [on the open space where his camel had stopped]. Abu Ayyub would prepare food every day and send it to the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH). The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) would eat first, and they would then eat after him. One day, they sent him a dinner containing garlic and onions, but the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) returned it without eating any of it. Abu Ayyub came to him, distraught, and said: "O Messenger of Allah, may my father and mother be sacrificed for you! You have returned your dinner (untouched). I did not see the trace of your hand in it." The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) said: **"I found the smell of this plant (garlic or onions) in it, and I am a man who speaks privately (i.e., to his Lord and is visited by the angels; and these foods cause bad breath). As for you, you may eat it."** So Abu Ayyub and his wife ate the meal. After that, he

never prepared any food for the Messenger (PBBUH) containing garlic or onions.

The House of Al-Arqam and the House of Abu Ayyub

Abu Ayyub attained the unparalleled honor of having his house as 'a light bearer' and 'a way shower' for Islam in Madinah, radiating faith and energy to all those who visited it. Similarly, the house of Al-Arqam ibn Abu Al-Arqam was like 'a light bearer' in Makkah, permeating the surroundings and impacting visitors. The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) used Abu Ayyub's house as a headquarters for his call throughout his stay there. People would come and go to his house to draw from the light of truth and guidance. Indeed, the Prophet's stay in Abu Ayyub's house, by Allah's Command, was a great honor for Abu Ayyub!

2. Abu Ayyub's Generosity and Love for the Prophet (PBBUH)

After the Prophet's Mosque and his room were built, the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) moved from Abu Ayyub's house to his own. Abu Ayyub and his wife awoke to find their home empty of the light of the Chosen Prophet (PBBUH), the revelations that descended upon him, and the fragrant company of the noble Companions that filled the house every day. This saddened them greatly.

Abu Ayyub Becomes the Neighbor of the Prophet (PBBUH)

However, the fact that the Prophet's house, to which he (PBBUH) moved, was opposite Abu Ayyub's house alleviated their sadness and pain of separation.

Thus, Abu Ayyub became a [close] neighbor of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH).

Just as Abu Ayyub loved the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) with a love that possessed his heart and soul, the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) loved Abu Ayyub with a love that removed all formality between them. He (PBBUH) began to regard Abu Ayyub's house as his own, visiting it frequently.

"Nothing Brought Us Out Except Intense Hunger"

Ibn `Abbas narrated: "Abu Bakr went out at midday—that is, in the intense heat—to the mosque. `Umar saw him and said: 'O Abu Bakr, what brought you out at this hour?' He replied: 'Nothing but the severity of my hunger has brought me out.' `Umar said: 'By Allah, nothing else brought me out.' While they were thus talking, the Prophet (PBBUH) came out to them and asked: 'What brought you out at this hour?' They replied: 'By Allah, nothing brought us out except the intense hunger we feel in our stomachs.' The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) said: **'And I, by Him in Whose Hand is my soul, have only come out for that reason. Come with me!'** So they set out until they came to the door of Abu Ayyub Al-Ansari."

Ibn `Abbas continued: "[Every day], Abu Ayyub used to store a meal or some milk for the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH), but the Messenger (PBBUH) was late that day and did not come at the appointed time. Therefore, he fed the food to his family and went to his date palms to work on them. When the Messenger (PBBUH) and his Companions reached the door, [Abu Ayyub's wife] Umm Ayyub came out to them and said: 'Welcome to the Prophet of Allah and those with him.' The Prophet (PBBUH) asked her: **'Where is Abu Ayyub?'"**

"Abu Ayyub heard the Prophet's voice, as he was working in a nearby date palm grove, so he came running and said: 'Welcome to the Prophet of Allah and those with him.' Then he added: 'O Prophet of Allah, you do not usually come at this time.' The Prophet (PBBUH) replied: 'You are right.'

"Then Abu Ayyub went to his date palm grove and cut off a branch—with many offshoots—that held fully-ripe dates, ripe dates, and [still] crunchy dates. The Prophet (PBBUH) said to him: **'Why did you cut this? Why did you not [just] gather some of its dates for us?'** Abu Ayyub replied: 'O Prophet of Allah, I wanted you to eat some of this [its fully-ripe, ripe and crunchy dates]. I will also slaughter an animal for you.' He (PBBUH) said: **'If you slaughter an animal, do not slaughter one that is lactating.'"**

"Take This Piece Quickly to Fatimah"

Ibn `Abbas narrated: "Abu Ayyub took a young goat and slaughtered it. He said to his wife: 'Knead the dough and bake bread for us. You know best how to bake.' Then he took half the goat and cooked it, and he took the other half and roasted it. When the food was ready, he placed it before the Prophet (PBBUH) and his two Companions. The Prophet (PBBUH) took a piece of the young goat, put it in a loaf of bread, and said: **'O Abu Ayyub, take this piece quickly to Fatimah (my daughter), for she has not had anything like this for days.'"**

Ibn `Abbas then narrated that when they had eaten and were satisfied, the Prophet (PBBUH) said: **"Bread, meat, fully-ripe dates, full-size [crunchy] dates, and ripe dates"** and his eyes filled with tears. He (PBBUH) explained: **"By Him in Whose Hand is my soul, these are indeed the bounties about which you will be asked on the Day of Resurrection. When you have something like this, and you eat with your hands, say: 'In the Name of**

Allah.' And when you are satisfied, say: 'Praise be to Allah Who has satisfied us, bestowed continuous bounties upon us, and been most gracious to us.'"

"Be Good to Her"

Ibn `Abbas continued: "The Prophet (PBBUH) then stood up and said to Abu Ayyub: **'Come back to us tomorrow.'** The Prophet (PBBUH) would never fail to repay a favor done for him.

"The next day, Abu Ayyub went to the Prophet (PBBUH), who gave him a young slave girl to serve him, saying: **'Be good to her, O Abu Ayyub, for we have seen nothing but good from her while she was with us.'** When Abu Ayyub brought her from the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH), he said: 'I find no better way to fulfill the commandment of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) than to free her.' Consequently, he freed her."[1]

Mus`ab ibn `Umair Becomes the Brother in Faith of Abu Ayyub

Abu Ayyub remained a constant Companion of the Prophet (PBBUH) in his travels and at home. The Prophet (PBBUH) established a bond of brotherhood between Abu Ayyub and Mus`ab ibn `Umayr. This pact of brotherhood was a unique social and economic institution designed to integrate the emigrants from Makkah (Muhajirin), who had left behind their wealth and belongings, into the community of Madinah (Ansar).[2]

[1] Reported in *Sahih Ibn Hibban*.

[2] Initially, this brotherhood in faith also entailed mutual inheritance rights, which was a significant commitment, though this practice was later cancelled by the ayahs establishing inheritance based on blood relationships.

3. The Dignified Stance that Abu Ayyub Takes Regarding the Incident of the Slander[1]

The incident of the slander, orchestrated and spearheaded by the chief of the hypocrites, `Abdullah ibn Ubayy ibn Salul, was intended to harm the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH), targeting his own home, after they had failed to harm him on the battlefields.

Abu Ayyub's stance on this incident is one that history has recorded in letters of gold. Indeed, an ayah of the Qur'an was revealed concerning it, to be recited both during and outside the prayer and also acted upon until the Day of Resurrection.

When the incident of slander occurred, and it became a widespread unseemly talking point among the people, Umm Ayyub said to her husband: "O Abu Ayyub, do you not hear what people are saying about `Aishah (the Prophet's wife)?" He replied: "Yes, and it is a lie. Would you do such a thing, O Umm Ayyub?" She replied: "No, by Allah, I would never do such a thing." He said: "By Allah, `Aishah is better than you. This is obvious falsehood." Then Allah's Saying was revealed: ﴿Why then, when you heard it (the slander), did the believers, men and women, not think good of their own people and say: 'This (charge) is an obvious lie?'﴾ (translated meaning of Al-Nur 24:12). Ibn Kathir said regarding this ayah: "It was revealed concerning Abu Ayyub Al-Ansari and his wife."

[1] A difficult time when Lady `Aishah was the subject of rumors and accusations, known as 'the incident of the slander'.

4. Abu Ayyub's Thirst for Knowledge and Eagerness to Learn

Abu Ayyub Al-Ansari was extremely eager to gain knowledge and learn. He immersed himself in the abundant knowledge of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH). He narrated more than fifty hadiths.

Abu Ayyub's Diligent Journey to Egypt in Quest of Hadith

Motivated by his intense desire for knowledge and learning, Abu Ayyub was always very meticulous in verifying what he narrated from the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH). One day, he wanted to confirm the authenticity of a hadith he had heard from the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH). He and `Uqbah ibn `Amir were the only two left among those who had heard this specific hadith. `Uqbah was in Egypt. So Abu Ayyub mounted his camel and traveled from Madinah to Egypt to ask `Uqbah about this hadith.

When Abu Ayyub arrived in Egypt, he went to the house of the governor of Egypt, Maslamah ibn Mukhallad Al-Ansari. After Maslamah came out to him and embraced him, he said: "What brought you here, O Abu Ayyub?" He replied: "A hadith I heard from the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH), which no one among those who had heard it remain except myself and `Uqbah ibn `Amir. Send someone with me to show me his house." Maslamah sent someone with him to show him `Uqbah's house.

When `Uqbah met him, he embraced him and said: "What brought you here, O Abu Ayyub?" He replied: "A hadith I heard from the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) about concealing the faults of a believer. No one else among those who had heard it remain except for you and me." `Uqbah said: "Yes, I heard the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) say: **'Whoever conceals the faults of a believer**

in this world, Allah will conceal his faults on the Day of Resurrection.'" Abu Ayyub said: "You have spoken the truth."

Abu Ayyub went to his camel, mounted it, and returned to Madinah without staying in Egypt any time. He had come on a mission, completed it, and returned to Madinah.

Such was Abu Ayyub's strong commitment to the duty of transmitting the hadiths, all for the pleasure of Allah.

5. Abu Ayyub Shows No Less Dedication in Fighting for Allah's Cause

In addition to the aforementioned praiseworthy aspects of Abu Ayyub Al-Ansari's life during times of peace, he was also great in warfare and striving in Allah's Cause.

"March Forth, Whether You Are Light or Heavy"

Abu Ayyub lived his life as a struggler in Allah's Cause. He participated with the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) in the Battles of Badr, Uhud, Al-Khandaq, and all other battles. After the death of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH), and until the time of Mu`awiyah ibn Abu Sufyan, Abu Ayyub only missed any battle fought by the Muslims if he was preoccupied with another confrontation. His motto, which he always repeated, was Allah's Saying: ﴿March forth, whether you are light (being healthy, young, and wealthy) or heavy (being ill, old, and poor), strive hard with your wealth and your lives in Allah's Cause. This is better for you, if you but knew﴾ (translated meaning Al-Tawbah: 9:41).

The Final Chapter of Abu Ayyub's Life

Our noble hero continued giving and sacrificing until he became an elderly sheikh, nearing eighty years of age. Abu Ayyub Al-Ansari then wrote the final chapter of his life, leaving an everlasting and visible legacy and impact through his exceptional perseverance and self-sacrifice. His advanced age did not diminish his resolve to live according to his deeply held religious principles and remain a fighter in Allah's Way until his very end.

No sooner had he seen the Muslim army moving toward Constantinople than he mounted his horse, took up his sword, and plunged into the sea with the Muslims, seeking victory or martyrdom in Allah's Cause.

"Do You Need Anything, O Abu Ayyub?"

Not long after engaging the enemy, Abu Ayyub suffered from a critical illness that made him unable to continue fighting. The army commander, Yazid ibn Mu`awiyah, came to visit him and asked: "Do you need anything, O Abu Ayyub?"

Abu Ayyub replied: "If I die, carry me on my horse and take me deep into enemy territory, to the farthest point you can reach, and bury me there."

No sooner had Abu Ayyub finished his statement than he breathed his last.

Yazid Fulfills Abu Ayyub's Dying Will

Yazid fulfilled Abu Ayyub's final wish. They charged the enemy army repeatedly until they reached the walls of Constantinople, carrying Abu Ayyub with them. There, they dug a grave for him and laid him to rest.

The body of this venerable Companion rests in Constantinople—which is today Istanbul. Abu Ayyub wished his final resting place to be where the Muslim army would march, so that he might hear their horses' hooves upon his grave; then he would know that they had succeeded and achieved victory.

May Allah's Mercy and Blessings be upon you, O you whom Allah favored with being the host of the Chosen Prophet (PBBUH).

O you whom Allah endowed with insight, so that your final resting place would be in the land of Constantinople.

May Allah be pleased with you and please you, O Abu Ayyub Al-Ansari.

24. Zayd ibn Arqam

May Allah Be Pleased with Him

24. Zayd ibn Arqam

Every day there is something new to explore in the gardens of the honorable Companions. Look, dear readers, another beautiful flower with a striking scent has opened: fresh, elegant, and full of character!

He was a Companion who was sincerely devoted to Allah and His Messenger, so Allah (Exalted be He) honored him by revealing a glorious ayah confirming his words and supporting his stance. He lived under the care and guidance of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH).

He is the noble Companion Zayd ibn Arqam.

Zayd's Lineage and Upbringing

His full name was Zayd ibn Arqam ibn Zayd ibn Qays Al-Khazraji.

Zayd grew up an orphan, having neither a father nor a mother. He lived under the care of one of the chieftains of the Khazraj tribe, `Abdullah ibn Rawahah, who looked after him and directed him, filling the absence caused by losing his parents.

Zayd Ibn Arqam Embraces Islam

`Abdullah ibn Rawahah went on a Hajj journey with his people and tribesmen during which they met with the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) and the Second Pledge of `Aqabah took place. Ibn Rawahah was one of those who pledged allegiance. He was also one of the twelve clan leaders selected by the Prophet (PBBUH) to be guardians of the pledge and act as representatives of

their respective communities, who would uphold the terms of the Second Pledge of Al-`Aqabah.

Ibn Rawahah returned to Madinah feeling happy and blessed with what had been accomplished in Makkah. He began to bear the responsibility of spreading the message of Islam. Zayd ibn Arqam and many of the people of Madinah quickly responded to him and became Muslims.

The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) emigrated to Madinah, and Zayd ibn Arqam, like all the people of Madinah, was overjoyed by the arrival of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH). Their happiness was immense, filling their hearts and overflowing into every corner of their lives.

The Remarkable Deeds and Merits of Zayd ibn Arqam

Zayd ibn Arqam remained inseparable from the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH), like an eye and its sister, absorbing his guidance and exemplary character and conduct. He reflected them in his own actions and in his interaction with the world and shaped his external environment in alignment with his internal values.

Here are some of Zayd's praiseworthy deeds and merits:

1. Building the Prophet's Mosque

Despite his young age, Zayd ibn Arqam was among the first to participate in building the Prophet's Mosque.

2. Zayd Shows Early Eagerness for *Jihad*

Although Zayd ibn Arqam was still young, he showed extreme eagerness to participate in fighting for Allah's Cause. In the Battle of Badr, he asked the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) to allow him to fight, but he was turned away due to his young age, along with a group of his peers. The same occurred during the Battle of Uhud.

However, afterward, with his insistence and persistence, the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) allowed him to fight. He participated in all the battles alongside the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH), having matured and become battle-ready.

3. Zayd Receives a Valuable lesson about Patience and the Reward It Brings

Zayd suffered from a pink eye infection (conjunctivitis), and the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) came to visit him to offer him comfort and support and to also teach him about patience. Zayd ibn Arqam narrated: "[When] I had a pink eye. The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) visited me and said: **'Tell me, O Zayd, if your eyes were to go blind, what would you do?'** I replied: 'I would be patient and seek reward from Allah.' He (PBBUH) said: **'If you do that, you will enter Paradise.'"**[1]

4. Zayd Plays a Key Role in the Battle of Banu Al-Mustaliq

The Battle of Banu Al-Mustaliq brought about a great distinction for Zayd ibn Arqam; a glorious ayah, to be recited until the Day of Resurrection, was revealed concerning him, confirming and emphasizing his statement.

This great distinction has a story with a lesson:

The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) was informed that Al-Harith ibn Dirar, the chief of Banu Al-Mustaliq, was amassing his people and other Arab tribesmen to wage war against him (PBBUH) and, in the process, assassinate him (PBBUH).

The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) advanced with his Companions to encounter them, placing Abu Bakr as the standard bearer of Al-Muhajirun and Sa`d ibn Ubadah as the standard bearer of Al-Ansar.

[1] Reported by Ahmad, hadith no. 19348.

The two sides met at a watering place called Al-Muraysi`, where the fighting began and ended with the defeat of Banu Al-Mustaliq. In keeping with the custom of the victorious, after the conclusion of the battle, the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) stayed several days at Al-Muraysi` Spring.

The Hypocrites Ignite Discord among the Muslims

A large faction of hypocrites, headed by `Abdullah ibn Ubai ibn Salul, joined the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) on this expedition. Their participation was neither for the sake of striving in Allah's Cause nor for stirring defeatism within the Muslim army, since they were certain of their victory. Rather, they came out, with a false pretense of belief, for the sole purpose of sharing in the gains. The expectations of the hypocrites proved right, and Allah (Exalted be He) bestowed victory and abundant spoils upon the Muslims.

Then it happened that while the Muslims were camping at Al-Muraysi`, two men pushed by each other to reach the spring and quarreled over drawing water. One of them, named Sinan ibn Wabr Al-Juhani, was from Al-Ansar. The other, named Jahjah ibn Mas`ud Al Ghifari, was from Al-Muhajirun and was a hired worker for `Umar ibn Al Khattab. Their two buckets became entangled, and the two men engaged in a brief fight during which Jahjah struck Sinan, causing him to bleed.

Sinan shouted out for help: "O people of Al-Ansar!" Jahjah in turn shouted out: "O people of Al-Muhajirun!" A group of men from both sides, Al-Ansar and Al-Muhajirun, came to the area, and swords were drawn. The situation was veering out of control and could have escalated into a struggle between the Muslims, but the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) hurried to intervene as soon as he learned what was happening. Admonishingly, the Prophet (PBBUH) said to them: **"Is it with the call of *Jahiliyyah* (pre-Islamic age of ignorance) that**

you are calling out, while I am present among you? Leave it, for it is rotten (referring to tribalism, clanism, or, in a modern context, nationalism)."

"When We Return to Madinah, the Honorable Will Certainly Drive Out the Mean"

However, within the internal ranks of the Muslims there was a party of men who did not want that conflict to subside. On learning of the incident at the spring, `Abdullah ibn Ubai ibn Salul vented the hatred seething within him against the Muslims. He used the quarrel that took place as an opportunity to arouse the Ansar's anger against their Muhajirun brothers and provoke a war between them. While he was sitting with a group of his fellow tribesmen, Ibn Ubai commented: "Have they really done this? They have tried to outrank us and outnumber us in our own land! By Allah, nothing fits us with them more than the ancient saying: 'Fatten your dog and it will devour you.' By Allah, when we return to Madinah, indeed the more honorable (by which he was referring to himself and his fellow hypocrites) will expel therefrom the meaner (by which he was referring to the honorable Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) and the Muhajirun)."

Zayd ibn Arqam Informs the Prophet (PBBUH) of Ibn Ubai's Vile Remarks

Among those who heard `Abdullah ibn Ubai spewing out his hatred of the Muslims was our hero, Zayd ibn Arqam. He was just a young boy at the time, and the people did not take him seriously because of his age. Zayd was a sincere believer and deeply loved the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH). He hated Ibn Ubai's derogatory remarks. He went and informed the Messenger of Allah

(PBBUH) of what Ubai had said in front of several Companions, including both Al-Muhajirun and Al-Ansar.

Zayd conveyed the evil statement made by Ubai to the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH), whose face changed color. `Umar ibn Al-Khattab said at once: "Order one of us to kill him, O Messenger of Allah!"

The Wisdom of the Prophet (PBBUH) Wards off Tribulation

The Prophet (PBBUH) was a wise, far-sighted, veteran leader in all situations and under all circumstances. When he (PBBUH) heard what `Umar had said, he turned to him and said: **"Leave him be! I do not want the people to say that Muhammad kills his Companions."**

Nonetheless, the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) knew that resolute action was urgently required to avert further worsening of the situation and its possible wider repercussions. Therefore, he (PBBUH) ordered that an announcement of departure be made. The people immediately started off on the journey back to Madinah at an hour that was unusual (and inconvenient) for the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) to break camp and start on the return journey. And so the people departed.

After setting forth on the journey to Madinah, the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) was met on the way by Usayd ibn Hudayr, one of the noblemen and chiefs of the Ansar. He greeted the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) with the respect due to a prophet and wondered why he (PBBUH) was traveling with his Companions at such an unusual time of the day.

The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) replied: "**Have you not heard what your companion Ibn Ubai has said? He claimed that when he returns to Madinah, the more honorable will expel therefrom the meaner."**

Usayd exclaimed: "You, by Allah, O Messenger of Allah, can expel him if you wish. By Allah, he is the inferior one, and you are the honorable one."

Then Usayd added: "O Messenger of Allah, be gentle with him. By Allah, Allah sent you to us while his people were stringing pearls in order to crown him (King of Madinah). He, therefore, believes that you have usurped his kingdom."

Ibn Ubai Denies Having Said This Vile Remark

`Abdullah ibn Ubai hurriedly went to the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) once he knew that Zayd ibn Arqam had told him what he had said. `Abdullah swore an oath by Allah that he had not said the words that Zayd ascribed to him. Some of the Ansar who were present said, in sympathy and defense of him: "O Messenger of Allah, perhaps the boy (meaning Zayd ibn Arqam) misunderstood what Ibn Ubai said or did not remember exactly what the man said."

The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) accepted Ibn Ubai's excuse, but he (PBBUH) did not change his decision to leave.

"I Was Overcome with Intense Grief the Like of Which I Had Never Experienced Before"

Although Zayd, the young boy, was truthful, he was discredited and received blame from the Asnar. On the other hand, Ibn Ubai took an oath and was believed, as he was an elderly man of status among his people. Zayd said: "I was overcome with intense grief the like of which I had never experienced before, and my uncle told me: 'Did you only want the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) to distrust you and despise you?'"

"Allah Has Confirmed Your Truthfulness"

Zayd felt ashamed and began to distance himself from the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH), fearing to meet him, until Allah revealed a Qur'anic passage confirming his account of what had happened:

﴿They are the ones who say: 'Spend not on those who are with the Messenger of Allah until they desert him.' And to Allah belong the treasures of the heavens and the earth, but the hypocrites comprehend not. They (the hypocrites) say: 'If we return to Madinah, indeed the more honorable will expel therefrom the meaner.' And to Allah belongs all honor, and to His Messenger, and to the believers, but the hypocrites do not know﴾ (translated meaning of Al-Munafiqun 63:7-8).

When these ayahs were revealed to the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH), he sent for Zayd and said to him: **"Allah has confirmed your truthfulness."**

Thus, Allah revealed a Qur'anic passage to confirm the truthfulness of Zayd ibn Arqam and to defend him just as he had defended the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH). This incident had a profound impact on the life of Zayd ibn Arqam and his standing among the Companions. From that time onwards his stature rose, and people's respect for him increased, despite his young age.

6. Zayd Losses His Beloved Caregiver in the Battle of Mu'tah

As was mentioned earlier, Zayd ibn Arqam lived under the guardianship of `Abdullah ibn Rawahah, until the day of Mu'tah came. The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) appointed Zayd ibn Harithah as commander-in-chief of the Muslim army, along with two deputy commanders, saying: **"If Zayd is killed, then**

Ja`far will take command; and if Ja`far is killed, then `Abdullah ibn Rawahah will take command."[1]

Zayd ibn Arqam set out with his guardian, `Abdullah ibn Rawahah, who had raised him and had always treated him kindly. Zayd ibn Arqam narrated: "I was an orphan in the care of Ibn Rawahah who took me with him to Mu'tah. He had me seated on the back of his saddlebag"

The two sides clashed, and the battle ended with the martyrdom of Zayd ibn Harithah, Ja`far ibn Abi Talib, and `Abdullah ibn Rawahah. Zayd ibn Arqam returned from Mu'tah, having lost his beloved guardian, the one who had raised and cared for him, `Abdullah ibn Rawahah. He grieved deeply for him.

[1] The Battle of Mu'tah has been recounted in detail in an earlier part of this book.

The Final Chapter of Zayd ibn Arqam's Life

Zayd ibn Arqam remained a close Companion of the Prophet (PBBUH), who died while immensely satisfied with Zayd's faith, loyalty, and service. Zayd continued to be a devout worshiper, an ascetic servant of Allah, and a dedicated fighter in Allah's Cause. The Companions recognized Zayd's worth and high standing and held him in the highest esteem and love.

After a life filled with sacrifice and giving, our hero lay on his deathbed. His pure soul peacefully departed to its Creator, to join the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) and his Companions in the Gardens of Bliss.

May Allah's Mercy and Blessings be upon you, O you concerning whom a passage of the Qur'an was revealed confirming your truth.

May Allah be pleased with you and please you, O Zayd ibn Arqam.

25. `Abdullah ibn Umm Maktum

May Allah Be Pleased with Him

25. `Abdullah ibn Umm Maktum

Now, dear readers, let us explore this shining star among the noble Companions for us to follow his example and take his actions as a guide to live righteously. He was the one concerning whom glorious ayahs were revealed on two separate occasions: once when the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) received a gentle divine admonition due to his momentary inattentiveness to him, and another time when his Lord answered his supplication and entreaty. He is the noble Companion, `Abdullah ibn Umm Maktum.

`Abdullah's Lineage and Upbringing

There is a disagreement regarding his name. The people of Madinah called him `Abdullah, while the people of Iraq called him `Amr. His father was Qays ibn Za'idah, about which there is no disagreement. His mother was `Atikah bint `Abdullah. She was called 'Umm Maktum' because her son was blind when she gave birth to him.

Ibn Umm Maktum was related by affinity to the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH), as he was the maternal cousin of the Mother of the Believers, Khadijah bint Khuwaylid (may Allah be pleased with her).

`Abdullah Ibn Umm Maktum Embraces Islam

Just when the earth became illuminated by the light of Islam, bringing enlightenment to all people without distinction and eliminating ignorance, Allah opened up the heart of `Abdullah ibn Umm Maktum to faith. He was among the first to embrace Islam.

`Abdullah ibn Umm Maktum endured his share of harm and oppression at the hands of Quraysh; he suffered as did the other early Muslims who faced a range of challenges because of their faith, including discrimination, violence, and violations of fundamental human rights.

Despite his blindness, `Abdullah's resolve did not waver, his zeal did not diminish, and his faith did not weaken. Rather, he became even more steadfast in his adherence to the true religion, more attached to Allah's Book, more eager to learn it, and more receptive to the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH).

The Remarkable Deeds and Merits of `Abdullah Ibn Umm Maktum

"He (the Prophet, PBBUH) Frowned and Turned Away"

Eagerness to learn the Qur'an and understand its meaning and depth intensified within Ibn Umm Maktum; he seized every opportunity to gain more insight. He would ask the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) questions, whether he (PBBUH) was with men who were around him and listening to him, on his way to the Ka`bah, or anywhere else.

During that period, the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) was intent on guiding the chiefs of Quraysh to Islam and was very keen on talking to them. One day, he (PBBUH) met with `Utbah ibn Rabi`ah and his brother Shaybah, `Amr ibn Hisham (Abu Jahl), Umayyah ibn Khalaf, and Al-Walid ibn Al-Mughirah. He (PBBUH) continued to speak to them and try to persuade them to believe, presenting Islam to them in the hope that they would respond and cease the harm they were causing the Muslims and that Islam would gain strength through them.

While the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) was thus engaged, `Abdullah ibn Umm Maktum approached the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH), asking him about a glorious ayah. He pressed the Messenger (PBBUH) for a response.

At that time, the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) wished that Ibn Umm Maktum would stop so that he (PBBUH) could address the chiefs of Quraysh. The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) frowned at Ibn Umm Maktum for interrupting him and turned away, quickly turning his face and attention toward those men of Quraysh instead.

No sooner had the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) finished speaking to those influential chiefs of Quraysh and concluded their private conversation than the Words of Allah Almighty were revealed, reproaching the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) concerning Ibn Umm Maktum:

﴿He (the Prophet) frowned and turned away, because there came to him the blind man [interrupting]. And how can you tell that perhaps he might grow in purity? Or that he might receive admonition, and the reminder might profit him? As for him who regards himself as self-sufficient, you attend to him, though you are not to be blamed if he does not purify himself [from disbelief]. But as for him who came to you full of eagerness and with fear [of Allah in his heart], of him you were unmindful. By no means [should it be so]! Truly, this [Qur'an] is a reminder. Therefore, let who will pay heed to it!﴾ (translated meaning of `Abasa 80:1-12).

"Welcome to the One Due to Whom My Lord Reproached Me"

Sixteen ayahs were brought down upon the Prophet's heart concerning `Abdullah ibn Umm Maktum. These ayahs are still recited to this day and will continue to be recited until the Day of Resurrection.

Ever since that incident, the Prophet (PBBUH) never ceased to honor and treat `Abdullah ibn Umm Maktum kindly. Whenever he (PBBUH) saw him approaching, he (PBBUH) would spread out his cloak for him and say: **"Welcome to the one due to whom my Lord reproached me."** He (PBBUH) would inquire about his well-being and actively attend to his needs, helping him whenever possible.

Ibn Umm Maktum Emigrates to Madinah

The persecution that the Prophet (PBBUH) and those who believed with him were facing intensified; therefore, the Prophet (PBBUH) permitted his Companions to emigrate. `Abdullah ibn Umm Maktum was the first among the Muslims to leave his homeland and flee with his faith.

Al-Bara' said: "The first to come to us (in Madinah) were Mus`ab ibn `Umair and Ibn Umm Maktum. They began teaching the people the Qur'an." Thus, Ibn Umm Maktum and Mus`ab ibn `Umair were the first of the Prophet's Companions to arrive in Madinah. They kept teaching the people the principles of Islam and preparing their hearts to receive the beloved Prophet Muhammad (PBBUH).

Bilal and Ibn Umm Maktum as Muezzins

When the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) arrived in Madinah, he (PBBUH) appointed `Abdullah ibn Umm Maktum and Bilal ibn Rabah as muezzins. They proclaimed to people the Islamic declaration of faith five times a day. Bilal would announce the azan, and Ibn Umm Maktum would announce the *Iqamah* (the call to start the prayer). Sometimes Ibn Umm Maktum would announce the azan, and Bilal would announce the *Iqamah*.

Bilal and Ibn Umm Maktum followed a special pattern during Ramadan. The Muslims in Madinah would eat their *Suhur* (pre-dawn meal before the fast) upon hearing the azan made by one of them, and begin their fast upon hearing the azan made again by the other. In clearer words, Bilal would announce the (first) azan to awaken the people, and Ibn Umm Maktum would announce the (second) azan to signal the start of the fast (the duration where individuals refrain from consuming food and liquids).

Allah Answers Ibn Umm Maktum's Supplication

Ibn Umm Maktum was affected deeply when Allah (Exalted be He) revealed ayahs that elevated the status of those who strive in His Cause and gave them precedence over those who stayed behind. He was distressed because he would not be able to reach this high level. He said: "O Messenger of Allah, if I were able to participate in *jihad*, I would." Then he turned to Allah Almighty in fervent supplication, saying: "O Allah, reveal my excuse! O Allah, reveal my excuse!" And Allah answered his supplication right away.

Zayd ibn Thabit, who was the scribe of Prophet Muhammad (PBBUH), narrated: "I was beside the Prophet (PBBUH) when divine revelation descended upon him. He (PBBUH) said, **'Write, O Zayd: ﴿Not equal are those believers who sit [at home] and those who strive hard and fight in Allah's cause﴾'** Ibn Umm Maktum came to him while he (PBBUH) was dictating it (this ayah) to me. He said: 'O Messenger of Allah! By Allah, if I were able to fight, I would fight'—but he was blind."

Zayd ibn Thabit continued: "Before Ibn Umm Maktum had finished speaking, divine revelation descended upon the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH), who then said: **'Read what you have written.'** I read, ﴿Not equal are those believers who sit (at home)...﴾ He (PBBUH) said, **'Write:** ﴿… except those who are disabled﴾.'" The full ayah was: ﴿Not equal are those believers who sit (at home), except those who are disabled, and those who strive hard and fight in Allah's Cause with their wealth and their lives﴾ (translated meaning of Al-Nisa' 4:95).

Thus, Allah (the Most Exalted) honored Ibn Umm Maktum twice by revealing glorious ayahs regarding him that will continue to be recited to the Day of Resurrection. First, when Allah (Glorified be He) reproached His noble

Messenger (PBBUH) due to him: ﴿He (the Prophet) frowned and turned away…﴾ (translated meaning of `Abasa 80:1-12). Second, when Allah Almighty provided an excuse [for people with disabilities]: ﴿… except those who are disabled﴾. (translated meaning of Al-Nisa' 4:95). What a great honor Ibn Umm Maktum attained!

Ibn Umm Maktum Eagerly Shows Up for *Jihad* in Each Battle

Although `Abdullah ibn Umm Maktum, and those like him, was exempted by Allah from *Jihad*, he refused to sit with those who sat back and resolved to strive in Allah's Cause. He was keen not to miss any battle and assigned himself a role on the battlefields. He would say: "Place me between the two rows of fighters, and give me the standard to carry and protect for you, for I am blind and cannot flee."

The Prophet (PBBUH) Appoints Ibn Umm Maktum as His Deputy in Madinah

Ibn Umm Maktum attained such a pinnacle of honor and distinction through his outstanding performance and dedication that the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) appointed him as his deputy in Madinah on more than ten occasions during his absence. One of these occasions was on the day the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) left to liberate Makkah.

The Final Chapter of Ibn Umm Maktum's Life

Despite his blindness and the challenges that came with it, this noble Companion, `Abdullah ibn Umm Maktum, continued to give and persisted in his efforts to contribute to his community and serve his religion in every field: knowledge, jurisprudence, and *Jihad*. Then came the end of his journey, in the fourteenth year of *Hijrah*. `Umar ibn Al-Khattab resolved to wage a decisive battle against the Persians, one that would dismantle their empire and pave the way for the Muslims. He wrote to his governors, saying: "Do not leave anyone with a weapon, a horse, experience, or sound judgment without selecting him and sending him to me."

Ibn Umm Maktum Attains His Long-Sought Goal

Multitudes of Muslims responded to the call of Caliph `Umar and began pouring into Madinah from every direction. Among them was the blind Companion, `Abdullah ibn Umm Maktum.

`Umar appointed Sa`d ibn Abu Waqqas as commander of the Muslim army. Once the army reached Al-Qadisiyyah (a city in Iraq), `Abdullah ibn Umm Maktum emerged, fully armored and equipped. He dedicated himself to hold the standard of the Muslims high and to defend it or die for it.[1]

The two armies clashed for three harsh and grim days in a battle unlike any other in history. The third day ended with a resounding victory for the Muslims.

[1] The standard-bearer was a major target for the enemy, who sought to capture or pull down the flag as a sign of victory and to demoralize the opposing side. The position was honorable but carried high risks and required unwavering dedication, where one's life is secondary to the preservation of the banner and the ideals it represents.

The Persian Empire fell, and the standard of monotheism remained upright, waving prominently.

The price of this clear victory was hundreds of martyrs, among them `Abdullah ibn Umm Maktum. He was found lying dead, embracing the standard of the Muslims.

And so this noble Companion departed. Although he was deprived of the blessing of sight in this world, Allah Almighty blessed him with the gift of insight. He finally attained martyrdom and the companionship of the best of humankind (PBBUH).

May Allah have mercy on you, O you concerning whom noble ayahs were revealed which will continue to be recited until the Day of Resurrection.

O you who attained martyrdom and the highest Gardens of Paradise.

May Allah be pleased with you and please you, O `Abdullah ibn Umm Maktum.

26. Abu Musa Al-Ash`ari

May Allah Be Pleased with Him

26. Abu Musa Al-Ash`ari

Here we are, my beloved readers, about to encounter another exceptional flower in the gardens of 'The Fragrant Companions'. He possessed a sweet voice that delighted the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) and all those who listened to his recitation of the Glorious Qur'an. He was the one through whom the people of Yemen embraced Islam.

Our hero is the ascetic, the devout, the scholar...Abu Musa Al-Ash`ari.

Abu Musa's Lineage and Upbringing

His full name was `Abdullah ibn Qays, nicknamed Abu Musa Al-Ash`ari.

Abu Musa grew up in the land of Yemen among the Yemeni people, who are known for their tenderheartedness and compassion. Despite his young age, he abhorred idol worship and condemned his people for worshipping idols that could neither harm nor benefit (powerless stones)[1]. He always hoped that someone would come to rescue humanity from the mire of polytheism and idolatry.

Abu Musa Embraces Islam

It was not long before the sun of truth shone, illuminating the minds with the undeniable brightness of certainty and dispelling the shadows of doubt and ignorance. Allah Almighty sent the person who would fulfill Abu Musa's sincere hopes and ardent wish. As soon as Abu Musa heard of the start of the

[1] The ability to harm or benefit rests solely with the One, All-Powerful Creator.

Prophet's mission, he set off for Makkah, racing like the wind, to be granted the honor of seeing the Prophet (PBBUH) and listening to him.

Abu Musa in the Presence of the Prophet (PBBUH)

Upon arriving in Makkah, Abu Musa embraced Islam and uttered the testimony of truth (*Shahadah*) in front of the Prophet (PBBUH). Abu Musa was not alone on this blessed journey, his paternal uncle, Abu `Amir, was with him. Immediately after his conversion, Abu Musa began actively spreading the message of Islam to his friends and associates. He started with his paternal uncle, who accompanied him to the Prophet (PBBUH) the very next day, when he also proclaimed his belief and bore witness to the truth.

The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) informed them of the principles of Islam and told them about his Companions who had fled with their faith to Abyssinia to escape the persecution and oppression of Quraysh. He (PBBUH) ensured them that Islam would inevitably prevail and that both Arabs and non-Arabs would embrace it. The two men's faces lit up as they heard the Prophet (PBBUH), and they said to him: "Command us as you will, O Messenger of Allah! If you wish, we will remain with you. We will bear any hardships just as our brothers (fellow believers) did. If you wish, we will return to our people and invite them to your religion. And if you wish, we will join our brothers in Abyssinia to be with them."

The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) and His Vision of the Future

The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) had a clear and vivid mental picture of the desired future state of Islam that inspired his action. His vision extended well beyond the present moment. He (PBBUH) looked to the distant future and sowed the seeds of faith throughout the world. This vision to sow the seeds of

faith in further regions was clear with Abu Dhar Al-Ghifari[1], who he (PBBUH) commanded to go to his homeland in Ghifar to spread the word of monotheism there. Similarly, he (PBBUH) also commanded Abu Musa Al-Ash`ari and his paternal uncle to return to their people in Yemen and call them to believe in Allah there. The plan was when the message of Islam would prevail, they could emigrate to him (PBBUH) with their people to strengthen the nascent Muslim community. They replied: "We hear and obey, O Messenger of Allah."

They stayed several days in Makkah with the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH), during which he (PBBUH) taught them some chapters of the Qur'an and instructed them in many religious matters.

The Spread of the Islamic Call in Yemen

Abu Musa and his paternal uncle returned joyful and enriched by the faith and certainty that Allah (Exalted be He) had bestowed upon them. Abu Musa continued to call his people to the light of truth, and many people in Yemen embraced Islam through him.

[1] Please see the biography of Abu Dhar Al-Ghifari.

Abu Musa Emigrates to the Prophet's City

Abu Musa continued to work diligently and tirelessly to spread Allah's religion in Yemen, as the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) had commanded him. He continued this work until he learned that Allah had granted victory to His Messenger (PBBUH) and made his cause prevail, leading to a major shift in the influence and dominance of the Muslims. Consequently, Abu Musa set out as an emigrant to the Prophet's city, having in his company about fifty men from Yemen to whom he had taught Islam and two of his brothers, Abu Ruhm and Abu Burdah. At that time, the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) had set out to conquer Khaybar.

Abu Musa Sails to Abyssinia and Meets Ja`far ibn Abu Talib

The boat, which Abu Musa and his companions boarded, drifted with them to the Negus in Abyssinia. There they met Ja`far ibn Abu Talib and other emigrants. Ja`far said to them: "The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) sent us here and commanded us to stay [until further commands], so stay with us." They stayed with them until they all headed to Madinah together. Their arrival coincided with the return of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) from the conquest of Khaybar, and consequently he (PBBUH) gave them all a share of the spoils.

A People Loved by Allah

The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) called the people of Abu Musa 'The Ash`ariyyin.' Upon their arrival in Madinah, the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) said to his Companions: **"The people of Yemen have come to you. They have**

gentler and more tender hearts (than you). Belief is Yemenite and wisdom is Yemenite."[1]

When this ayah was revealed: ﴿Allah will assuredly bring a people He loves, and who love Him﴾ (translated meaning of Al-Ma'idah 5:54), the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) said to Abu Musa: **"They are your people, O Abu Musa,"**[2] and he (PBBUH) gestured toward him.

The Companions Who Emigrated Twice for Allah's Sake

Some people remarked, saying to the people of the boat (Ja`far, Abu Musa, and those with them): "We preceded you in emigration." This statement was conveyed to the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH), who responded by saying: **"You, O people of the boat, have two emigrations [in your balance of good deeds]; you emigrated to the Negus [in Abyssinia] and you emigrated to me [in Madinah]."**[3]

"These People Are of Me, and I Am of Them"[4]

Abu Musa and his people remained close to the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH), who loved them dearly because of the good traits he (PBBUH) noticed in them, including genuine tenderheartedness and honesty in their character and actions. He (PBBUH) often praised them and spoke highly of them among his Companions, such as his saying: **"Whenever the Ash`ariyyin' (Yemenite tribe) ran out of provisions during a military expedition, or the food of their families in Madinah became scarce, they would collect all**

[1] Reported by Al-Bukhari, hadith no. 4388.
[2] Reported by A-Tabari in his *Tafsir* (12189).
[3] Reported in *Al-Tabaqat Al-Kubra* by Ibn Sa`d (8/281).
[4] An expression of a profound sense of unity, mutual belonging, and shared identity.

what they had in a single garment and then distribute it among themselves equally, measuring it using a bowl. These people are of me, and I am of them."[1]

[1] Reported by Al-Bukhari, hadith no. 2486.

The Remarkable Deeds and Merits of Abu Musa Al-Ash`ari

Abu Musa Al-Ash`ari possessed multiple exceptional characteristics, which can be summarized as follows:

1. Abu Musa's Beautiful Qur'an Recitation

None of the Companions of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) had a more melodious and beautiful voice than Abu Musa. His voice, while reciting the Qur'an, was so captivating and moving that it had a universal effect, bringing a sense of overwhelming joy and harmony to everyone who heard it.

- The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) said: **"O Abu Musa, you have been given a melodious voice like that of the family of Dawud (David)."**[1]

- Buraydah narrated: "I went out one night to the mosque and saw the Prophet (PBBUH) standing at a door. A man was praying inside. The Prophet (PBBUH) said to me: 'O Buraydah, do you think he is showing off?' I said: 'Allah and His Messenger know best.' He (PBBUH) said: **'Rather, he is a penitent believer.'** The man finished praying, then sat down to supplicate, saying: 'O Allah, I ask You by the fact that I testify that You are Allah; there is no god except You alone, without any partner; the One (God), the Unique, the Self-Sufficient Master, Who neither begets nor was born, and there is none who is equal to Him." The Prophet (PBBUH) said: **'O Buraydah, by Allah, he has supplicated Allah using His Greatest Name, by which if He is**

[1] Reported by Al-Bukhari, hadith no. 5048.

asked, He gives; and if He is called upon, He answers.' That man was Abu Musa Al-Ash`ari."[1]

- Abu `Uthman Al-Nahdi said: "I have never heard a flute, a tanbur, or a cymbal more beautiful than Abu Musa's voice. When he would lead us in prayer, we used to wish he had recited Surah Al-Baqarah (the longest chapter of the Qur'an) due to the beauty of his voice [and his skill in reciting]."

- Abu Salamah narrated: "`Umar ibn Al-Khattab would say to Abu Musa, while he was sitting in gatherings: 'O Abu Musa, remind us of our Lord.' Therefore, Abu Musa would recite while sitting in the gathering [while the group listened]."

- Abu Musa Al-Ash`ari was one of the few men who recited the Qur'an to the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH), and he (PBBUH) loved to listen to them.

2. Abu Musa as Judge and Emir

Abu Musa Al-Ash`ari was a wise and intelligent jurist showing much brilliance, grace, splendor, and justice in issuing fatwas and legal rulings. It was even said that the four greatest judges of the *Ummah* were: `Umar, `Ali, Abu Musa, and Zayd ibn Thabit.

Evidence for this includes the following:

- The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) dispatched him to Yemen along with Mu`adh ibn Jabal to teach the people and judge between them justly. He (PBBUH) instructed them, saying: **"Make things easy and do not**

[1] Reported by Ibn `Asakir.

make things difficult, bring good news and do not drive people away."[1]

- `Umar ibn Al-Khattab appointed him governor of Basra during his caliphate. When Abu Musa arrived there, he gathered its people and addressed them, saying: "The Commander of the Believers, `Umar, has sent me to you to teach you the Book of your Lord and the Sunnah of your Prophet, and to clean your roads."

  The people were astonished and bewildered when they heard his statement. They understood that educating the people and teaching them about their religion was among the duties of a ruler and governor, but that his duties should include cleaning their roads was something new and amazing to them.

  Therefore, `Umar ibn Al-Khattab extended his tenure for four years, even though he did not keep any other governor for more than a year. Al-Sha`bi reported that `Umar wrote in his will: "No governor shall be kept in his position for more than a year, but Al-Ash`ari will serve for four years."

- During the time of `Uthman ibn `Affan, he was appointed governor of Kufa, and he held a prominent position among its people.

- Imam `Ali was asked about the Companions of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH). He replied: "Which of them are you asking me about?" They said: "Abu Musa Al-Ash`ari." He replied: "He was immersed in knowledge, and then he emerged from it."

[1] Reported by Al-Bukhari, hadith no. 4038.

3. Abu Musa's Modesty

Abu Musa Al-Ash`ari was one of those whom Allah (Exalted be He) adorned with the virtue of modesty.

- Abu Musa said: "I bathe in the dark [place] of the house (to avoid his own gaze or the possibility of anyone else seeing him), and I bend my back out of modesty before my Lord."

- Anas said: "Abu Musa had trousers—that is, long garments—that he wore when he slept, for fear that his private parts would be exposed while he slept."

4. A Penitent Worshipper

Abu Musa Al-Ash`ari was extremely pious and fearful of Allah Almighty. He was a devout worshipper, frequently repentant, weeping, fasting, and standing in prayer. He would undertake the difficult act of fasting on the most intensely hot days, when thirst and heat were most severe and unbearable. Abu Musa would look forward to those days to fast.

It was even said of him that on every hot day, you would find him fasting. He used to say: "Perhaps the thirst experienced on these hot days will be a cause of quenching our thirst—that is, on the Day of Resurrection."

5. Some Pages of Abu Musa's Tireless Striving in Allah's Cause

Despite the gentleness that characterized Abu Musa Al-Ash`ari and the modesty that enveloped him, he was a courageous fighter and a steadfast warrior when the battle raged and he had to fight. He was so skilled in war that

the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) said of him: **"The master of horsemen is Abu Musa."**[1]

The Liberation of Isfahan

After the Muslims entered Persia with their forces, Al-Ash`ari made peace with the people of Isfahan in exchange for the payment of *Jizyah* (poll tax required from non-Muslims living in an Islamic state).

Abu Musa's Astuteness and Quick Wit

However, the people of Isfahan entered the peace agreement without a genuine commitment to lasting peace. Rather, they just wanted to give themselves a tactical opportunity to catch their breath, regroup militarily, and prepare for a treacherous attack. But Abu Musa's astuteness, which never failed him when it was needed, enabled him to perceive their hidden motives and what they were plotting.

When they carried out their surprise attack, this righteous and devout man was not caught off guard. He was fully prepared and vigilant against their treachery. He fought them fiercely, and before midday, he had achieved a resounding victory over these treacherous and deceitful people.

The Battle of Shushtar

In this battle, Hormuzan withdrew his army to Shushtar, fortifying himself with a huge army there. `Umar ibn Al-Khattab reinforced Abu Musa Al-Ash`ari, sending him a huge number of fighters, most prominent among them

[1] Reported in *Al-Jami' Al-Saghir* by Al-Suyuti, hadith no. 4734.

were `Ammar ibn Yasir and Al-Bara' ibn Malik. The Muslims, under the command of Abu Musa, besieged the Persians, who were led by Hormuzan, inside Shushtar.

Abu Musa Employs His Sharp Intellect

The siege continued for many days, with much bloodshed on both sides, until Abu Musa employed his intellect to navigate this critical situation. He used an infiltration tactic by succeeding to recruit a man from inside Shushtar to work for the Muslims. Abu Musa guaranteed his safety in exchange of showing the Muslims how to enter the city.

Abu Musa selected two hundred brave horsemen for this mission. The man showed them the way into the city, which was also its main water outlet. No sooner had the gates opened and the vanguard stormed the city's stronghold than Abu Musa and his army charged in and entered the fortified city. Within hours, the city and its inhabitants were under the control of the Muslims, led by Abu Musa Al-Ash`ari. The Persian commanders surrendered.

6. Abu Musa Withdraws from the Armed Strife

Then came the great strife between `Ali ibn Abu Talib and Mu`awiyah ibn Abu Sufyan, in which Abu Musa Al-Ash`ari maintained a stance worthy of being written in letters of gold. Abu Musa showed immense courage and boldness in fighting against the polytheists, but when fighting broke out between fellow Muslims, his sole role and whole efforts were to try to reconcile them.

This was how Abu Musa reacted to the armed strife that broke out between `Ali and Mu`awiyah. Abu Musa was the governor of Kufa at the time, and he

encouraged the people's abstention from this strife and supported their refusal to participate in it. When the people of Kufa pressed him, he said to them: "There are only two options: either to stay at home for the sake of the Hereafter or to go forth for the sake of this world."

A Valuable Piece of Advice

Abu Musa maintained his neutral stance, keeping aloof from this armed strife and refusing to join either camp. He rejected every offer from either side, replying to them by saying: "I heard the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) say: **'There will be tribulations during which the one who sitting is better than the one who is standing, and the one who standing is better than the one who is walking, and the one who is walking is better than the one who is running.'"**[1]

Abu Musa added: "Allah has made us brothers and has forbidden us to shed each other's blood and take each other's property."

If only the people had listened to the voice of reason and heeded the advice of Abu Musa—this devout and repentant worshipper! But no one listened to him, and turmoil and fighting ensued.

If only our *Ummah* (worldwide Muslim community) today, as trials and tribulations assail us from every direction, would listen to the words of Abu Musa Al-Ash`ari and take lessons from past conflicts![2]

[1] Reported by Al-Bukhari, hadith no. 7082.

[2] For further reading on this issue, please see part two, *A Biography of the Ten Given Glad Tidings of Paradise*, by the same author.

The Final Chapter of Abu Musa's Life

Abu Musa sought a shelter, far from all strife and everything that might lead to it. He settled in Makkah to spend the last days of his life there.

"There Is Little Left of My Life"

Before his death, Al-Ash`ari exerted himself greatly in worship and acts of obedience. He was told: "Why do you not slow down and be gentle with yourself?" He replied: "When horses are released and approach the end of their race—that is, when they are nearing the finish line—they give their best. What is left of my life is less than that."

After a long life of purpose and fulfillment, filled with immense effort, dedication, and valuable contribution, leading to success, excellence, and a positive impact, Abu Musa Al-Ash`ari lay on his deathbed. His heart and tongue were engaged in remembering Allah as his pure soul departed to its Creator.

May Allah's Mercy and Blessings be upon you, O you who were given a pleasant voice like that of Prophet Dawud (David, PBBUH).

O you who were a hero in fighting the polytheists, but a peaceful man who avoided all the strife and fighting among Muslims.

May Allah be pleased with you and please you, O Abu Musa Al-Ash`ari.

27. Abu Al-Darda’

May Allah Be Pleased with Him

27. Abu Al-Darda'

Now, my beloved readers, let us welcome this venerable Companion whose life was the perfect example of an ascetic. He was a man who prioritized Hereafter over this world and renounced worldly desires with both his hands and his heart, thus becoming the wise man of the *Ummah*. He is Abu Al-Darda'.

Abu Al-Darda's Lineage

His full name was `Uwaymir ibn Malik Al-Khazraji, nicknamed Abu Al-Darda'.

Abu Al-Darda' Embraces Islam

Good Friends Guide Toward Allah

Abu Al-Darda' was the cherished friend of `Abdullah ibn Rawahah. They had been brothers since pre-Islamic time and had a deep bond and affection formed through consistent care and shared experiences. When Islam came, Ibn Rawahah embraced the new faith whereas Abu Al-Darda' turned away from it. However, this did not sever the strong ties between the two men. They continued to visit each other and care for one another despite their differing beliefs. Yet, Ibn Rawahah, out of his deep love for his brother Abu Al-Darda', continued to invite him to Islam and encourage him to embrace it.

Abu Al-Darda' Triumphs Over His Attachment to Idols

One day, Abu Al-Darda' went out to his shop, only to find the city's streets and roads crowded with the followers of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH). They had returned from the battle of Badr with groups of captives from Quraysh walking ahead of them. He turned away from them, but then he remembered his brother `Abdullah ibn Rawahah. He approached one of them and inquired after his wellbeing. The man replied: "He fought valiantly and returned safe and victorious." Reassured, Abu Al-Darda' continued on his way to his shop.

Ibn Rawahah felt great distress over his friend's attachment to idol worship and sought to guide him away from it. He went to his house, where he found his wife, Umm Al-Darda'. After she granted him permission to enter, he went directly to the room where Abu Al-Darda' kept his idol. He smashed it and left. When Umm Al-Darda' saw the idol shattered and its pieces scattered, she began to cry and say: "You have ruined me, O Ibn Rawahah!"

"My Lord Has Promised Me That Abu Al-Darda' Will Become a Muslim"

Abu Al-Darda' returned home only to find his idol, which he worshipped and considered a powerful deity and revered entity, reduced to insignificant, broken pieces. When he learned from his wife what had happened, he became furious. However, his fury soon subsided. He reflected on what had occurred. He said: "If there were any good in this idol, it would have protected itself from harm."

Abu Al-Darda' immediately went to the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH). His brother Ibn Rawahah was with the Messenger (PBBUH) at that time. Upon

seeing him approaching, Ibn Rawahah said: "O Messenger of Allah, here is Abu Al-Darda'. I think he has come looking for us." The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) replied: **"He only came to embrace Islam. My Lord has promised me that Abu Al-Darda' will become a Muslim."**

Abu Al-Darda' declared his faith in Islam in the presence of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH). He triumphed over his idols and the devil on the day the Muslims gained victory over the polytheists at Badr.

Enveloped in the Embrace of Islam

Abu Al-Darda' was the last of his tribe to accept Islam. The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) established a bond of brotherhood between him and Salman Al-Farisi. After Abu Al-Darda' became a Muslim and faith permeated his heart and being, he deeply regretted the good that had escaped him. He resolved to make up for what he had missed and so remained close to the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH), absorbing his knowledge and character. He participated in all the battles alongside the Messenger (PBBUH). On the day of the Battle of Uhud, he was ordered to remain on the [Rumah] mountain to repel the polytheists who were attempting to infiltrate from the rear. He stood his ground and single-handedly repelled them, continuing to fight alongside the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH).

Abu Al-Darda' Trades This World for the Hereafter

Abu Al-Darda' was a successful merchant, one of the most brilliant in this field in all of Madinah. But when he embraced Islam, he felt that trade would distract him from obeying Allah, diminish the enjoyment of worship, and cause him to miss gatherings of knowledge. Therefore, he abandoned trade business altogether without any hesitation or regret, driven by his strong conviction and a fundamental change in priorities.

Abu Al-Darda' was asked about this life-altering decision, and he replied: "I was a merchant before I met the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH). When I embraced Islam, I wanted to combine trade and worship, but they could not be reconciled. Consequently, I abandoned trade and devoted myself to worship."

"I Am Not Saying That Allah Has Forbidden Trade!"

Abu Al-Darda' added: "By Allah, I would not even want to have a shop at the door of the mosque, where I would not miss a single congregational prayer, and then buy and sell to earn three hundred dinars every day. However, I am not saying that Allah has forbidden trade, but I would prefer to be among those whom neither trade nor selling distracts from the remembrance of Allah."

Have you started to understand the true nature of our hero, dear readers? Have you sensed his honesty and exactitude? He hastened to answer the question about the legality of trade before anyone asked him: "Did Allah forbid trade, O Abu Al-Darda'?" He pointed to the higher goal he was seeking, for which he abandoned his business. He sought to focus his efforts on striving for

spiritual growth and excellence that would help him reach the attainable levels of perfection for humankind.

"Everyone Is Naturally Prepared for What He Is Created for"[1]

Several Companions of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) were among those whose trade and business did not distract them from the remembrance of Allah. Rather, they strove to specifically increase their trade and wealth to dedicate it to the service of Islam, like Abu Bakr, `Abdul-Rahman ibn `Awf, and others. Abu Al-Darda's approach does not diminish their stances, and vice versa. As the Prophet (PBBUH) said: **"Everyone is naturally prepared for what he is created for."** That is, individuals are naturally inclined and guided toward actions that align with their ultimate purpose and destiny, whether it is good or bad.

Abu Al-Darda' was richly endowed with wisdom. His devotional asceticism emanated from his high gift of wisdom, which he channeled into a dynamic force for spiritual development.

[1] Reported by Al-Bukhari, hadith no. 7551.

Excerpts From Abu Al-Darda's Sayings and Wisdom

Abu Al-Darda' engaged in personal growth and succeeded in refining and purifying himself, transforming himself into a great educator and a wise, upright man.

Now, my dear readers, let us draw closer to Abu Al-Darda', the wise man of the *Ummah*, and immerse ourselves in the profound beauty of some of his words and deeds.

Reflection and Contemplation

Umm Al-Darda' was asked: "Which act of worship did Abu Al-Darda' practice most?" She replied: "Reflection and contemplation." Abu Al-Darda' often encouraged his companions to reflect and contemplate, saying: "An hour of reflection is better than a night of worship."[1]

"Where Are Your Belongings?"

A group of people were accommodated as guests by Abu Al-Darda' on a very cold night. He sent them hot food, but no blankets. When they were about to go to sleep, they began to discuss the matter of the blankets. One of them said: "I will go and speak to him." He left and reached the room of Abu Al-Darda', where he saw Abu Al-Darda' lying down, wearing a scant garment that

[1] It suggests that engaging one's mind to ponder the signs of the Creator and those within oneself can lead to a deeper spiritual understanding than merely performing acts of worship without true presence of mind.

offered no protection from the cold. He said to him: "I see you are sleeping [without a blanket] as we are. Where are your belongings?"

Abu Al-Darda' replied: "We have an abode there to which we send all the goods we acquire. If we had kept anything in this abode, we would have sent it to you."

The man, understanding what Abu Al-Darda' was hinting at, said to him: "Since you are still living in this abode [i.e., this world], do you not keep anything here to help you live in it?"

Abu Al-Darda' replied: "There are difficult obstacles on the path we are taking to that abode [i.e., the Hereafter], and we wanted to lighten our burdens so that we might overcome these obstacles." Then he said to the man: "Do you understand?" He said: "Yes, I understand, and may you be rewarded with the best."

Abu Al-Darda's Approach to the World and Its Pleasures

- For Abu Al-Darda', money was a means to achieve a contented life, not a goal in itself. Therefore, he advised others to earn a lawful living through lawful work but avoid excessiveness or greed in the process, saying: "Eat only what is good, earn only what is good, and bring nothing into your house except what is good."

- He also taught that a person can only obtain the world by being disinterested in it. He said: "He who does not dispense with the world, has no world."[1]

[1] Excessive attachment to material possessions and worldly concerns can hinder a person's ability to experience a deeper, more meaningful connection to life.

- He wrote to his companion, advising him: "To proceed, any material thing you possess of this world belonged to someone else before you and will be transferred to someone else after you. Only what [charity] you have sent ahead [as an investment] for yourself [in the afterlife] will remain for you."

"Why Do I See You Accumulating Wealth That You Will Not Consume?"

During his caliphate, `Umar decided to appoint Abu Al-Darda' governor of Syria and insisted on this. Abu Al-Darda' replied: "If you want me to go to the people to teach them the Book of their Lord and the Sunnah of their Prophet, I will go." `Umar agreed to this, and Abu Al-Darda' went to Syria. There, he found the people deeply immersed in luxury and worldly delights, and this alarmed him.

He summoned the people to the mosque to address them as a preacher. However, the people did not act promptly and with due diligence; they arrived late, distracted by the pleasures of life. He said: "O people of Syria, you are my brothers in faith, my neighbors, and my allies against our enemies. O people of Syria, what prevents you from showing me affection and heeding my advice? I seek nothing from you; my advice is for your benefit and my provisions come from sources other than you."

Then Abu Al-Darda' began to advise them, saying:

– "Why do I see your scholars departing—that is, dying—while your ignorant ones do not take lessons from it [i.e., failing to heed the fundamental lesson that life is temporary]?"

- "Why do I see you preoccupied with what Allah Almighty has guaranteed for you but neglecting what you have been commanded to do?"

- "Why do I see you accumulating wealth that you will not consume and building structures you will never inhabit? Are you hoping for what you cannot attain [such as lasting happiness in this world, immortality, and so on]?"

- "Generations before you amassed and hoarded wealth, but their hoarding became worthless, their hopes [worldly goals] vanished, and their homes became tombs [i.e., in the long run, material possessions lose their value, especially after death]. Remember the people of `Ad, who filled the world with riches and children." Then Abu Al-Darda' called out to them mockingly: "Who will buy the estate of `Ad from me for two dirhams?"

Abu Al-Darda's effective and moving exhortation successfully resonated with the people of Syria, who were moved to tears. The sound of their weeping could be heard outside the mosque. It profoundly touched their emotions, values, and sense of purpose.

"Do Not Judge People Before Their Lord Does!"

One day Abu Al-Darda' passed by a man around whom people were gathered, beating and insulting him. When he asked what was happening, they told him: "He has committed a grave sin."

Abu Al-Darda' asked the people: "Tell me, if he fell into a well, would you not pull him out?"

They replied: "Yes."

Abu Al-Darda' said: "Then do not insult him or beat him. Rather, point out his error to him and offer him advice, and thank Allah who has protected you from falling into his sin."

They asked him: "Do you not hate him?"

Abu Al-Darda' replied: "I only hate his wrongdoing, but once he abandons it, he is my brother. Do not judge people before their Lord [does][1]."

"What Will Be the State of My Daughter's Faith Then?"

During his stay in Syria, Mu`awiyah ibn Abu Sufyan, who was the governor of the Levant, sent a message to Abdul Darda' asking for his daughter, Al-Darda', in marriage for his son, Yazid. Abu Al-Darda' rejected the proposal. Then he married her to one of the poor but righteous Muslims. This news spread among the people, and they were astonished.

When Abul-Darda' was asked about the reason why he rejected Yazid, he said: "I only sought, by this, what is best for Al-Darda's well-being. What do you think would happen to Al-Darda' if slaves stood before her to serve her and she was dazzled by the splendor of the palaces? What will be the state of her faith [i.e., religious commitment] then?"

`Umar Visits Abu Al-Darda's Modest House

During Abu Al-Darda's stay in Syria, Caliph `Umar ibn Al-Khattab came to check on the conditions of its people. He visited his friend Abu Al-Darda' at his

[1] Do not overstep your bounds by holding people accountable for what is between the servant and his Lord, for ultimate judgment belongs to Allah alone.

home at night, entering his room that was dark and lacked light. Abu Al-Darda' welcomed him and seated him, and the two men began conversing, the darkness concealing each from the other's sight.

`Umar felt Abu Al-Darda's pillow and found it to be a saddle blanket (a covering placed on the back of a riding animal). He felt his bedding and found it to be pebbles and his blanket to be a flimsy covering that offered no protection from the biting cold of Syria. `Umar said to him: "May Allah have mercy on you, Abu Al-Darda'. Did I not provide for you generously? Did I not send [resources] for you?"

Abu Al-Darda' replied: "Do you remember, O`Umar, a hadith that the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) told us?" `Umar asked: "What was it?" He replied: "Did he (PBBUH) not say: **'Let your provision in this world be like that of a traveler'**[1]?"[2]

`Umar replied: "Yes."

Abu Al-Darda' said: "So what did we do after him (PBBUH), O `Umar?"

`Umar wept, and Abu Al-Darda` wept, and they continued to weep until dawn.

[1] Reported in *Sahih Al-Targhib* by Al-Albani, hadith no. 3319.

[2] Like a traveler on a long journey, one should only carry what is necessary for the destination, understanding that the journey is finite and the ultimate goal lies beyond the material world. The Prophet's saying is a call to live deliberately and ethically, using one's time and resources wisely to prepare for what comes after this life, rather than becoming entangled in the pursuit of temporary worldly gains.

Knowledge and Acting Upon It

Abu Al-Darda' not only had revered knowledge, but he acted upon it too. He internalized learned insights and translated them into tangible actions, behaviors, and a way of life. This practical application is the goal, transforming knowledge from a passive belief into a powerful, lived experience.

- Abu Al-Darda' used to say: "None of you can be truly pious until he is knowledgeable, and knowledge will not beautify (elevate) him until he acts upon it."[1]

- He also said: "What I fear most is for me, on the Day of Resurrection and before all of creation, to be asked: 'O `Uwaymir, did you learn [knowledge]?' And I will say: 'Yes.' Then I will be asked: 'So what did you do with what you learnt?'"

- He also said: "Woe to him who does not learn, and sevenfold woes to him who learns but does not act."[2]

Core Rights Entailed by Brotherhood in Faith

According to Abu Al-Darda', brothers in faith should be treated with the best of manners, including overlooking slips and mistakes, accepting apologies, assuming the best about a fellow Muslim's words and actions, avoiding actions that lead to division or conflict, and letting go of grudges.

[1] Knowledge without action is neither beneficial nor does it elevate its possessor; rather, it may lead to misguidance or arrogance.

[2] This powerful quote by Abu Al-Darda' emphasizes that ignorance of what is right is a lesser failing (one woe) compared to knowing good and deliberately failing to act on it, which is a much greater sin (sevenfold woes). It highlights that faith without deeds is dead, and true righteousness involves actively doing good, not just possessing knowledge or good intentions.

- Abu Al-Darda' said: "Reproaching a brother is better than losing him."

- He also said: "Give to your brother and be gentle with him. Do not obey (listen to) an envious person regarding him, lest you become like him [i.e., adopt his negative traits]."

- He also said: "Tomorrow death will inevitably come and deprive you of your brother. How will you weep for him after death when, during his life, you neglected to maintain ties with him."

Supplicating for a Fellow Muslim in His Absence

His wife, Umm Al-Darda', narrated that Abu Al-Darda' had three hundred and sixty friends for Allah's Sake[1], and he would supplicate for them all in his prayers. Umm Al-Darda' asked him about that. He replied: "There is no person who supplicates for his brother in his absence except that Allah appoints two angels to him who say: 'And may you have the same as what you asked.' Should I not then desire that the angels supplicate Allah for me?"[2]

People's Rank with Allah is Diminished and Nations Lose Their Sovereignty Through Disobedience

Cyprus was liberated, and the spoils and captives were brought to Madinah, but as they passed by Abu Al-Darda', he wept. People approached him, asking:

[1] Friends for Allah's Sake describes a pure, sincere Islamic friendship where people love and support each other to draw closer to Allah, helping each other with worship, reminding each other of faith, and encouraging good deeds. This makes such kind of friendships a blessing and a refuge in this life and the Hereafter, unlike worldly friendships which can become adversarial.

[2] This means that a Muslim who makes a heartfelt supplication for someone else receives a reciprocal blessing or benefit from Allah, equivalent to what he asked for his friend, through the supplication of the angels.

"O Abu Al-Darda', why do you weep on a day when Allah has honored Islam and its people?" Abu Al-Darda' replied with profound wisdom and deep understanding of the broader implications of the current situation. He said: "How insignificant are the servants of Allah when they disobey Him! That was a powerful and dominant nation. They held sovereignty over the land. But they abandoned Allah's Commands, and so it has become as you see it."[1]

This is how Abu Al-Darda' explained the defeats and rapid collapses that befall nations, attributing their primary cause to disobedience to Allah Almighty and turning away from His Commands. Abu Al-Darda' feared for the Muslims a time when their faith and connection to Allah would weaken, causing power to slip from their grasp as easily as it had previously slipped from the hands of previous nations.

These, my dear readers, are but a selection of the sayings and exhortations of the 'Sage of the *Ummah*', all of which cannot be mentioned here.

[1] Worldly power and sovereignty are transient, and ultimate sovereignty belongs to Allah. Nations are judged by their obedience to divine law and their moral conduct, and their eventual decline is presented as a consequence of their widespread corruption and disobedience to Allah.

Abu Al-Darda’s Special Standing in the Hearts of the Companions

Abu Al-Darda’ held a lofty position in the hearts of the Companions. Here is a selection of some laudatory remarks about the virtues of Abu Al-Darda’:

- The Companions used to say: “The sincerest among us in combining knowledge with action is Abul-Darda’.”
- Abu Dhar Al-Ghifari said to Abu Al-Darda’: “The earth has not carried, nor has a tree shaded, anyone more knowledgeable than you, O Abu Al-Darda’.”
- Ibn `Umar said: “Tell us about the two wise men.” It was said: “Who are the two wise men?” He replied: “Mu`adh and Abu Al-Darda’.”

The Final Chapter of Abu Al-Darda's Life

Abu Al-Darda' stayed in Syria, diligently preaching to the people and teaching them the Qur'an and Sunnah. After a long life filled with the two forms of *Jihad* (striving in Allah's Cause): the lesser *Jihad* (struggle on the battlefields against external enemies) and the greater *Jihad* (inner struggle against oneself[1]), Abu Al-Darda' lay on his deathbed. He was preparing for the journey for which he had gathered provisions, in order to depart to the abode to which he had transferred all his possessions.

"Who Will Exert Themselves for a Day Like This?"

When his companions entered to visit him, they asked him: "What is troubling you?"

Abu Al-Darda' replied: "My sins."

They asked: "What do you desire?"

Abu Al-Darda' replied: "My Lord's Forgiveness."

Then Abu Al-Darda' looked at them to deliver his final piece of wisdom, saying: "Who will exert themselves for a day [which is inevitable] like this? Who will exert themselves for an hour [which is inevitable] like this? Who will exert themselves for a situation [which is inevitable] like this?"[2]

[1] Inner struggle against temptation, sin, and base desires.
[2] Rhetorical questions encouraging believers to perform righteous deeds in this life as preparation for the Day of Judgment.

Eternal Companionship with Abu Al-Darda'

Abu Al-Darda's illness worsened. His wife, Umm Darda', perceived that she would soon be separated from her husband, whom she loved and with whom she had lived a glorious life of renunciation [abandoning worldly pursuits for spiritual growth, enlightenment, and connection] and closeness to Allah (Exalted be He).

She turned to Allah (Glorified be He) in fervent supplication, saying: "O Allah, Abu Al-Darda' proposed to me and married me in this world. O Allah, I now propose to him before You. I ask You, my Lord, to make me his wife in Paradise."

What a Righteous Wife!

Umm Darda', my dear readers, is held up as an exemplary model of a righteous wife for her actions in helping her husband obey Allah Almighty and draw closer to Him, despite the hard living conditions that Abu Darda' had caused her. He had once been a wealthy merchant whose trade afforded them a comfortable, affluent living. Abu Al-Darda' had renounced all the pleasures of this world, but his wife did not complain nor did she bite her fingers in regret for the luxurious life she had missed. Rather, she was happy with the profound spiritual delight and inner peace she found in deep belief and closeness to Allah. Not only that, but she also wanted to be his wife in Paradise.

The final moment came, and the pure soul of Abu Al-Darda' ascended to its Creator to join the esteemed company of the prophets, the righteous, and the martyrs.

This occurred in the land of Syria in the year 32 A.H., during the caliphate of `Uthman ibn `Affan.

Abu Al-Darda's Renounces the World with Both Hands and a Heart Full of Devotion

Days passed, and `Awf ibn Malik Al-Ashja`i saw a wonderful vision: a vast, green meadow with a magnificent leather dome, around which sheep lay resting. [A scene] the likes of which had never been seen before. He asked: "Whose is this?" He was told: "It belongs to `Abdul-Rahman ibn `Awf." Then `Abdul-Rahman ibn `Awf appeared to him from the dome and said: "O Ibn Malik, this is what Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) has given us through the Qur'an. If you were to look down upon this path, you would see what your eyes have never seen, hear what your ears have never heard, and experience what your heart has never imagined." Ibn Malik asked: "For whom is this (good), O Abu Muhammad?" He replied: "Allah prepared it for Abu Al-Darda', because he used to ward off worldly temptations with both hands and his heart."

Congratulations to you, O you who sold this world for the Hereafter and attained Allah's Good Pleasure in both worlds.

May Allah be pleased with you and please you, O Abu Al-Darda'.

28. Al-Bara’ ibn Malik

May Allah Be Pleased with Him

28. Al-Bara' ibn Malik

Now, my dear friends, let us welcome another hero from among these noble Companions. He is a hero whose motto was 'Allah and Paradise.' When you see him fighting with visible intensity and dedication, you see a man yearning for martyrdom, loving death as much as his enemies loved this life. He was the second of two brothers who lived for Allah and loved the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH). He was the full brother of the servant of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH), Anas ibn Malik. He is Al-Bara' ibn Malik, who, according to the Prophet (PBBUH), if he were to swear by Allah, Allah would fulfill his oath.

In the Company of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH)

Al-Bara' ibn Malik remained in the company of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) as one of his soldiers and under his command. The most prominent feature of his personality was courage and chivalry. He was known for his outstanding strength and valor.

Scenes From Al-Bara's Life During the Time of the Prophet (PBBUH)

- Uhud was the first battle during which Al-Bara' fought alongside the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH), followed by the Battle of Al-Khandaq. He performed admirably in both battles, demonstrating his strength, will, and courage.

- Al-Bara' was with the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) when he marched to Al-Hudaybiyah. He was among those who took the Ridwan Pledge[1], when his right hand met that of the Prophet (PBBUH) and grasped it firmly as he pledged allegiance to him under the Samurah (which was the name of the tree under which the Muslims had gathered to give the Ridwan Pledge).

Al-Bara' Is Someone Who, When He Takes an Oath by Allah, Allah Fulfills His Oath

The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) bestowed upon Al-Bara' ibn Malik a high honor and an unmatched distinction. He (PBBUH) highlighted an admirable characteristic that set him apart and made him particularly noteworthy, saying: **"Many a disheveled, dusty man, wearing two worn-out garments and who is not given any importance, if he were to swear by Allah, He (Allah) would fulfill his oath. Among them is Al-Bara' ibn Malik."**[2] This hadith describes individuals whose supplications are readily fulfilled by Allah due to their righteousness. They are people of exceptional piety and moral standing, ones whose relationship with Allah is so strong that Allah would honor their oath.

Al-Bara' continued performing *Jihad* under the leadership of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH), witnessing the victorious liberation of Makkah, the Battle of Hunayn, and other important events. He kept actively pursuing and maintaining righteousness in all aspects of his life until the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) passed away being pleased with him.

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[1] It was a pledge that the Companions swore to the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) under a tree after the rumored death of `Uthman. All the Companions pledged that they would not flee the battlefield, if a battle broke out with Quraysh, and that they would keep on fighting firmly and steadfastly to the last man.

[2] Reported by Al-Tirmidhi, hadith no. 3854.

Al-Bara' Shows Exceptional Courage in the Battle of Yamamah

Soon after Abu Bakr Al-Siddiq assumed the caliphate, some Arabs apostatized from Islam. Al-Siddiq resolved to confront this sedition, standing firm like the steadfast mountains. He prepared and dispatched eleven armies throughout the Arabian Peninsula to bring the apostates back to the path of guidance and truth.

The most powerful and numerous of the apostates were the Banu Hanifah (a prominent ancient Arab tribe inhabiting the area of Yamamah), who were followers of Musaylimah the Liar (who claimed prophethood during the time of the Prophet). Musaylimah defeated the first Muslim army sent against him, which was led by `Ikrimah ibn Abu Jahl. Al-Siddiq sent a second army under the command of Allah's sword, Khalid ibn Al-Walid, which included prominent Companions from the Muhajirun and Ansar. At the forefront of both groups was Al-Bara' ibn Malik.

"O People of Madinah! You No Longer Have Madinah (City)!"

On the land of Yamamah in Najd, the two armies engaged in combat, and the advantage laid with Musaylimah and his followers, at first. They even stormed the tent of Khalid ibn Al-Walid, who rushed to his forces when he saw them being defeated, reorganized their ranks, and boosted their cohesion. All leaders and orators of the Muslim army started to deliver words of encouragement from atop their horses [from their mounted position], inspiring confidence and motivation among the soldiers. Al-Bara' ibn Malik had a beautiful, loud voice, so Khalid called out to him, saying: "Rise, O Bara'!" Al-Bara' shouted words of unparalleled eloquence, meaning and power, saying: "O

people of Madinah! You no longer have Madinah (City)! There is only Allah and Paradise!"[1]

Al-Bara's words resonated deeply with the Muslims, and the course of the battle changed. The Muslims advanced, and Musaylimah and his followers were shaken to their core. They retreated to the garden that later became known in history as the "Garden of Death" because of the large number of those killed there. It was a large, high-walled garden. Musaylimah and his followers entered it and fortified themselves within, raining arrows down upon the Muslims from inside.

"Lift Me and Throw Me into the Garden!"

At that critical moment, the valiant fighter, Al-Bara' ibn Malik, stepped forward, climbed a high hill, and shouted: "O Muslims, lift me and throw me over to them in the garden!" In the blink of an eye, Al-Bara', being of small stature, scaled the garden wall and threw himself into the garden amid thousands of Musaylimah's soldiers. He descended upon them like a thunderbolt and continued fighting them at the garden gate until he had killed ten of them. He then opened the gate from the inside, and the Muslims poured into the Garden of Death. A clear victory was achieved, and Musaylimah was killed.

However, Al-Bara' did not attain the martyrdom he longed for this time, even though his body bore over eighty wounds from arrows and sword blows. He was treated for his wounds for a full month after the battle. Khalid ibn Al-Walid personally supervised his treatment and nursing.

[1] This means that the world is fleeting and the ultimate goal is to support Allah's Cause and reach Paradise, not merely to preserve worldly homelands.

The Battle of Shushtar Brings Al-Bara's Life Story to an End

Al-Bara' recovered from the wounds he sustained at the Battle of Yamamah. He once again set out with the Muslim armies, his soul still yearning for martyrdom. He began fighting battle after battle, eager to fulfill his greatest wish: martyrdom in Allah's Cause.

Then came the siege of Shushtar. A large Persian army had gathered to confront the Muslims. `Umar ibn Al-Khattab wrote to Sa`d ibn Abu Waqqas in Kufa, instructing him to dispatch an army to Ahvaz. He also wrote to Abu Musa Al-Ash`ari in Basra, instructing him to dispatch an army to Ahvaz as well, stating in his letter: "Appoint Suhayl ibn `Adi as the commander of the army, and let Al-Bara' ibn Malik be with him."

Al-Bara' ibn Malik Rescues His Brother from Certain Death

The forces coming from Kufa met those coming from Basra to face the Persians in a fierce battle. The two great brothers, Anas ibn Malik and Al-Bara' ibn Malik, were among the Muslim soldiers. When the Muslims' strength was reinforced, the Persians retreated to one of the fortified castles. The Muslims besieged them there, encircling them tightly like a chain around a wrist.

As the siege dragged on and the suffering of the Persians intensified, they lowered iron chains from the top of the castle walls. From these chains hung hot steel hooks, glowing brighter than embers. These hooks snatched any Muslim they could reach, leaving escape impossible.

One of these hooks fell and caught Anas ibn Malik, who could not free himself from the burning chain. It was ablaze with flames and fire. As soon as Al-Bara' saw his brother in this near-death situation, he rushed to him. Anas was being pulled up by the red-hot chain to the top of the castle wall. Al-Bara' leaped onto the castle wall, seized the red-hot chain holding his brother, and struggled fiercely until he broke it. He did this with immense pain; his hand burning and smoking; he was focused on rescuing his brother from certain death. He landed on the ground to find his hand devoid of flesh; only its charred skeleton remained.

"O Bara', Make an Oath by Your Lord!"

The fighting intensified; the enemy clashed fiercely, hearts reached the throats, and significant numbers of soldiers on opposing sides were killed. Some of the Companions approached Al-Bara' and said to him: "O Bara', the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) said: 'If you swear by Allah, He will fulfill your oath (supplication).' Take an oath by Allah to defeat them and grant us victory."

With his arms raised to the sky, Al-Bara' fervently supplicated and entreated Allah, saying: "O Allah, enable us to overcome them, grant us victory over them, and let me join Your Prophet today."

Allah (Exalted be He) fulfilled Al-Bara's oath (i.e., supplication in the form of an oath) and granted the Muslims a decisive victory. Here, the traveler reached his destination. Al-Bara' attained the honor of martyrdom he had always longed for, and at last, he joined the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH).

May Allah's Mercy and Blessings be upon you, O Al-Bara'.

Whenever you take an oath by Allah, Allah will surely fulfill it.

May Allah be pleased with you and please you, O Al-Bara' ibn Malik.

29. Usayd ibn Hudayr

May Allah Be Pleased with Him

29. Usayd ibn Hudayr

Here we are, dear readers, welcoming a new guest from this fragrant assembly of the honorable Companions whose path of upright character and righteousness we join, applying the insights gained from their lives to engage with our world in a meaningful and ethical manner.

Our hero was one of the chiefs of the Ansar (the Supporters of the Prophet, PBBUH, from the local inhabitants of Madinah) and one of their wisest men. Angels descended to listen to him recite the Qur'an. He loved the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) profoundly and demonstrated exceptional devotion and loyalty to him. The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) loved him very much as well. He is the noble Companion, Usayd ibn Hudayr.

Usayd's Upbringing

Usayd grew up in a family of high standing and honor. His father, Hudayr ibn Al-Kata'ib, was the chief of the Aws tribe and one of the most prominent noblemen and powerful warriors of the Arabs.

He was killed on the Day of Bu`ath—a battle that occurred between the Aws and Khazraj tribes in the pre-Islamic era in which the Aws were victorious. When Hudayr was killed, the tribe passed the leadership role to his son, Usayd. They crowned him their leader, succeeding his father, and united under him to uphold and protect their community's established structure and traditions.

Usayd inherited his father's courage, generosity and sound judgment. He inherited noble qualities, from ancestor after ancestor, like a legacy. Thus his character was the culmination of a long line of virtuous ancestors.

Usayd had a close friend with whom he spent his childhood and youth: Sa`d ibn Mu`adh. They were inseparable, whether traveling or resident, and never parted except when each retired to his bed.

Usayd Embraces Islam

A pivotal moment significantly altered the course of Usayd's life, bringing with it profound clarity, deep understanding, spiritual enlightenment, and relief from doubt and uncertainty; he bore witness to the truth: there is no god but Allah and Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah. This major turning point in Usayd's life, this transformation from disbelief to faith and from confusion to conviction, has a story with a moral.

When the first ambassador of Islam, Mus`ab ibn `Umair, arrived in Madinah to preach Allah's religion and guide people to the straight path, he stayed with Asaad ibn Zurarah. He made Asaad's home his residence and the starting point for spreading the message of Islam. Through his eloquent communication, the clarity of his arguments, and his gentle character, Mus`ab ibn `Umair was able to win people's hearts, and they entered Allah's religion.

The Lights of Faith Draw Near Usayd

One day, Asaad ibn Zurarah went out with his guest, Mus`ab ibn `Umair, to meet a group from Banu `Abdul-Ash'hal—the tribe of Usayd and Sa`d ibn Mu`adh. They sat by a well called 'Maraq.' A group of those who had embraced Islam and other people who wanted to hear about Islam gathered around Mus`ab. He began to preach Islam to them and give hope and glad tidings, with people listening attentively.

News of this gathering was disclosed to Usayd ibn Hudayr and Sa`d ibn Mu`adh (who was the maternal cousin of Asaad ibn Zurarah). Sa`d ibn Mu`adh said to Usayd: "May you be bereft of your father, O Usayd! Go to these two men, who have come to our land to mislead our weak-minded people, and drive them away. Warn them not to come to our dwellings (area) again." Then he added: "If Asaad ibn Zurarah were not related to me, I would have spared you the trouble."

With his spear in his hand, Usayd went to the two men. Once Asaad ibn Zurarah saw him approaching, he said to Mus`ab: "This is the leader of his people and their wisest man. If he embraces Islam, many will follow his example. Be sincere with Allah regarding him."

"How Excellent and Beautiful This Speech Is!"

Usayd stood before them, cursing them. He said in a tough, insulting manner: "What has brought you to our area? Are you deceiving the weak ones among us? Leave us be, if you have any concern for yourselves (i.e., your own well-being)." Mus`ab replied in his sincere, captivating tone: "Will you sit and listen? If you are pleased with our matter (message), accept it. If you dislike it, we will refrain from what you dislike and will depart from you, never to return."

Usayd was a man with an enlightened mind and keen intellect, to the extent that his people nicknamed him 'The Perfect One,' which was a title his father had held before him. He saw Mus`ab using logic and sound reason, so he planted his spear in the ground and said to the Companion: "You have spoken justly. Now, tell me what you have to say."

Mus`ab approached him, reciting the Qur'an to him and explaining the truth of Islam in his eloquent, pleasant style. Moments later, Usayd's face lit up

with joy, and those present said: "By Allah, we recognized the acceptance of Islam in Usayd's face even before he spoke!" No sooner had Mus`ab finished speaking than Usayd exclaimed in admiration: "How excellent and beautiful this speech is! What do you do if you want to enter this religion?" Mus`ab replied: "You perform ablution, purify your clothes, bear witness to the truth (say *Shahadah*), and then pray two *Rak`ah*s (units of prayer)."

Usayd rose, performed ablution, purified himself, and bore witness that there is no god but Allah and that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah. He then prayed two *Rak`ah*s.

Usayd's conversion to the faith of Islam led to the conversion of Sa`d ibn Mu`adh, and they both caused their entire tribe of Banu `Abdul-Ash'hal and a large number of the Aws tribe to convert.

Usayd in the Company of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH)

Usayd ibn Hudayr was fascinated with the Glorious Qur'an from the moment he heard it recited by Mus`ab ibn `Umair. His heart grew attached to the beloved Prophet (PBBUH) even before his eyes rested upon him.

When the Second `Aqabah Pledge was made, Usayd was among the first to pledge allegiance to the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH). He was one of the twelve representatives selected by the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) [to be responsible for the Muslim community in Yathrib]. Usayd rejoiced greatly at the Prophet's arrival in Madinah. He remained close to him, absorbing his knowledge and guidance, allowing his noble qualities and behaviors to permeate his own being and influence his actions and identity.

The Angels Listen to Usayd's Pleasant Recitation of the Qur'an

Usayd continued to draw sustenance from this sweet spring of unending goodness, surrounding himself with its continuous supply of beneficial knowledge and enlightenment. He was never seen except as a striver, a fighter, or a worshipper devoted to reciting Allah's Book. He had a melodious voice radiating peace and serenity. He found the recitation of the Qur'an most pleasing when the night was still. The Companions eagerly awaited those hours when Usayd recited the Qur'an, competing for the opportunity to hear his recitation.

Not only did the inhabitants of the earth enjoy Usayd's beautiful recitation, but also the inhabitants of the heaven. One night, Usayd was sitting in his enclosure—a space behind his house—with his son Yahya asleep beside him

and his horse tethered nearby. He began reciting the Qur'an in his pleasant, gentle voice.

Suddenly, Usayd heard his horse circling around him, almost breaking free from its tether. He stopped reciting, and the horse calmed down. He resumed reciting, and the horse circled him even more vigorously. This happened several times; whenever Usayd recited, the horse would scurry about and become skittish, and whenever he stopped, it would calm down and become still. Fearing that the horse might trample his son Yahya, Usayd started to wake him up when he noticed a cloud in the sky, like a canopy, with lamp-like objects hanging from it, filling the horizons with light. It ascended until it disappeared from his sight.

When morning came, Usayd went to the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) and told him what he had seen. The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) said to him: **"Those were angels listening to you. If you had continued your recitation, the people would have seen them in the morning and they would not have concealed themselves from them."**[1]

Usayd's Profound Fondness for the Prophet (PBBUH)

Just as Usayd was passionate about Allah's Book, he was also passionate about the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH). He was—as he himself recounted—at the purest and serenest state when he recited the Noble Qur'an or listened to it and when he looked at the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) as he (PBBUH) preached or spoke.

[1] Reported by Muslim, hadith no. 796.

Usayd Aspires to the Honor of Embracing the Prophet (PBBUH)

Because of his immense love, Usayd desired for more from the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH), hoping to once touch his noble body. This aspiration became possible on a certain occasion.

Usayd was a righteous, cheerful, and pleasant man. One day, while he was talking to people and making them laugh, the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) nudged him with his hand, as if approving of what he was saying. Usayd said to him: "You hurt me, O Messenger of Allah." The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) said: **"Take your revenge on me, O Usayd."** Usayd said: "O Messenger of Allah, you are wearing a shirt, and I have no shirt." Therefore, the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) lifted his shirt, upon which Usayd embraced him and began kissing his body while saying: "May my father and mother be sacrificed for you, O Messenger of Allah! This is a wish I have had since I met you, and now it has been granted to me."

"What an Excellent Man Usayd Is!"

The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) reciprocated Usayd's love. The Messenger (PBBUH) esteemed Usayd's status as an early believer who demonstrated exceptional devotion and sacrifice in the most difficult days of Islam. Usayd kept protecting him (PBBUH) during the Battle of Uhud, even though he was stabbed seven times that day. The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) used to say about him: **"What an excellent man Usayd is!"**

The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) Never Refuses Usayd's Intercession

The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) recognized Usayd's worth and standing among his people. Consequently, whenever he interceded for someone, the Prophet (PBBUH) accepted his intercession.

Usayd narrated: "I came to the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) and drew his attention to a certain family of the Ansar who were poor and needy. Most of the members of that family were women. The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) said, **'You have come to us, O Usayd, after we have distributed all that we had. When you hear of anything that has come to us, mention that family to us.'** Later, when the spoils of Khaybar arrived, the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) distributed them among the Muslims, giving generously to the Ansar and to that family.

I said: 'May Allah reward you well on their behalf, O Prophet of Allah.'

The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) replied: **'You too, O group of Ansar! May Allah reward you with the best reward, for you are known for you chastity and patience. And you will face favoritism (preferential treatment) after me, so be patient until you meet me, and your meeting place is the *Hawd*** (the Prophet's fountain in the Hereafter, its waters flowing from the river in Paradise, Al-Kawthar)'."

Usayd's Shows Reason and Wisdom in the Expedition of Banu Al-Mustaliq

The Expedition of Banu Al-Mustaliq revealed the sound judgment and wisdom of Usayd ibn Hudayr. During this expedition, the leader of the

hypocrites, `Abdullah ibn Ubai ibn Salul, manipulated a certain tense situation to incite the people against the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH). He said to them: "This is what you have brought upon yourselves. You have given them (the Muhajirun) refuge in your land and shared your wealth with them. By Allah, if you withhold what you have from them, they will be forced to move away from your land. By Allah, when we return to Madinah, indeed the more honorable (by which he was referring to himself and his fellow hypocrites) will expel therefrom the meaner (by which he was referring to the honorable Messenger of Allah, PBBUH, and the Muhajirun)."

The noble Companion Zayd ibn Arqam heard this vile remark made by Ibn Salul, so he went to the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) and informed him of what had happened. The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) was deeply saddened by this derogatory statement.

To quell the discord that Ibn Salul had instigated, the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) ordered the departure at an unusual (inconvenient) time, and the people started off on the journey back to Madinah.

When Usayd met the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) on the way, he asked him: "O Prophet of Allah, by Allah, you have set forth at an unusual hour, one you have never traveled at before."

The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) said to him: **"Have you not heard what your companion said?"**

Usayd asked: "Which companion, O Messenger of Allah?"

The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) replied: **"`Abdullah ibn Ubai."**

Usayd asked: "What did he say?"

The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) replied: "**He claimed that when he returns to Madinah, the more honorable will expel therefrom the meaner**."

Usayd exclaimed: "You, by Allah, O Messenger of Allah, can expel him if you wish. By Allah, he is the inferior one, and you are the honorable one."

Then Usayd added: "O Messenger of Allah, be gentle with him. By Allah, Allah sent you to us while his people were stringing pearls in order to crown him King of Madinah. He, therefore, believes that you have usurped his kingdom."

A Lesson to Ponder

Usayd's actions consistently demonstrated prudence and wisdom. He was not defending the hypocrite Ibn Salul in this situation; rather, out of his intense love for the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH), he wanted to alleviate the Messenger's emotional pain and lessen the impact of these harsh words.

Perhaps, my dear readers, we can learn from the conduct of the Companions of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH), emulate their example, and apply their virtues to our own lives. When disagreements arise, we should try to calm tempers during emotionally charged moments. We should not be among those who want to fan the flames of conflict (escalate anger) to exacerbate the situation and prolong the dispute, like someone pouring oil on a fire that makes it burn more fiercely. May Allah guide us and benefit us through these noble Companions.

Usayd During the Era of the Rightly Guided Caliphs

The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) passed away while he was pleased with Usayd ibn Hudayr[1]. Usayd also became a figure of honor and respect for Abu Bakr (may Allah be pleased with him) during his caliphate. He held the same esteemed position in the heart of the Commander of the Believers, `Umar ibn Al-Khattab.

Usayd narrated: "It happened that when the caliphate passed to `Umar ibn Al-Khattab, he divided some wealth and goods among the Muslims and sent me a garment, which I considered small. While I was in the mosque, a young man from Quraysh passed by me wearing a long, wide garment like the one `Umar had sent me, dragging it on the ground. I cited to those with me the words of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH): **'You will face favoritism after me,'** and I said: 'The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) spoke the truth.' A man went to `Umar and told him what I had said. `Umar came to me quickly and asked: 'What did you say?' So I told him what I had seen and what I had said.

"`Umar exclaimed: 'May Allah forgive you. That was a garment I sent to so-and-so, who is an Ansari, and this young Qurayshi man bought it from him and wore it. Do you think that what the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) told us about will happen in my time?' I (Usayd) replied: 'By Allah, O Commander of the Believers, I thought that it would not happen in your time.'"

[1] This expression suggests that Usayd had lived a life that met the Prophet's approval.

The Final Chapter of Usayd's Life

During the caliphate of `Umar ibn Al-Khattab, in the month of Sha`ban of the year 20 A.H., after years of persistent striving, sacrifice and giving, the glorious voice that angels came down to listen to while reciting the Qur'an fell silent. Usayd ibn Hudayr passed away to be with his Lord and finally meet with the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH), leaving behind a powerful example and set of values that Muslims may internalize and continue, thus perpetuating the blessed impact.

The Commander of the Believers, `Umar ibn Al-Khattab, insisted on carrying his bier on his shoulder until he was buried and laid to rest in his final resting place.

Usayd Used to Help People, so Allah Helped His Children

When Usayd died, he had a debt of four thousand dirhams. His heirs considered selling part of his land to settle it. When `Umar ibn Al-Khattab learned of this, he said: "I will not leave the children of my brother Usayd dependent on others." `Umar spoke to the creditors, and they agreed to buy the produce of the land from him for four years, at a price of one thousand dirhams per year. Thus, Usayd's kind acts accrued benefits not only to him, but also to his family after him. Just as Usayd had been a helper and supporter of people, Allah provided for him someone to support and protect his children after him.

May Allah's Mercy and Blessings be upon you, whose recitation attracted the angels.

May Allah be pleased with you and please you, O Usayd ibn Hudayr.

30. `Abdullah ibn `Umar

May Allah Be Pleased with Him

30. `Abdullah ibn `Umar

And now, my dear readers, let us calmly approach this exquisite flower among the noble Companions, exuding charm and nectar, overflowing with color and delightful qualities.

He was a Companion whose teacher was the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) himself, and his father was `Umar ibn Al-Khattab. He learned much goodness from his father, and all goodness from the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH). Both influences combined to form his unique identity, shaping his character and values and guiding his actions.

He was the persevering, repentant one, whom the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) described as a righteous man. Our hero is `Abdullah ibn `Umar (may Allah be pleased with them both).

`Abdullah Embraces Islam

Abdullah ibn `Umar embraced Islam as a young boy and emigrated with his father before reaching puberty.

`Abdullah Shows Early Eagerness to Participate in *Jihad*

Ibn `Umar was presented to the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) on the day of Uhud, when he was fourteen years old. He (PBBUH) did not permit him to participate due to his young age. However, on the day of Al-Khandaq, when he was fifteen years old, the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) permitted him to participate in the conflict and assigned him, along with others, the age-

appropriate task of guarding the women and children of Madinah as a first training in bearing responsibility.

After that, Ibn `Umar witnessed all the major events with the Messenger of Allah (PBUH). During the era of the Rightly Guided Caliphate, he witnessed the Battle of Yarmouk, the Liberation of Egypt, and the Liberation of Africa.

The Remarkable Deeds and Merits of Ibn `Umar

`Abdullah ibn Umar possessed a magnificent combination of virtues. His personality was characterized as a powerful blend of generosity, asceticism, and piety that worked together to create a truly great man. He gave generously because he was generous. He spent from the lawful and good things that he loved because he was pious. He was unconcerned that his generosity might leave him poor because he was ascetic.

Let us, dear friends, draw closer to this noble Companion and live some moments with some of his virtues and merits.

1. Ibn `Umar's Love for the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) and His Strong Keenness to Follow Him

Like his father, `Abdullah ibn `Umar showed a profound faith in Allah and His Messenger (PBBUH). His adherence to the Prophet's example was truly outstanding. He would observe the Prophet's actions and behaviors in every matter and meticulously imitate them.

Here are some examples of Ibn `Umar's close adherence to the example of the Prophet (PBBUH):

- Ibn `Umar would pray in the very same place where he saw the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) pray.
- When the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) supplicated standing, Ibn `Umar would supplicate standing. When the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) supplicated sitting, `Ibn Umar would supplicate sitting.

- `Abdullah ibn `Umar would follow the footsteps of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) in every place he (PBBUH) passed. He even saw the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) rest under a tree, so he would tend to that tree, pouring water at its base to prevent it from withering.

- Ibn `Umar saw the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) dismount from his camel during a journey and pray two *Rak`ah*s (units of prayer) in a certain spot. Therefore, whenever he was traveling to the same spot, he would do as the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) had done, dismounting from his camel and praying two *Rak`ah*s in the same place.

- When Ibn `Umar traveled a route that the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) had traveled, he would stand with his mount, direct it, and say: "Perhaps a hoofprint will touch a hoofprint," hoping that his mount's hoof would precisely follow the trail left by the Prophet's (PBBUH) mount.

- With the same fervor and dedication to following the footsteps of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH), Ibn `Umar was very cautious when narrating hadiths. Any time he narrated a hadith, he would neither add to it nor omit a single letter. His contemporaries said: "None of the Companions of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) was more careful not to add to or omit anything from the hadiths than `Abdullah ibn `Umar."

- Due to his meticulous devotion, intense commitment, and close adherence to the example of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH), Lady `Aishah said concerning him: "No one followed the footsteps of the

Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) in every place where he (PBBUH) stopped as closely as Ibn `Umar did."[1]

- `Asim ibn Muhammad Al-`Umari reported on the authority of his father that he said: "I never heard Ibn `Umar mention the Prophet (PBBUH) without weeping."

2. "What an Excellent Man `Abdullah Is!"

`Abdullah ibn Umar had a significant vision in his youth, which the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) interpreted for him. It led him to adopt night prayer as his consistent practice and way of life, and the source of his contentment and happiness.

Ibn `Umar narrated: "I was a young, unmarried man, and I used to sleep in the mosque during the lifetime of the Prophet (PBBUH). I saw in a dream that I had a piece of brocade in my hand, which flew with me to whichever part of Paradise I desired. I also saw as if two angels came to me and wanted to take me to Hell—I seek refuge with Allah from Hell! But another angel met them and said to me: 'Do not be afraid,' so they let me go. I narrated this (vision) to Hafsah (the Prophet's wife), who narrated it to the Prophet (PBBUH), and the Prophet (PBBUH) said: **'What an excellent man `Abdullah is! If only he would pray at night.'**"[2] According to another narration, the Prophet (PBBUH) said: **"`Abdullah is a righteous man."**[3]

[1] It signifies that Ibn `Umar walked every path the Prophet (PBBUH) had walked and he stopped at every place the Prophet (PBBUH) had stopped.

[2] Reported by Al-Bukhari, hadith no. 1156, 1157,1158.

[3] Reported by Al-Bukhari, hadith no. 7030, 7031.

From that day until Ibn `Umar met his Lord, he never neglected *Qiyam-ul-Layl* (optional prayer at night), whether at home or traveling. If he missed the *`Isha* (Night) Prayer in congregation, he would spend the night in worship.

3. Ibn `Umar's Profound Awe and Reverence for Almighty Allah

Like his father, Ibn `Umar was deeply fearful of Allah, intensely mindful of Him in private and in public. Fervent tears would flow from his eyes whenever he heard one of the glorious ayahs warning of Allah's Punishment.

Here are some situations in which Ibn `Umar wept out of fear and awe of Allah Almighty:

- Nafi` narrated that whenever Ibn `Umar recited (Allah's Saying): ﴿Is it not time for the hearts of the believers to become humbled by the remembrance of Allah…?﴾ (translated meaning of Al-Hadid 57:16), he would weep until he was overwhelmed.

- `Ubayd ibn `Umayr narrated: "One day I recited to `Abdullah ibn `Umar (Allah's Saying): ﴿How (will it be) then, when We (Allah) bring from each nation a witness and We bring you (O Muhammad) as a witness against these people?﴾ (translated meaning of Al-Nisa' 4:41), and he began to weep until his beard was wet with tears."

- One day Ibn `Umar sat among his brothers and recited (Allah's Saying): ﴿Woe to those who give less than due measure (i.e., decrease the rights of others)﴾ (translated meaning of Al-Mutaffifin: 83:1) until he reached His Saying: ﴿The Day when humankind will stand before the Lord of the worlds﴾ (Al-Mutaffifin 83:6). Ibn `Umar kept repeating: ﴿The Day when humankind will stand before the Lord of the worlds﴾

with his tears flowing like rain, until he collapsed due to the intensity of his awe and emotions.

- Samir Al-Riyahi reported on the authority of his father that he said: "`Abdullah ibn `Umar drank some cold water, and then he wept, and his weeping intensified. He was asked: 'What makes you weep?' He replied: 'I remembered the Almighty's Saying: ﴿And a barrier will be placed between them and that which they desire﴾ (translated meaning of Saba' 34:54), and I realized that the dwellers of Hell do not desire anything as much as they desire water. The Almighty says: ﴿And the dwellers of the Fire will call to the dwellers of Paradise: 'Pour on us some water or anything that Allah has provided you with'﴾ (translated meaning of Al-A`raf 7:50).'"

4. Ibn `Umar's Manner of Worship

Let us draw closer to `Ibn Umar, my dear readers, to see how he practiced worship, as related to us by his contemporaries.

- He had a shelter, in which he would pray as much as he was able, and then go to bed and take a short nap. After that he would get up, perform ablution, and pray. He would do these steps four or five times during the night.

- Nafi` was asked: "What did Ibn `Umar do in his house?" He replied: "You cannot bear it (i.e., his level of worship and religious devotion is exceptionally high, you cannot do the same amount of worship as him). He used to perform ablution for every prayer and read the Qur'an in between."

5. Ibn `Umar's Genuine Humility

Ibn `Umar was extremely humble, despite his potential to be proud. Arrogance never found a way to him, even if people praised and flattered him.

- A man once said to him: "O best of people, son of the best of people!" Ibn `Umar replied: "I am not the best of people, nor the son of the best of people. Rather, I am just one of Allah's servants, who places hopes in Him and fears Him."

- Another said to him: "People will remain well as long as Allah keeps you among them." Ibn `Umar became angry and said: "How do you know what your mother's son (meaning himself) keeps hidden behind his door?"

6. Ibn `Umar's Generosity Combined with Compassion for the Poor

Ibn `Umar was a trustworthy and successful merchant. Allah (Exalted be He) had bestowed upon him abundant wealth. Yet, he would not hoard any of it and would spend all that he had, prioritizing people and relationships over the accumulation of wealth. For him, money was a servant, not a master, that helps achieve goals and support values, rather than being an end in itself.

"O Merchants! What Are You Doing with This World?"

Ayyub ibn Wa'il Al-Rasibi tells us about one of Ibn `Umar's acts of generosity, saying: "One day, four thousand dirhams and a velvet cloth were gifted to Ibn Umar. The next day, Ayyub ibn Wa'il saw him in the market buying fodder for his camel on credit. [Intrigued], Ibn Wa'il went to his family and asked them: 'Didn't Abu `Abdul-Rahman—meaning Ibn `Umar—receive

four thousand dirhams and a velvet cloth yesterday?' They replied: 'Yes.' He said: 'But I saw him today in the market buying fodder for his camel, and he could not afford it.' They informed him that he had not slept last night until he had distributed all the money. Then he took the velvet cloth, threw it on his back, and went out. When he returned, it was gone. We asked him about it, and he said that he had given it away to a poor man."

Ibn Wa'il then left, clapping his hands in amazement until he reached the market. He climbed to a high place and shouted to the people: "O merchants, what are you doing with this world? This is Ibn `Umar! Four thousand dirhams come to him, and he distributes them all. The next morning he has to borrow fodder for his camel!"

"You Invite the Well-Fed and Ignore the Hungry!"

Ibn `Umar rarely ate alone; he always had orphans or poor people with him. He would admonish those who offered resources to the rich and disregarded those in genuine need, saying to them: "Why do I see you inviting the well-fed and ignoring the hungry?"

Ibn `Umar's kindness and compassion were well-known throughout the community. The poor would sit in his path so that he would take them to his house, offer them food, and give them whatever they needed. They would eagerly gather around him like a cluster of bees flying around flowers to sip their nectar.

"Whoever Deceives Us in Allah's Name, We Are Deceived by Him"

Ibn `Umar was known for his generosity, frequently giving charity. He particularly gave from the possessions he cherished most, acting upon the

Almighty's Saying: ﴿Never will you attain righteousness until you spend from that which you love﴾ (translated meaning of Al `Imran 3:92). Ibn `Umar's slaves noticed this trait, so they would flock to the mosque and demonstrate their piety. They hoped to be freed by him because of this, and he would free them for Allah's Sake. His companions used to say to him: "O `Abdul-Rahman, by Allah, they are only feigning piety to deceive you," to which `Ibn `Umar would respond: "Whoever deceives us in Allah's Name, we are deceived by him."[1]

Nafi`said: "Ibn `Umar did not die until he had freed a thousand slaves or more."

7. Ibn `Umar's Renunciation of Material Wealth and Worldly Status

Ibn Umar's ascetic lifestyle enabled him to be very generous. For him, wealth was a means to securing the necessities of life, rather than funding opulence or excess. He lived a simple, humble, and thankful life, free from covetousness and anxiety caused by the pursuit of more. He did not pant after material possessions or status, hoping for nothing from this world except clothing to cover his body and food to sustain his family.

Jabir ibn `Abdullah said of him: "There is none among us who has experienced this world without being inclined toward it and it toward him, except `Abdullah ibn `Umar."[2]

[1] It means that he who feigns piety and righteousness, pretending to be a believer and good person and claiming to be drawing closer to Allah or seeking His Favor: "We are deceived by him." That is, we believe him and think well of him, because we deal with him based on outward appearances, while Allah judges his true intentions.

[2] It indicates that the world tempts and seduces people, and they are drawn to it in their lives and affairs, except for `Abdullah ibn `Umar. He was among the few who were not consumed by the world. He was detached from it, following the Sunnah.

Here are some instances of Ibn `Umar's asceticism:

"I Fear [That Wearing] This Garment Will Make Me Arrogant and Boastful"

One day, one of his brothers from Khorasan brought him a soft garment, saying: "I have brought you this garment. It would gladden my eyes to see you take off these rough clothes and wear this soft cloth." Ibn `Umar touched it and asked: "Is it silk?" His companion replied: "No, it is cotton." Ibn `Umar pushed it away with his right hand and said: "No, I fear it will make me arrogant and boastful, and Allah does not love the arrogant and boastful."[1]

"I Knew People Who Were Sometimes Satiated and Sometimes Hungry"

A man brought Ibn `Umar medicine, and Ibn `Umar asked him: "What does this medicine do?" He replied: "It aids digestion." Ibn `Umar smiled and said to his companion: "It aids digestion? I have not eaten my fill for forty years, and it is not because of a lack of food; rather, I knew people who were sometimes satiated and sometimes hungry. I fear that if I diverge from their path, I will not catch up with them."

[1] Allah's saying: "And turn not your face away from people with pride, nor walk in insolence through the earth. Verily, Allah does not like each arrogant boaster" (translated meaning of Luqman 31:18)

"His Entire Belongings Were Not Worth One Hundred Dirhams!"

Maymun ibn Mihran narrated: "I entered upon `Ibn Umar and assessed everything in his house—his bedding, blanket, mat, and everything else. I found it was not worth one hundred dirhams."

Ibn `Umar's asceticism was not due to poverty, for he was wealthy, nor was it due to stinginess, for he was generous and open-handed. It was simply a commitment to his approach of truthfulness and piety.

Ibn `Umar's Renunciation of Positions of Power and Authority

`Ibn Umar did not compete for worldly power; rather, worldly power sought him out. He refused positions of governance in all their forms.

One day, Caliph `Uthman ibn Affan summoned him and asked him to assume the position of judge. He declined, saying: "There are three types of judges:

- A judge who rules out of ignorance, who is destined for Hellfire.
- A judge who rules out of personal desire, who is destined for Hellfire.
- A judge who strives and gives a correct verdict, who is at a 'midmost position', bearing neither sin nor deserving reward.

I ask you for Allah's Sake to excuse me."

Also, when Caliph `Uthman ibn `Affan was assassinated, they said to Ibn `Umar: "Come out so that the people may pledge allegiance to you." He rejected the caliphate, despite the threats and sometimes temptations he faced.

All these threats and temptations could not penetrate to the heart or weaken the resolve of the devout and ascetic worshipper, Ibn `Umar.

8. Ibn `Umar Distances Himself from the Sedition that Culminated in the Assassination of Caliph `Uthman

When civil strife raged among the Muslims, Ibn `Umar was among those who abstained from participation, fighting on neither side.

"Whoever Calls to Prayer, I Will Answer Him"

Ibn `Umar refused to take a side in the conflict; he maintained a neutral and aloof stance while adopting the following motto: "Whoever calls people to prayer, I will answer him. But whoever calls people to kill your Muslim brother and seize his wealth, I will not [answer]."

"Should I Fight Someone Who Says: 'There is No God but Allah'?"

Ibn `Umar was asked about the reason for his detached position and his refusal to join either side, and he replied: "What prevents me is that Allah (Exalted be He) has forbidden me to shed the blood of a Muslim. He (Glorified be He) says: ﴿Fight them until there is no more *fitnah* (*Shirk* or disbelief) and the religion (worship) is entirely for Allah﴾ (translated meaning of Al-Anfal 8:39). We did, and we fought the polytheists until religion was entirely for Allah. But what are we fighting for today? I fought when idols filled the sanctuary from corner to corner until Allah removed them from the land of the Arabs. Should I fight today those who say: 'There is no god but Allah?'"

"I Do Not Wish That a Single Man Be Killed Because of Me"

Ibn `Umar remained steadfast in this position, even after Mu`awiyah became the ruler and his son Yazid after him. Yazid's son, Mua`wiyah II ibn Yazid, was indifferent to ruling and thus relinquished it. Even until that day, Ibn `Umar, an elderly man, was still the hope of the people and the man desired for the caliphate.

Marwan went to persuade Ibn `Umar, saying: "Give me your hand so we may pledge allegiance to you, for you are the chief of the Arabs and the son of their chief." Ibn `Umar replied: "What should I do with the people of the East?" Marwan said: "Strike them until they pledge allegiance." He said: "By Allah, I would not wish that I have it (worldly power or authority) for seventy years, and that (in return) a single man be killed because of me."

Such was his logic and such was his conviction. Ibn `Umar remained careful, until his last days, not to have any role or share in armed conflicts.

9. Words of Light

Before we bid farewell to this noble Companion, let us spend a moment with a glimpse of his sayings that fill the hearts with light.

- A man wrote to Ibn `Umar, asking him to write down all possible knowledge for him. He wrote to him: "Knowledge is vast, but if you can meet Allah with a light conscience free of people's blood[1], a stomach free from their wealth, a tongue restrained from speaking ill of them, and adherence to their community (Muslim main body), do so."

[1] That is without guilt and not being responsible for causing harm, injury, or death to others.

- It was said to `Abdullah ibn `Umar: "So-and-so, an Ansari man, has passed away." He said: "May Allah have mercy on him." They said: "He left behind one hundred thousand dirhams." He said: "But it (that money) did not leave him (i.e., he will be accountable for it)."

- Upon waking, `Ibn Umar would say: "O Allah, make me among Your servants who receive the greatest share of every good You distribute this morning: a light by which You guide, a mercy You spread, a provision You bestow, a good You reveal, a calamity You remove, and a tribulation You avert."

May Allah be pleased with Ibn `Umar and his father `Umar. He showed unmatched commitment, piety, knowledge, and devotion. What a man! The caliphate was offered to him, yet he rejected it; the jurisdiction was offered to him by `Uthman, yet he declined it; and the governorship of Syria was offered to him by `Ali, yet he fled from it. Indeed, Allah chooses for Himself whom He wills and guides to Himself whoever turns to Him in repentance and in obedience.

The Final Chapter of Ibn `Umar's Life

In the year 73 A.H., at the age of eighty-five, after a long life filled with devotion and sacrifice, the devout and ascetic Ibn `Umar departed to his Creator to meet the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) and his honorable Companions in Paradise.

May Allah's Mercy and Blessings be upon you, O you whom the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) described as a righteous man.

May Allah be pleased with you and please you, O `Abdullah ibn `Umar.

31. Mu`adh ibn Jabal

May Allah Be Pleased with Him

31. Mu`adh ibn Jabal

Let us now, dear readers, spend the following moments with a prominent figure among the Companions, one of the most knowledgeable and learned in Islamic jurisprudence, one of the first to embrace Islam, and a participant in the Pledge of `Aqabah.

Our hero is the Imam of Muslim jurists and the treasure trove of information for scholars, Mu`adh ibn Jabal, to whom the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) said: **"I love you, O Mu`adh."**[1]

Mu`adh's Description and Qualities

Mu`adh ibn Jabal was among the finest young men of Yathrib. He stood out among his peers for his sharp intellect, quick wit, eloquence, and high ambition.

Mu`adh was also handsome and admirable, with a fair complexion, sparkling teeth, curly hair, and kohl-rimmed eyes. His composure captivated onlookers. When he spoke, he charmed the hearts and minds, leaving them even more fascinated.

Mu`adh Embraces Islam

Mu`adh ibn Jabal was among the first in Madinah to embrace Islam. His conversion was facilitated by an encounter with the Makkan preacher and the first ambassador of Islam, Mus`ab ibn `Umair. He was a blessed fruit of the

[1] Reported by Al-Nasa'i, hadith no. 1303.

persistent *Da`wah* (calling people to Allah) efforts which Mus`ab ibn `Umair diligently carried out using his refined and calm approach, relying on wisdom and good counsel.

On the night of the Pledge of Al-`Aqabah, Mu`adh ibn Jabal was present among those who witnessed the pledge of allegiance. He placed his hand in the hand of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) to swear allegiance to him.

Mu`adh Starts to Call People to Allah

Mu`adh ibn Jabal returned from Makkah, his heart overflowing with light after pledging allegiance to the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH). He resolved to spread Allah's religion and call people to the light of truth. He and a group of young men began a campaign to destroy idols and remove them from the homes of the polytheists in Yathrib, both secretly and openly.

The Chief of Banu Salamah, `Amr ibn Al-Jamuh, Embraces Islam

Because of this initiative led by the young men of Yathrib, one of the eminent dignitaries of Yathrib, `Amr ibn Al-Jamuh, embraced Islam. He was one of the chiefs and noblemen of Banu Salamah. His son, Mu`adh ibn `Amr, had embraced Islam and participated in the Pledge of `Aqabah. Mu`adh ibn `Amr was a close friend of Mu`adh ibn Jabal and had joined the group of young men who were destroying idols.

`Amr ibn Al-Jamuh had a private wooden idol called 'Manat.' As was the custom among the nobles, he worshiped it as a god, venerating it, purifying it, and perfuming it with incense every morning. He placed it in a special place in his house.

Cleansing `Amr's House of Idols

The young men, Mu`adh ibn Jabal, his son Mu`adh ibn `Amr, and others, went to his idol 'Manat' under the cover of darkness, removed it from its place, and threw it into a pit of filth and excrement.

On waking up, `Amr ibn Al-Jamuh did not find his idol in its usual place. Instead, he found it lying face down in a refuse pit, covered in filth. He said: "Woe to you! Who transgressed against our god this night?"

He took the idol out, washed it, purified it, perfumed it, and returned it to its place, saying to it: "O Manat, by Allah, if I knew who did this to you, I would humiliate him." After the old man went to sleep that night, the young men crept to his idol and did the same to it as they had done the previous night. The next morning, `Amr found his idol in the same state of defilement, so he washed it, purified it, and placed it back in its place. When night fell, the same thing happened again. This continued for a while.

"If There Is Any Good in You, Defend Yourself!"

Every time, `Amr retrieved his idol from where they had thrown it, purified it, and perfumed it. But he grew exasperated, so he took his sword and hung it on it, saying to it: "By Allah, I do not know who is doing this to you. If there is any good (power) in you, defend yourself. Here is the sword with you." After the old man went to sleep that night, the young men went to the idol, removed the sword from its neck, tied the idol to the neck of a dead dog, and threw them both into one of these refuse pits.

`Amr ibn Al-Jamuh awoke next morning to find his idol missing. He went out searching for it until he found it lying among the filth, tied to a dog's carcass with no sign of the sword. Seeing his idol in this state, he said: "By Allah, if you were a god, you and a dog would not be tied together amid such filth." `Amr ibn Al-Jamuh realized the utter powerlessness of idols and embraced Islam wholeheartedly.

Mu`adh in the Company of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH)

The Best Student of the Best Teacher (PBBUH)

Mu`adh ibn Jabal remained constantly present with the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) after his arrival in Madinah, learning the Glorious Qur'an and the laws of Islam from him. Eventually, Mu`adh became one of the most knowledgeable among the Companions of Allah's Book and the laws it contained.

No wonder he was the most knowledgeable, for Mu`adh was raised in the school of the Beloved Prophet (PBBUH) and drank deeply and enthusiastically from its abundant springs of knowledge. He was the best student of the best teacher (PBBUH).

Honors Bestowed Upon Mu`adh

Here are some of the honors bestowed upon Mu`adh ibn Jabal by the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH).

"O Mu`adh, by Allah I Love You"

Mu`adh ibn Jabal narrated that the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) took his hand and said: **"O Mu`adh, by Allah I love you! By Allah I love you. I advise you, O Mu`adh, do not fail to say after every (prescribed) prayer: O Allah,**

help me to remember You, to thank You, and to worship You in the best way."[1]

"Learn the Qur'an from Four"

The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) said: **"Learn the Qur'an from four: Ibn Mas`ud, Ubai (ibn Ka`b), Mu`adh ibn Jabal, and Salim, the freed slave of Hudhayfah."**[2]

"What an Excellent Man Mu`adh Is!"

Abu Hurairah narrated that the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) said: **"What an excellent man Abu Bakr is! What an excellent man `Umar is! What an excellent man Abu `Ubaidah ibn Al-Jarrah is! What an excellent man Usayd ibn Hudayr is! What an excellent man Thabit ibn Qays ibn Shammas is! What an excellent man Mua`dh ibn Jabal is! What an excellent man Mu`adh ibn `Amr ibn Al-Jamuh is!"**[3]

"The Most Knowledgeable of What Is Lawful and Unlawful Is Mu`adh"

Anas ibn Malik narrated that the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) said: **"The most merciful of my followers to my followers is Abu Bakr. The one who adheres most uncompromisingly to Allah's religion is `Umar. The one who possesses the sincerest *Haya'*[4] is `Uthman. The best judge is `Ali ibn Abu**

[1] Reported by Abu Dawud, hadith no. 1522.
[2] Reported by Al-Tirmidhi, hadith no. 3810.
[3] Reported by Al-Tirmidhi, hadith no. 3795.
[4] *Haya'* can mean many good things, the most popular definition of it is shyness, but it also means modesty, humility, decency, and self-respect.

Talib. The best in reciting the Allah's Book is Ubai bin Ka`b. The most knowledgeable of what is lawful and unlawful is Mu`adh bin Jabal. The most knowledgeable of the rules of inheritance is Zayd ibn Thabit. And every nation has a trustworthy guardian, and the trustworthy guardian of this nation is Abu `Ubaidah ibn Jarrah."[1]

Mu`adh Rides Behind the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH)

Mu`adh ibn Jabal said: "I was riding [sitting] behind the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) on a donkey called `Ufair."[2] This reveals the great humility of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH), and Mu`adh's high standing and position with him.

Mu`adh Was a Leader Having all the Good Righteous Qualities

The Companions of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) recognized Mu`adh's honorable standing and distinguished position, and they held him in the highest esteem and love. Ibn Mas`ud said: "We used to compare Mu`adh to Ibrahim (Prophet Abraham, PBBUH) [in terms of his stature, righteousness, and leadership qualities]."

[1] Reported by Ibn Majah, hadith no. 154.
[2] Reported by Abu Dawud, hadith no. 2559.

The Remarkable Deeds of Mu`adh During the Prophetic Era

The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) appreciated the worth of men. He (PBBUH) knew how to unearth their latent potential and unlock their hidden and dormant capabilities for them to utilize those energies in the service of Allah's religion, and he (PBBUH) placed the right man in the right position.

Mu`adh as a Teacher

- Allah granted victory to His Messenger (PBBUH) and the believers, and the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) saw multitudes of people entering Allah's religion after the Liberation of Makkah. The increasing numbers of new Muslims had increased the need for a teacher to instruct them in Islam and its laws. The Prophet (PBBUH) appointed `Attab ibn Usaid as the governor of Makkah and left Mu`adh ibn Jabal with him to teach the people the Qur'an and instruct them in Allah's religion.

- The kings of Yemen came to the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) declaring their faith in Islam and the faith of their people and asking him to send someone with them to teach the people their religion. The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) assigned this task to a group of his Companions, who were prominent guiding figures, and appointed Mu`adh ibn Jabal as their leader.

The Methodology of *Da`wah* That Mu`adh Adopted

Before his departure to Yemen, the teacher of humanity (PBBUH) illuminated the path for Mu`adh ibn Jabal and taught him the methodology of *Da`wah* (calling people to Allah).

- Mu`adh ibn Jabal narrated that when the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) sent him to Yemen, he (PBBUH) asked him: **"How will you judge if a case is presented to you?"** Mu`adh replied: "I will judge according to what is in Allah's Book." The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) said: **"And if you do not find it** [**in Allah's Book**]**?"** Mu`adh replied: "I will judge according to what the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) judged." He (PBBUH) said: **"And if you do not find it** [**there**]**?"** Mu`adh said: "I shall do my best to form an opinion and spare no effort." The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) gave him an encouraging pat on his chest and said: "**Praise be to Allah who has guided the messenger of the Messenger of Allah to what pleases the Messenger of Allah."**[1]

- Also, Abu Musa Al-Ash`ari narrated that when the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) dispatched him to Yemen along with Mu`adh ibn Jabal in order to teach the people and judge between them justly, he (PBBUH) instructed them saying: **"Make things easy and do not make them difficult, bring good news and do not drive people away."**[2]

The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) Bids Mu`adh a Final Farewell

The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) went out to bid farewell to this mission of guidance and light, led by Mu`adh who was riding his mount. The

[1] Reported by Abu Dawud, hadith no. 3592.
[2] Reported by Al-Bukhari, hadith no. 4038.

Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) was walking directly beside Mu`adh. He (PBBUH) said to him: **"O Mu`adh, maybe you will not meet me after this year of mine. Maybe you will pass by my mosque and my grave."** Mu`adh was deeply moved to tears by the Prophet's words which signified a permanent parting. Then the Prophet (PBBUH) turned and faced Madinah, while adding: **"The people most worthy of me are the pious, whoever they may be and wherever they may be."**[1]

Mu`adh arrived in Yemen and started calling people to Allah (Exalted be He) and teaching the people the principles and laws of Islam. The prophecy that the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) made came true. After that parting, Mu`adh never again had the pleasure of seeing the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH). The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) passed away before Mu`adh returned from Yemen. When Mu`adh returned to Madinah and did not find his beloved Prophet (PBBUH) there, he wept and felt as if the whole world had darkened.

[1] Reported in *Takhrij Al-Musnad li-Shu`ayb* by Shu`ayb Al-Arna'ut, hadith no. 22052.

The Remarkable Deeds and Merits of Mu`adh ibn Jabal

After the death of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH), Abu Bakr assumed the caliphate. Abu Bakr appreciated Mu`adh's worth and status.

The following, dear readers, are some wonderful scenes from the life of Mu`adh during the era of the Rightly Guided Caliphs, highlighting his character and contributions. Let us read and reflect.

1. "I Had a Vigilant Watcher with Me"

When `Umar ibn Al-Khattab assumed the caliphate, he sent Mu`adh to Banu Kilab to distribute their allowances to them and give alms to their poor. Mu`adh carried out his mission and returned to his wife with the same saddlecloth he had when he left, wrapped around his neck.

His wife asked him: "Where are the gifts that governors usually bring for their families?" Mu`adh replied: "I had a Vigilant Watcher (meaning Allah, the Exalted) with me, recording my deeds."

She said: "You were trustworthy in the eyes of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) and Abu Bakr, and now `Umar sends a guardian with you to record your deeds?" She told this to `Umar's female relatives, complaining to them.

`Umar, upon learning of this, summoned Mu`adh and said: "Do I send a guardian with you to record your deeds?" He replied: "No, O Commander of the Believers, but I found nothing else to offer her (my wife) as an excuse." `Umar laughed, gave him something, and said: "Appease her with this."

2. Mu`adh Is the Reference Point in Islamic Jurisprudence

The people of the Levant needed someone to teach them the Qur'an and instruct them in the religion, so the Commander of the Believers, `Umar ibn Al-Khattab, summoned the five men who had written down the Qur'an during the time of the Prophet (PBBUH), namely: Mu`adh ibn Jabal, `Ubadah ibn Al-Samit, Abu Ayyub Al-Ansari, Ubai ibn Ka`b, and Abul Darda'.

He said to them: "Your brothers from the Levant have asked me for someone to teach them the Qur'an and instruct them in the religion. Help me (accomplish this task) by three of you. If you wish, draw lots; otherwise, I will appoint three from among you." They replied: "Why should we draw lots? Abu Ayyub is an old man, Ubai is ill, and that leaves only the three of us."

`Umar said: "Begin with Homs. If you are satisfied with the state of its people, leave one of you in charge there and let one of you go to Damascus and the other to Palestine."

The three Companions of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) did as `Umar had instructed them in Homs. They left `Ubadah ibn Al-Samit there. Abul Darda' went to Damascus, and Mu`adh went to Palestine.

`Umar ibn Al-Khattab greatly esteemed Mu`adh's profound knowledge and understanding of Islamic jurisprudence.

- Musa ibn `Ali ibn Rabah narrated from his father that `Umar addressed the people in Al-Jabiyah, saying: "Whoever desires knowledge of Islamic jurisprudence should go to Mu`adh ibn Jabal."

- `Umar ibn Al-Khattab often consulted Mu`adh. He said: "Were it not for Mu`adh, `Umar would have perished."

3. "His Love Entered My Heart"

The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) said: **"When Allah loves a servant, He calls out to Jibril (Angel Gabriel) and says to him, 'I love so-and-so, so love him.' So Jibril loves him, and then Jibril calls out in the heavens, saying, 'Allah loves so-and-so, so love him.' The inhabitants of the heavens respond, and then he is granted acceptance among the people of the earth**[1]**."**[2]

Mu`adh ibn Jabal was of this noble kind; he was beloved among the people of the earth. Acceptance and love entered the heart of everyone he met. Abu Muslim Al-Khawlani narrated: "I entered the mosque of Homs and found about thirty elderly Companions in it. In their midst was a young man with gleaming teeth and kohl-rimmed eyes, silent and not speaking. Whenever they disagreed on something, they would turn to him and ask him. I asked the person sitting next to me, 'Who is this?' He said, 'Mu`adh ibn Jabal.' His love entered my heart."

4. "Light and Pearls Emanated from His Mouth"

Yazid ibn Qutayb narrated: "I entered the mosque of Homs, and there was a young man with curly hair around whom the people had gathered. When he spoke, it was as if light and pearls emanated from his mouth[3]. I asked, 'Who is this?' They said, 'Mu`adh ibn Jabal.'"

[1] That is, Allah (Exalted be He) places love for righteous people in the hearts of others.
[2] Reported by Muslim, hadith no. 2637.
[3] It emphasizes that his speech was not only full of wisdom and truth but was also articulate, beautiful, and captivating, likened to a well-organized string of precious pearls.

5. A Glimpse at Some of Mu`adh's Wise Sayings

Let us, dear readers, draw closer to this pious scholar and listen to some of his wise sayings:

"Truth Has a Light"

Mu`adh used to call people to seek sound and beneficial knowledge, saying: "Beware of the errors of the wise, and receive truth when you hear it, for truth has a light."[1]

"Teach Me, O Mu`adh"

Mu`adh viewed that worship should be moderate and consistent, without any negligence (deficiency) or excess (extremism).[2] A man said to Mu`adh: "Teach me, O Mu`adh." Mu`adh asked him: "Will you obey me?" He replied: "I am eager to obey you." He said: "Fast and break your fast, pray and sleep, earn a living and avoid sin, and do not die except as a Muslim. And beware of the supplication of the oppressed."[3]

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[1] That is, accept true and valuable insights from anyone—a child, a stranger, or an opponent—regardless of the source. Truth possesses an intrinsic power to stand on its own and become known, much like light banishes shadows and exposes what is hidden. Truth inherently reveals itself, dispelling darkness or falsehood.

[2] His perspective reflects the core Islamic approach to worship, often described as a middle path that rejects both extremism (excess) and negligence (deficiency). It emphasizes maintaining a consistent, sustainable routine rather than overburdening oneself. This methodology is designed to keep worship as a sustainable, lifelong practice rather than a temporary burst of activity.

[3] This is an important hadith warning that supplications from those who have been wronged are powerful and have no barrier to Allah, emphasizing that oppressors should fear Allah's justice as the cries of the oppressed are readily heard and answered, regardless of their faith. This warns people against committing injustice, as the victim's

"Pray as If It Were Your Last Prayer"[1]

Mu`adh ibn Jabal said to his son: "My son, when you pray, pray as if it were your last prayer. Do not think that you will ever return to it again. And know, my son, that the believer dies between two good deeds: one that he has performed and one that he intended to perform after that."[2]

The Supplication That Mu`adh Says When He Prays at Night

When Mu`adh ibn Jabal prayed at night, he would say: "O Allah, eyes have slept, and stars have set, and You are the Ever-Living, the Sustainer of all existence. O Allah, my pursuit of Paradise is slow, and my escape from Hell is weak. O Allah, grant me from You continuous guidance to the Day of Resurrection[3]. Verily, You never break Your Promise."

6. His Extreme Generosity and Selflessness

Mu`adh had a generous hand, spirit, and character. No one would ever ask him for anything but he gave it gladly. His generosity and munificence were boundless, so much so that he consumed all his wealth in helping others.

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sincere supplication for help or relief is accepted by Allah, promising divine intervention for the wronged party.

[1] This is a powerful saying that encourages deep focus, sincerity, and presence in prayer. It is as if a person is saying farewell to the world, remembering death, and being fully connected with Allah, making every moment of worship meaningful and without regret.

[2] It suggests that a believer's life is characterized by persistent good deeds, from past actions to future intentions, culminating in a state of grace at death due to dying in this state—with a good deed just completed and with the intention to do another good deed. It is a sign of a blessed end.

[3] This is a request to Allah to grant him a firm and unwavering guidance that will make him adhere to the truth until he meets Him.

Brothers to Each Other

The Commander of the Believers, `Umar ibn Al-Khattab, sent four hundred dinars to `Ubaidah ibn Al-Jarrah and said to his envoy: "Wait a short time and see what he does [with the money]." The young man took the dinars and told Abu `Ubaidah: "The Commander of the Believers tells you to use these for your needs." Abu `Ubaidah replied: "May Allah have mercy on him."

Then Abu `Ubaidah turned to his servant-girl and said: "Give these seven dinars to so-and-so, and these five dinars to so-and-so." He continued like this until all the money was distributed.

The young man returned to the Commander of the Believers and informed him of what he had seen. `Umar took out the same amount for Mu`adh ibn Jabal and said to him: "Do with them (these dinars) as you did with Abu `Ubaidah."

The young man went to Mu`adh, and as soon as he gave Mu`adh the money, he said: "Come, O servant-girl! Go to the house of so-and-so with this much, and to the house of so-and-so with this much." Mu`adh's wife came out and said: "By Allah, we, too, are poor." There were only two dinars left in the purse, so Mu`adh gave them to her.

The young envoy returned to the Commander of the Believers and told him what he had seen and heard. `Umar was delighted by the accounts that he received about them and said: "They are brothers to each other."

Certainly, dear readers, whenever you come across the biography of any of the noble Companions, you will find similar stories of generosity and selflessness. This is not surprising as the Companions were all raised, educated,

and graduated from the best school known to humanity...the school of the beloved Chosen Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace.

7. Mu`adh Strives in Allah's Cause

Despite his vast knowledge and profound understanding of Islamic jurisprudence, Mu`adh ibn Jabal was a valiant commander on the battlefields. He participated in all the battles alongside the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) until the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) passed away while being pleased with him. He was also a fearless soldier, seeking martyrdom during the caliphates of Abu Bakr and `Umar.

Mu`adh participated in the Battle of Ajnadayn, commanding the right flank and performing admirably. Similarly, in the Battle of Fahl, when he negotiated with the Byzantines as the representative of the Muslims, he was a resolute negotiator, skillfully and decisively defeating their arrogance and pride. Then came the Battle of Yarmouk, in which Mu`adh was one of its commanders. In this conflict, he played a significant role by instilling a spirit of purpose and commitment in his soldiers that ignited their enthusiasm and made them fight like heroes, unafraid of death and yearning for martyrdom. Thus, Allah granted them a clear victory.

The Final Chapter of Mu`adh's Life

Mu`adh as Governor of Syria

After Abu `Ubaidah ibn Al-Jarrah contracted the plague of Amwas, `Umar appointed Mu`adh as governor of Syria. He remained in his post for only a few months before the time came for him to depart.

"Amwas Is Not a Punishment, but a Mercy of Your Lord"

The plague began to claim lives, and the people cried out to Mu`adh: "Supplicate to Allah to remove this punishment from us." He replied: "It is not a punishment but a mercy of your Lord[1], the supplication of your Prophet (PBBUH) [for the Muslims to die as martyrs], and the way of death of the righteous before you. O Allah, grant the family of Mu`adh the fullest share of this mercy."

"You Will Find Me, Allah Willing, One of the Patient Ones"

Allah answered Mu`adh's supplication. His two daughters died, and he buried them in one grave. Before evening fell, his son `Abdul-Rahman, the dearest of people to him, from whom the name he was known by was derived, also contracted the plague.

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[1] Mu`adh considered the plague a mercy from Allah and a form of martyrdom. His statement reflects an Islamic perspective that hardships or trials are often tests from Allah to draw believers closer to Allah, encourage repentance, and build stronger faith, rather than just a punishment, as Allah's Mercy is vast and encompasses all things.

When Mu`adh found his son distressed, he said to him: "O `Abdul-Rahman, how are you?" `Abdul-Rahman replied: "O my father, ﴿The truth is from your Lord, so do not be among the doubters﴾ (translated meaning of Al `Imran 3:60)." Mu`adh said: "As for me, my son, ﴿You will find me, Allah willing, one of the patient ones﴾ (translated meaning of Al-Saffat 37:102)." `Abdul-Rahman died that night and was buried the next day.

"Welcome O Death, a Visitor Who Has Come After a Long Absence"

The plague left little time for Mu`adh, and his destined moment arrived; he was summoned to meet his Lord. When he was in the throes of death, he faced the *Qiblah*, gazing at the sky, and said, supplicating to his Lord:

> "O Allah, I used to fear You, but today I lay my hope in You. O Allah, You know that I did not love this world and hope to live long in it to enjoy flowing rivers or to plant trees, but rather to fast on hot days, steadfastly worship for hours, and join scholars in circles of Your remembrance."
>
> "Welcome, O death! Welcome, O visitor who has come after a long absence, the beloved one who has arrived with longing."[1]

Mu`adh's pure soul departed to its Creator, at the age of thirty-three. He left this world, leaving behind his knowledge and noble biography to live on and inspire people.

[1] As he felt death approaching, Mu`adh turned toward the Ka`bah and welcomed the experience, rather than fearing it, viewing it not as an end but as a long awaited meeting. His statement embodies how Islamic faith views death for a believer—as a bridge to the ultimate goal of returning to Allah.

May Allah's Mercy and Blessings be upon you, O you to whom the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) said: "I love you."

May Allah be pleased with you and please you, O Mu`adh ibn Jabal.

32. `Abdullah ibn Amr ibn Al-`As

May Allah Be Pleased with Him

32. `Abdullah ibn `Amr ibn Al-`As

Let us take a moment to breathe, shift our perspective, and feel elevated as we welcome this noble Companion, this devout worshiper, this repentant and diligent servant, who dedicated all his time to worshiping and obeying Allah. Neither night nor day could contain his immense devotion and worship. He was the one who extended a greeting of peace to Jibril (Angel Gabriel, PBUH), and Jibril returned his greeting of peace. Our hero is `Abdullah ibn Amr ibn Al-`As.

`Abdullah ibn `Amr Embraces Islam

`Abdullah ibn `Amr embraced Islam before his father, `Amr ibn Al-`As, and concealed his conversion from him. Just as the early Muslims were subjected to persecution and torture, `Abdullah ibn `Amr also endured his share of torture at the hands of the disbelievers of Quraysh and their allies.

The Remarkable Deeds and Merits of `Abdullah Ibn `Amr

From the moment `Abdullah ibn `Amr placed his right hand in the right hand of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH), pledging allegiance to him and declaring his faith, Allah's light shone in his heart. It transformed darkness into clarity and led him to a new life filled with obedience to Allah.

Here are some of his outstanding deeds and virtues:

1. `Abdullah ibn `Amr Memorizes the Entire Qur'an and Lives by Its Teachings

First, `Abdullah ibn `Amr devoted himself to the Qur'an. Whenever an ayah was revealed, he memorized it, understood it, and acted upon it. He would permit for himself whatever the Qur'an states to be permissible and prohibit for himself whatever it states to be prohibited.

He would constantly recite the Qur'an and ponder its deep meanings, bringing the divine words from his mind into his heart until his eyes would fill with tears at the awe for Allah they inspired in him.

2. `Abdullah ibn `Amr Fights in Allah's Cause

`Abdullah ibn `Amr participated in all the battles alongside the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) and the Caliphs after him. He was a valiant fighter in Allah's Cause. He did not fear death and fervently longed for martyrdom out of his intense love for Allah.

3. `Abdullah ibn `Amr Lives as a Devout, Ascetic and Repentant Worshiper

When any battle ended, `Abdullah ibn `Amr once again shifted all his focus to worship and drawing closer to Allah Almighty, dedicating his thoughts, emotions and actions entirely toward Allah. He would either be at the mosque or at his home, fasting and praying. He abstained from all speech unrelated to the remembrance of Allah. He was either reciting the Qur'an or glorifying and praising Allah. He became so engrossed in worship that he found no time to enjoy any of the worldly pleasures that Allah had permitted him.

If he was not occupied with a military expedition [or other communal responsibilities], his days were spent from dawn till dawn in continuous worship: fasting, praying, and reciting the Qur'an.

The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) Exhorts `Abdullah to Practice Moderation in Worship

His father, `Amr ibn Al-`As, learned of his son's excessive devotion to worship and his neglect of his wife. He complained to the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) about his son's overexertion in worship. The teacher of humanity (PBBUH), who came to call people to the worship of Allah, summoned `Abdullah to teach him moderation in worship and to warn him against excess.

The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) said to him: **"I have been informed that you fast every day and recite (the entire Qur'an) every night."**

`Abdullah ibn `Amr replied: "Yes, O Prophet of Allah, and I desire thereby nothing but good."

The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) said: **"It is enough for you that you observe fast for three days in every month."**

`Abdullah ibn `Amr replied: "O Prophet of Allah, I am capable of more than this."

The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) said: **"Your wife has a right over you. Your visitor has a right over you. Your body has a right over you. Therefore observe the fast of Dawud (David), the Prophet of Allah (PBBUH), for he was the best worshiper of Allah."**

`Abdullah ibn `Amr asked: "O Prophet of Allah, what is the fast of Dawud?"

The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) said: "**He used to fast every other day."**

He (PBBUH) also said: **"Complete a full recitation of the Qur'an once a month."**

`Abdullah ibn `Amr replied: "O Prophet of Allah, I am capable of more than this."

The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) said: **"Recite it in twenty days."**

`Abdullah ibn `Amr replied: "O Prophet of Allah, I am capable of more than this."

The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) said: **"Recite it in ten days."**

`Abdullah ibn `Amr replied: "O Prophet of Allah, I am capable of more than this."

The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) said: **"Recite it in seven days, and do not do (read) more than this, for your wife has a right over you, your visitor has a right over you, and your body has a right over you."**[1]

The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) gave a comprehensive piece of advice in this regard that applies to `Abdullah ibn `Amr and to anyone who goes to extremes in their manner of worship, saying: **"I fast and break my fast, I pray and I sleep, and I marry women. Whoever turns away from my Sunnah (prophetic way) is not of me."**[2]

`Abdullah ibn `Amr Losses Active, Youthful Capability for Worship

`Abdullah ibn `Amr grew old and his bones weakened, and he could no longer perform this intensive worship. He would always remember the advice of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) and say: "I wish I had accepted the concession (relief or allowance) that the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) granted me [rather than choosing a harder path]."[3]

4. `Amr Is Very Keen to Know What Deeds Lead to Paradise

`Amr was very keen on learning about every deed that would earn him a place in Paradise. Because of his extreme keenness, he would follow and observe those Muslims about whom he had heard the Prophet (PBBUH) say they were surely among the people of Paradise.

[1] Reported by Muslim, hadith no. 1159.
[2] Reported by Muslim, hadith no. 1401.
[3] Reported by Al-Bukhari, hadith no. 1975.

"A Man from the People of Paradise Will Appear Before You Now!"

Anas ibn Malik narrated: "We were sitting with the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) when he (PBBUH) said: **'A man from the people (inhabitants) of Paradise will appear before you now.'** Then a man from the Ansar appeared, with his beard dripping with water from ablution and his sandals held in his left hand. The next day, the Prophet (PBBUH) said something similar, and again that man appeared in the same way as the first time."

Anas ibn Malik continued: "On the third day, the Prophet (PBBUH) repeated his statement, and the same man appeared again in the same condition. After the Prophet (PBBUH) got up, `Abdullah ibn `Amr ibn Al-`As followed him (the Ansari man) and told him: 'I had a dispute with my father and swore not to enter his place for three days. Could you accommodate me until the oath period is over?' The man replied: 'Yes.'"

Anas narrated that `Abdullah stayed with that man for the three nights, during which he did not see him get up for (optional) night prayer at all; whenever he was disturbed from sleep and turned in his bed, he would only remember Allah and say '*Allahu Akbar*' until the time for the *Fajr* (Dawn) Prayer came, when he would get up to pray.

`Abdullah added: "However, I never heard him say anything but good."

"I Do Not Harbor Any Ill Will or Envy Toward Anyone"

`Abdullah ibn `Amr explained: "When the three nights had passed and I almost started to look down upon his deeds, I said: 'O slave of Allah, there was no anger or estrangement between my father and me, but I heard the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) say on three occasions that a man from the

people of Paradise would appear, and you appeared. So I wanted to stay with you to see what deeds you perform in order to follow your example, but I did not see you doing much (acts of worship). What is it that made you reach the level that the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) referred to?' The man replied: 'It is nothing but what you saw, except that I do not harbor any ill will toward any of the Muslims, nor do I envy anyone for the good that Allah has given them.' `Abdullah said: 'This is what has brought you to this level (of excellence), and it is what we are not able to do.'"[1]

5. Jibril (Angel Gabriel) Returns a Greeting Extended by `Abdullah ibn `Amr

`Abdullah ibn `Amr narrated: "**One** day I was with the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) in his house when he (PBBUH) said: **'Do you know who is with us in the house?'** I said: 'Who, O Messenger of Allah?' He (PBBUH) said: **'Jibril (PBUH).'** I said: 'May Allah's Peace and Mercy be upon you, O Jibril." The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) said: **'He has returned your greeting.'"**[2]

6. `Abdullah ibn `Amr Writes Down Everything He Hears from the Prophet (PBBUH)

With the encouragement of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH), `Abdullah ibn `Amr became among the Companions who narrated the most hadiths. `Abdullah ibn `Amr narrated: "I said, 'O Messenger of Allah, may I write down everything which I hear from you?' He (PBBUH) replied, **'Yes.'** I asked, 'In times

[1] Reported by Ahmad, hadith no. 12697.
[2] Reported in *Majma' Al-Zawa'id* by Al-Haythami, hadith no. 9/357.

of anger and contentment [i.e., when emotions are high or low]?' He (PBBUH) replied, **'Yes; for I only speak the truth.'**"[1]

And Abu Hurairah said: "No one among the Companions of the Prophet (PBBUH) narrated more hadiths than I, except for `Abdullah ibn `Amr. This is because he would write them down while I did not write [them]."[2]

7. `Abdullah ibn `Amr Displays High Levels of Generosity, Humility, and Asceticism

The following, dear readers, is a scene from the life of `Abdullah ibn `Amr that illustrates a bouquet of virtuous qualities in this devout and ascetic worshiper.

Salman ibn Rabi`ah narrated that he was on a Hajj journey with a group of Qur'an reciters from Basra when he said: "By Allah, we will not return until we meet one of the Companions of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) to tell us some hadiths."

We continued asking until we learned that `Abdullah ibn `Amr was staying in the lower part of Makkah. When we arrived at his house, we found three hundred camels there. We asked: "Whose are all these?"

They replied: "They belong to `Abdullah ibn `Amr."

We asked: "Do all these (camels) belong to him?" We had heard that he was one of the humblest and most ascetic people.

[1] Reported in *Takhrij Siyar A`lam Al-Nubala'* by Shu`ayb Al-Arna'ut.
[2] Reported by Al-Bukhari, hadith no. 113.

They replied: "One hundred camels are for his brothers for them to ride on, and the other two hundred are for those who come to him from other cities and for his guests."

We were left amazed by this, but they said: "Do not be amazed at this. `Abdullah is a wealthy man, and he believes it is his duty to store provisions for those who stay with him as guests."

We said: "Show us where he is."

They replied: "He is at the Sacred Mosque."

We proceeded until we found him sitting behind the Ka`bah, wearing two cloaks and a turban, without a shirt. His sandals were hanging on his left hand.

Capturing the Gist of This Previous Scene

We are before a man whom Allah (Exalted be He) blessed with wealth, which `Abdullah ibn `Amr dedicated to serving others. He remained steadfast and devoted to Allah, maintaining a life of renunciation of worldly matters and total surrender to Allah. He thus combined in his character the loftiest virtues: generosity, asceticism, and humility. Such was the state of most of the noble Companions.

8. A Glimpse at Some of `Abdullah's Wise Sayings

Now, my dear readers, before leaving this noble Companion, let us quote some of his profound sayings.

– `Abdullah ibn `Amr said: "To be the tenth of ten poor people on the Day of Resurrection is more beloved to me than to be the tenth of ten

rich people. For those who have much [in this world] will be those who have little [reward] on the Day of Resurrection."[1]

- He also said: "If you truly knew the right of the All-Knowing Lord upon you, you would prostrate until your backs broke, and you would cry out until your voices gave out. Therefore weep, and if you cannot find tears, feign weeping."

- He also said: "To shed a single tear out of fear of Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He) is more beloved to me than giving a thousand dinars in charity."

[1] The phrase: "Those who have much will be those who have little on the Day of Resurrection," is a part of a noble hadith meaning that the richest people in this world will be the least rewarded on the Day of Resurrection. This is because they are often preoccupied with accumulating wealth instead of obeying Allah and spending in His Cause, except for the few who spend their money on good causes secretly and openly, and they are very few.

The Final Chapter of `Abdullah's Life

"I Did Not Want to Have a Hand in Siffin! I Did Not Want to Have a Hand in Fighting Muslims!"

As previously mentioned, `Amr ibn Al-`As complained to the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) when he saw his son so devoted to worship that it negatively impacted his other duties. The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) instructed him to be moderate in his worship and specified for him its limits. `Amr was present at the time. The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) took Abdullah's hand and placed it in his father's hand, saying to him: **"Obey your father as long as you live."**

The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) passed away, and significant events occurred within the Muslim community until the great civil strife broke out, culminating in the Battle of Siffin between `Ali ibn Abu Talib and Mu`awiyah ibn Abu Sufyan. `Amr ibn Al-`As took Mu`awiyah's side, and knowing that the Companions trusted the opinion of his son `Abdullah, he urged him to go out with him to battle. `Abdullah went reluctantly, not wanting to fight but wanting to obey the Prophet's command when he (PBBUH) said to him: **"Obey your father as long as you live."** `Abdullah witnessed the fighting, but he hit nobody with his sword nor shot a single arrow.

The battle ended and `Abdullah ibn `Amr returned, but the Battle of Siffin remained a dark chapter in his life and a constant source of anxiety for him. Whenever that day was mentioned, even though he took no active role in combat, he would weep, saying: "I did not want to have a hand in Siffin! I did

not want to have a hand in fighting Muslims! I wish I had died twenty years before it. By Allah, I hit nobody with my sword nor shot a single arrow."

`Abdullah ibn `Amr Fulfilling a Promise on His Deathbed

After a long life filled with obedience and asceticism, Ibn `Amr lay on his deathbed, setting an example of keeping promises even while facing death. Harun ibn Ri'ab narrated: "When death approached `Abdullah ibn `Amr, he said: 'A man from Quraysh asked for my daughter's hand in marriage, and I had made a promise to him. By Allah, I will not meet Allah with even a third of hypocrisy[1]. Bear witness that I have given her to him in marriage.'"

In the year 65 A.H., aged seventy-two years old, `Abdullah ibn `Amr answered the call of his Lord, and his pure soul ascended to its Creator.

May Allah's Mercy and Blessings be upon you, O scribe of the Sunnah.

O you to whom Jibril returned the greeting of peace.

May Allah be pleased with you and please you, O `Abdullah ibn `Amr ibn Al-`As.

[1] 'A third of hypocrisy' in the context of failing to fulfill a promise refers to the well-known hadith that outlines the signs of a hypocrite, in which the Prophet (PBBUH) said: **"The signs of a hypocrite are three: Whenever he speaks, he tells a lie; whenever he promises, he breaks it; and whenever he is entrusted, he betrays his trust."** Breaking a promise is considered one of these three distinct signs, interpreted as constituting a "third" of the characteristics of a hypocrite.

33. Ka`b ibn Malik

May Allah Be Pleased with Him

33. Ka`b ibn Malik

And here we are, dear readers, delving deeper into the garden of the honorable Companions to appreciate the beauty of another fragrant flower, combining stunning visual appearance with a charming, powerful aura.

He was a Companion who fought alongside the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) with the power of his sword and the eloquence of his tongue, using both force and persuasion to achieve victory and uphold righteousness. He was sincere, genuine, and honest with Allah and His Messenger (PBBUH), so a glorious ayah was revealed concerning him, to be recited until the Day of Resurrection. He is an exemplary model of truthfulness and integrity in both word and intention. He is the poet of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH), Ka`b ibn Malik.

Ka`b Embraces Islam

Ka`b ibn Malik embraced Islam early and was among those who pledged allegiance at Al-`Aqabah. Right from the moment he placed his right hand in the hand of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH), his heart overflowed with love for Allah and His Messenger (PBBUH). After the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) emigrated to Madinah, Ka`b became the Prophet's constant companion, almost inseparable from him. The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) established a bond of brotherhood between him and Talhah ibn `Ubaidullah. According to another narration, he (PBBUH) established a bond of brotherhood between him and Zubayr ibn Al-`Awwam.

Ka`b ibn Malik Fights in Allah's Cause Both with His Sword and His Word

Ka`b ibn Malik had two weapons with which he fought: his poetry (intellectual ability) and his sword (physical strength).

Ka`b Fights with His Poetry

The Tongue Is a Weapon as Potent as an Arrow

The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) had three poets: Hassan ibn Thabit, `Abdullah ibn Rawahah, and Ka`b ibn Malik. Their poetry played a significant role in spreading the message of Islam, encouraging the believers, and instilling fear in the hearts of the *Mushrikin* (polytheists). For example, the tribe of Daws embraced Islam after hearing some verses by Ka`b ibn Malik.

`Abdul-Rahman ibn Ka`b narrated on the authority of his father that he said: "O Messenger of Allah! Allah has revealed concerning poets what He has revealed." The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) said: **"The true fighter is the fighter with his sword and his tongue[1]. By Him in Whose Hand is my soul, it is as if you are shooting arrows at them with it (i.e., the poetry you are reciting)."[2]**

1 The tongue is a weapon as potent as a sword or an arrow, capable of wounding or defending, and a true striver in Allah's Cause knows how to use both.

2 Reported by Ahmad, hadith no. 15796.

Ka`b Fights with His Sword

On the Day of Badr

Ka`b did not participate in the Battle of Badr, and the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) did not rebuke him for his absence. Ka`b did not participate because he thought, like many other Companions thought, that the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) had set out to just intercept a caravan belonging to Quraysh[1]. However, events led up to the Battle of Badr, as Allah brought the Messenger (PBBUH) face to face with his enemies unexpectedly.

On the Day of Uhud

On the Day of Uhud, Ka`b fought valiantly. As the battle progressed, the Muslim army's rear flank became vulnerable after the archers left their strategic positions on the hill and the tide turned against the Muslims. The *Mushrikin* spread the rumor that the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) had been killed. When the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) returned safely to his army, Ka`b ibn Malik was the first to recognize him, and he called out in a loud voice: "O Muslims, rejoice! This is the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH), alive and not killed!"

Ka`b's cry had a profound effect that changed the outcome, for as soon as his strong cry reached the ears of the Muslims, they rushed to the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) and gathered around him. Ka`b fought fiercely that day, sustaining seventeen wounds.

After that, Ka`b participated in all the battles alongside the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH), never missing a single one…except for Tabuk.

[1] This caravan contained the property and valuables of which the Muslims had been dispossessed in Makkah.

The Expedition of Tabuk

Important news had reached the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) that the Byzantines were preparing for a decisive attack to eliminate Islam and the Muslims. The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) resolved to march out against them before they reached Madinah. Thus began the Expedition of Tabuk, which was better known as the 'Expedition of Hardship' due to the harsh conditions surrounding it.

The enemy was the Byzantine army, a mighty well-equipped force in the region, and it was a summertime of intense heat and drought. Therefore, preparing an army to fight the Byzantines required considerable effort and resources.[1]

Once the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) resolved to march against the Byzantines and fight them, he (PBBUH) informed the people of his intention in order for them to prepare themselves for the confrontation. However, people's willingness to participate varied, revealing the true intentions of the people and who of them were truly seeking Allah's pleasure. They fell into three main groups:

- There were wealthy individuals who competed to contribute their wealth to equip and prepare the army.

- There were the poor who generously wanted to give up not just their little possessions but themselves as well; but due to lack of resources (i.e., riding animals and weapons), they were sent back and could not participate. Their eyes overflowed with tears of sorrow.

[1] For more on the events of Tabuk, please refer to part one: '*A Biography of the Best Man in Creation*' by the author

- On the other side, there were the skeptics and hypocrites who offered every kind of excuse to stay behind and tried to discourage the others.

The Three Muslims Who Stayed Behind Without a Valid Excuse

Some honest Muslims whose faith was beyond reproach were among those who stayed behind during the Expedition of Tabuk, namely Ka`b ibn Malik, Hilal ibn Umayyah, and Murarah ibn Al-Rabi`. They did not show zeal and energy; they had been lazy and failed to set out with the army from the beginning, intending to join them later. They kept postponing their departure, day after day, to the extent that they still had not set out when the Muslim army reached its destination.

The Clear Victory

The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) marched with his army until he (PBBUH) reached Tabuk. As soon as the Byzantines learned of the arrival of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) with his army, they fled in terror. The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) stayed there for several days, then decided to return to Madinah with his army, victorious and triumphant, having suffered no harm. Allah Almighty spared the believers the hardship of fighting. Indeed, enough is Allah for the believers in their conflicts.

The Men Who Stayed Behind During the Expedition of Tabuk Offer Their Excuses

The first thing the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) did upon arriving in Madinah was to visit the mosque and pray two *Ra`kah*s (units of prayer) there. He (PBBUH) then sat to receive the people. Those who had stayed behind during the expedition started to show up. They numbered about eighty men. They offered all kinds of excuses for not participating and confirmed them with oaths. The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) accepted their superficial, outward excuses and entrusted their inner intentions to Allah (Exalted be He).

Ka`b Honestly Admits His Mistake to the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH)

Ka`b ibn Malik came forward, and when he greeted the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) and sat before him, the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) asked him: **"What kept you back? Did you not buy your mount?"** Ka`b replied: "By Allah, if I were to sit with anyone else in this world, I would have found an excuse to escape his displeasure. But by Allah, I know that if I were to tell you a lie today to make you pleased with me, Allah would soon make you angry with me. And if I tell you the truth, it will make you angry with me, but I will still have the hope that Allah may forgive me. By Allah, I had no excuse. By Allah, I have never been stronger or more at ease than when I stayed behind and did not join you."

The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) said: **"This man has spoken the truth. Get up until Allah decides concerning you."**[1]

[1] Reported by Al-Nasa'i, hadith no. 731.

Ka`b stood up, followed by some men from Banu Salamah, admonishing him and advising him to return to the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) and offer the same excuse as the others. But Ka`b disregarded their words, especially after learning that two other men had said the same thing and received a similar response. These two men were Murarah ibn Al-Rabi` and Hilal ibn Umayyah, both righteous men who had fought at Badr and served as role models.

The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) Delivers a Verdict Regarding the Three Who Stayed Behind

With the wisdom of a teacher and the compassion of a father who might sometimes be strict with his children to teach and guide them, the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) forbade the Muslims from speaking to these three men. The people complied and avoided them, and the three men detached themselves and stayed away in their homes.

Ka`b ibn Malik was the bravest of them. He would go out to pray with the Muslims. If he encountered the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH), the Messenger (PBBUH) would turn away from him.

Ka`b would then walk through the markets, and no one would speak to him.

Ka`b Endures the Social Boycott and Intense Isolation

Ka`b ibn Malik patiently endured the ordeal of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) and the Muslims avoiding him. When this distressing situation became prolonged and intolerable, he went to the house of Abu Qatadah, who was his paternal cousin and the dearest of people to him.

Ka`b greeted Abu Qatadah, but he did not return his greeting. Therefore Ka`b said: "O Abu Qatadah! I adjure you by Allah, do you know that I love Allah and His Messenger?" He remained silent. Ka`b repeated the adjuration, but Abu Qatadah again remained silent. Ka`b repeated it a third time. Abu Qatadah finally said: "Allah and His Messenger know best." At that, Ka`b's eyes overflowed with tears, and he went away sorrowful.

A Letter from the King of Ghassanids

When Ka`b's suffering and isolation intensified, he was subjected to another trial. While walking in the market of Madinah, a man from Syria approached the people, saying: "Who can direct me to Ka`b ibn Malik?"

People began pointing him out until the man came to him and handed him a letter from the King of Ghassanids. The letter read: "To proceed, I received news that your companion has forsaken you. Allah does not allow you to live where you feel inferior and your rights are lost. Join us, and we will comfort you." Ka`b realized this was also a trial, so he took the letter and burned it.

"Isolate Yourselves from Your Wives"

Forty days of boycott passed, and Ka`b and his two companions patiently endured the hardship. Then an envoy of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) came to Ka`b and said: "The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) commands you to separate yourself from your wife." Ka`b asked: "Should I divorce her or what?" He replied: "No, just separate yourself from her and do not approach her." The Messenger (PBBUH) sent the same message to his two companions. Ka`b said to his wife: "Go to your family and stay with them until Allah decides this matter."

Hilal ibn Umayyah was poor and old; his wife went to the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) and requested that her husband be excluded from that command and that she be allowed to serve him because he was a poor, old man with no servant. The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) allowed her to do so but without Hilal approaching her.

Some members of Ka`b's family said to him: "Why do you not ask the Messenger of Allah for permission regarding your wife, just as he permitted the wife of Hilal ibn Umayyah to serve him?" Ka`b replied: "By Allah, I will not do that. I do not know what the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) would say to me if I asked his permission regarding her while I am a young man?"

"Rejoice in the Best Day You Have Experienced Since Your Mother Gave Birth to You!"

This painful situation continued until the earth, vast as it was, felt straitened for the three. Only on the fiftieth night, at *Fajr* (Dawn) Prayer, did Allah's Mercy and Pardon for them descend in His Saying: ﴿And (He also forgave) the three who were left behind, when the earth, vast as it is, was straitened for them, and their own souls were straitened for them till they were certain that there is no refuge from Allah except in Him. Then He turned to them in forgiveness so they might repent. Indeed, Allah is the Acceptor of Repentance, the Merciful﴾ (translated meaning of Al-Tawbah 9:118).

While Ka`b was on the roof of his house, he heard a caller shouting very loudly: "O Ka`b ibn Malik, rejoice!" Ka`b fell in prostration in gratitude to Allah, knowing that relief had come from Him. When the bringer of the good news reached Ka`b, he instantly took off his two garments and gave them to him as a gift for the good news he conveyed to him, although he possessed no other clothes than them.

Ka`b borrowed two garments, put them on, and hurried to see the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH).

The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) was sitting in the mosque surrounded by the people. Talhah ibn Ubaidullah rushed to Ka`b as soon as he entered the mosque. He shook his hand and warmly congratulated him, and the people came to congratulate him on Allah's acceptance of his repentance.

With his face beaming with joy, the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) returned Ka`b's greeting and said to him: **"Rejoice in the best day you have [experienced] since your mother gave birth to you."**

"Allah Saved Me Because of My Adherence to Truthfulness"

Ka`b said to the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH): "Is this (forgiveness) from you, O Messenger of Allah, or from Allah?" He (PBBUH) replied: **"No, it is from Allah."**

Ka`b said: "O Messenger of Allah, part of my repentance is to give away my wealth as charity for Allah and His Messenger."

The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) said: **"Keep some of your wealth; it is better for you."**

Ka`b said: "O Messenger of Allah, Allah has saved me through truthfulness." The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) smiled. Whenever he (PBBUH) was pleased, his face would light up as if it were a piece of the moon.

Ka`b ibn Malik added: "After embracing Islam, Allah did not grant me a greater blessing than I and my two companions telling the truth to the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH). We did not lie and perish as others did. Indeed, I

hope that Allah will not test anyone due to telling the truth as He tested me. By Allah, I have not deliberately lied ever since, and I hope that Allah will preserve me [from lying] for the rest of my life."

The Final Chapter of Ka`b's Life

Ka`b ibn Malik lived his entire life as a sincere and devoted worshiper of Allah (Glorified and Exalted be He). As he lay on his deathbed, his pure soul departed to its Creator, to meet the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) and his Companions in the highest Paradise.

May Allah's Mercy and Blessings be upon you, O poet of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH).

You who were truthful to Allah and His Messenger (PBBUH), and you whose repentance Allah accepted and whom Allah graced with forgiveness.

May Allah be pleased with you and please you, O Ka`b ibn Malik.

34. `Abdullah ibn `Abbas

May Allah Be Pleased with Him

34. `Abdullah ibn `Abbas

And here, dear readers, is this noble Companion, a blossoming flower whose fragrance and influence fill the world with knowledge as well as profound understanding and wisdom, leaving a good impact. He was a man who possessed all merits.

- The merit of companionship with the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH).
- The merit of kinship with the best of humankind (PBBUH), for he was the paternal cousin of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH).
- The merit of vast and deep knowledge, for he was the scholar of the *Ummah* and its ocean of knowledge.

He is `Abdullah ibn `Abbas, the godly man of the *Ummah*, the most knowledgeable of Allah's Book and its most insightful interpreter.

Glad Tidings of an Exceptionally Bright, Intelligent Son

A siege was imposed by Quraysh on the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) and his sub-clan, Banu `Abdul-Muttalib, making them take refuge in the mountain pass of Abu Talib. During such a period of great hardship and endurance, the wife of Al-`Abbas—Umm Al-Fadl—was expecting a child.

One day, when she passed by the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) while he (PBBUH) was in the *Hijr* (the semi-circular area adjacent to the Ka`bah), he (PBBUH) said to her: **"O Umm Al-Fadl, you are pregnant with a boy. When you give birth, bring him to me."** When she gave birth, she brought him to the

Messenger of Allah (PBBUH), who named him `Abdullah and moistened his palate with his own saliva. He (PBBUH) said: **"Take him. You will find him intelligent."**[1]

This took place three years before the *Hijrah* (the Prophet's emigration to Madinah).

Thus Ibn `Abbas was raised in the care of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH). The first thing that entered his body was the saliva of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH), which brought him abundant good.

Ibn `Abbas Emigrates to Madinah

Ibn `Abbas left Makkah for Madinah along with his parents in the year of the Liberation of Makkah. He and his mother had embraced Islam before that event. Ibn `Abbas said about this experience: "My mother and I were among the weak and oppressed Muslims. I from among the children, and my mother from among the women."[2]

[1] Reported in *Al-Silsilah Al-Sahihah* by Al-Albani.
[2] Reported by Al-Bukhari, hadith no. 1357.

The Remarkable Deeds of `Abdullah Ibn `Abbas

1. Being in the Company of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH)

The Hashimite youth, having reached the age of discernment, emigrated to Madinah and became inseparable from the Messenger of Allah (PBUH). He remained with him for approximately thirty months, spending all this time in the company of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH). He absorbed his knowledge and grew stronger in piety and wisdom, and at the same time he achieved closeness to the Prophet (PBBUH) and earned his pleasure and supplications.

Throughout all this, Ibn `Abbas showed himself to have a receptive heart and a brilliant mind that enabled him to grasp complex matters and commit the Prophet's words to memory with great accuracy. This was despite his young age, as the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) passed away when he was only thirteen years old.

The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) Supplicates for Ibn `Abbas

Despite his early age, Ibn `Abbas was an eminent scholar, deeply versed in knowledge due to the Prophet's supplications for him, as Ibn `Abbas narrated about himself.

- Ibn `Abbas said: "The Prophet (PBBUH) embraced me and said, **'O Allah, teach him wisdom.'**"[1]

[1] Reported by Al-Bukhari, hadith no. 3756.

- Ibn `Abbas also said: "The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) was in the house of [his wife] Maymunah. I had put some water for him for his ablution at night. Maymunah said to him: '`Abdullah ibn `Abbas has placed this for you.' He (PBBUH) said: **'O Allah, grant him deep understanding of the religion and teach him interpretation** [**of the revelation**][1].'"[2]

- Ibn `Abbas also said: "I came to the Prophet (PBBUH) at the end of the night and prayed behind him. He took my hand and pulled me until I was beside him. But when the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) resumed his prayer, I moved back. The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) prayed and when he finished his prayer, he said: **'What is the matter? I placed you beside me, and you moved back?'** I replied: 'O Messenger of Allah, it is not appropriate for anyone to pray beside you when you are the Messenger of Allah, to whom Allah has given so much.' He (PBBUH) was pleased and supplicated that Allah would increase me in knowledge and understanding."[3]

Allah Almighty answered the supplication of His Messenger (PBBUH), and He bestowed upon the young Hashimite wisdom that surpassed even the greatest of sages.

"I Shall Teach You Some [Valuable] Words"

The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) loved Ibn `Abbas dearly. One day the Beloved Prophet (PBBUH) wished to give him a comprehensive piece of advice that integrates both religious and worldly success.

[1] It involves understanding the context and reasons for any revelation as well as the deep meanings of the glorious ayahs.
[2] Reported in *Takhrij Al-Musnad li Shu`ayb* by Shu`ayb Al-Arna'ut, hadith no. 3102.
[3] Reported in *Majma` Al-Zawa'id* by Al-Haythami.

Ibn `Abbas narrated: "I was riding [sitting] behind the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) one day when he (PBBUH) said: **'O young man, I shall teach you some words. Guard Allah's Commandments, and He will guard you. Guard Allah's Commandments, you will find Him before you. If you ask, ask Allah; if you seek help, seek help from Allah. Know that if all people were to gather together to benefit you in any way, they could not benefit you except with what Allah has already decreed for you. And if they were to gather together to harm you in any way, they could not harm you except with what Allah has already decreed against you. The pens [inscribing fate] have been lifted, and the pages have dried.[1]'"**[2]

2. Ibn `Abbas Shows Instantiable Eagerness for Knowledge and Learning

Ibn Abbas's natural readiness for knowledge, stemming from his sharp intellectual powers and high discerning intelligence, urged him to seek knowledge with consistent and rapid steps. He acquired in a few years what others could not manage in a lifetime. Despite the vast knowledge Ibn `Abbas acquired from the Prophet (PBBUH) during the thirty months he spent with him, after the Prophet's death, he actively sought out other Companions—even waiting at their doors—to learn hadith and knowledge he had missed acquiring directly from the Prophet (PBBUH) himself.

[1] This phrase inspires patience during hardship or loss, encouraging believers to accept that what happened was meant to be and that the decision of all matters is with Allah.
[2] Reported by Al-Tirmidhi, hadith no. 2516.

"I Am the One Who Should Come to You"

Ibn `Abbas said: "When the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) passed away, I said to a man from the Ansar: 'O so-and-so, come, let us ask the Companions of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) [about hadith], for they are many [today].' He said: 'How strange of you, Ibn `Abbas! Do you think people need you when there are so many Companions of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH)?' Therefore, I left and began to ask the Companions of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) [about the hadiths they knew]. Whenever I heard that a certain man knows a hadith, I would go to him while he was resting—that is, sleeping at midday. I would use my cloak as a pillow at his door, and the wind would blow dust on my face. He would come out and see me like this and say: 'O paternal cousin of the Messenger of Allah, what brings you here? Why have you not sent someone to me so I could come to you?' I would say: 'I am the one who should come to you,' and I would ask him about the hadith."

According to Ibn `Abbas, learning requires active effort, pursuit, and dedication. He used to go to various Companions, sometimes waiting at their doors, to learn hadith and knowledge directly from them, which emphasizes his humility, diligence, and respect for the pursuit of knowledge from its original sources.

Precision in Investigating Issues

Ibn `Abbas would investigate a single issue by consulting multiple Companions. His brilliant mind and intense, analytical nature drove him to examine everything he heard. He said of himself: "I would ask thirty of the Companions about a single matter."

A Questioning Tongue and a Reasoning Heart

Thus, Ibn `Abbas amassed an immense amount of knowledge, having memorized more than one thousand six hundred and sixty hadiths. When he was asked one day: "How did you acquire this (vast) knowledge?" He replied: "With a questioning tongue and a reasoning heart."

Through his ever-questioning tongue, his ever-examining mind, and his humility and gentle character, Ibn `Abbas earned his place among the scholars. Despite his young age, he became the 'Scholar of the *Ummah*'.

3. Ibn `Abbas's Transition from Learner to Teacher

Having achieved his aspirations, Ibn `Abbas transformed from a dedicated learner and knowledge seeker into a preeminent teacher who instructed and educated people. As he had once stood at doors seeking knowledge, people now stood at his door to drink from his wellspring of wisdom.

Ibn `Abbas's Home Becomes a University for Muslims

His home became a destination for every knowledge seeker and a haven for every researcher. People would come to Ibn `Abbas in droves from all corners of the Muslim world to listen to him and learn from him. His home thus became a university for Muslims, in every sense of the word. While universities today boast dozens, even hundreds, of professors specializing in various fields of knowledge, Ibn Abbas's university was built upon the shoulders of a single scholar: Ibn `Abbas himself.

Ibn `Abbas: A Source of Pride for All of Quraysh

One of the companions and contemporaries of Ibn `Abbas recounted: "I witnessed a gathering of Ibn `Abbas that would be, were all of Quraysh together to boast of it, a source of immense pride for them. I saw people gathered at his door until the roads were so crowded that no one could move or enter. Therefore I went in and told him about the crowd at his door."

A Sea of Knowledge

The companion continued recounting that Ibn `Abbas replied: "Put some water for me to perform ablution." Ibn `Abbas then performed ablution and sat down. He said to his companion: "Go out to them and say: 'Whoever wants to ask about the Qur'an and its modes of recitation, let him enter.' The companion went out and told them, and they came in until the house was full. They asked Ibn `Abbas about everything, and he answered them and gave them more than they asked.

The companion then said that Ibn `Abbas told him: "Go out and say: 'Whoever wants to ask about what is permissible and forbidden and about jurisprudence, let him enter.'" The companion went out and told them, and they entered and asked Ibn `Abbas, and he answered them as he had done with those before them.

After that Ibn `Abbas said to the companion: "Go out and say: 'Whoever wants to ask about inheritance law and similar issues, let him enter.'" The companion told them, and they entered and obtained what they sought.

Then Ibn `Abbas said to the companion: "Go out and say: 'Whoever wants to ask about Arabic grammar, poetry, and rare Arabic words, let him come in."

Therefore they entered, and Ibn `Abbas left no question posed by them unanswered, just as he had answered all those who came before them.

Perhaps Ibn `Abbas thought it was best to distribute knowledge over several days so that there would not be such a crowd at his door. `Ubaidullah ibn `Utbah said: "Ibn `Abbas would set one day for teaching Islamic jurisprudence, another day for interpretation and the sciences of the Qur'an, another for narrating the battles fought by the Prophet (PBBUH), another for language and poetry, and another for the history and stories of the Arabs."

Thus, his house was truly an educational institution for Muslims.

The Young Scholar among the Elders of Badr

Ibn `Abbas narrated: "`Umar used to make me attend his council alongside the elders of Badr (the senior Companions who had fought in the Battle of Badr). Some of them felt this was unfair. They said: 'Why do you bring this boy to sit with us while we have sons of similar age.' `Umar replied: 'Because of his status (i.e., religious knowledge), which you already know about.'

Ibn `Abbas continued: "One day `Umar summoned me and made me sit in the gathering of those elders; I thought he had only summoned me to show them (my religious knowledge). `Umar then asked them (in my presence): 'What is your interpretation of Allah's Saying: ﴿When Allah's victory has come (to you, O Muhammad, against your enemies) and the liberation (of Makkah)﴾ (translated meaning of Al-Nasr 110:1)?' Some of them said: 'We are ordered to thank Allah and ask for His Forgiveness when He grants us victory and the liberation (of Makkah).' Others remained silent. `Umar then asked me: 'Do you say the same, O Ibn `Abbas?' I replied: 'No.' He asked: 'Then what do you say?' I said: 'It is [referring to] the time of death of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH),

which Allah informed him of. Allah says: ﴿When Allah's victory has come and the liberation﴾ and that is a sign of your imminent death, ﴿Glorify the praises of your Lord and ask for His Forgiveness. Verily, He is the One Who accepts repentance and forgives﴾ (translated meaning of Al-Nasr 110:3)'. `Umar said: 'I know nothing else about it other than what you have said.'"[1]

Such was Ibn `Abbas, possessing the wisdom, patience, and discernment of elders that qualified him to become an advisor to the Rightly Guided Caliphate. The Commander of the Believers was keen to include him with the senior Companions to consult them all about important matters. `Umar used to call him 'the young man of the elders,' as he acted with the wisdom, maturity, and responsibilities of elders.

"O Sinner, Do Not Rejoice!"

Just as Ibn `Abbas devoted himself to teaching and instructing his students of knowledge, he did not neglect the rights of the public. He would hold gatherings for them to preach and remind them.

Addressing those who had sinned, Ibn `Abbas would say:

- "O sinner, do not feel safe from the consequences of your sin. Know that what follows sin is greater than the sin itself."
- "Your lack of shame before those (angels who record good and bad deeds) on your right and left while you commit a sin is no less than the sin itself."

[1] Reported by Al-Bukhari, hadith no. 4970.

- "Your laughter while committing sin, unconcerned about what Allah will do to you, is greater than the sin itself."
- "Your joy at succeeding in a sinful act is greater than the sin itself."
- "Your sorrow over missing the opportunity to commit a sin is greater than the sin itself."
- "Your fear of the wind if it stirs your veil while you are committing a sin, while your heart does not tremble at the fact Allah is watching you, is greater than the sin itself."
- "O you who have sinned, do you know what Ayyub's (Job's) sin was when Allah Almighty afflicted him (with a disease) in his body and (with loss in his) wealth? His only sin was that a needy [oppressed] person sought his help to ward off injustice from him, but Ayyub did not help him."

4. Besides Knowledge Ibn `Abbas Possessed Strength in His Argument

In addition to his strong memory, keen intelligence and profound insight, Ibn `Abbas was gifted with strength in his arguments, which were as clear as the sun. This was evident in his debate with the Kharijites who had deserted Imam `Ali in his conflict with Mu`awiyah ibn Abu Sufyan.

Let us listen to this strong and persuasive debate with the Kharijites in which Ibn `Abbas combined facts with sound and clear reasoning:

After some of `Ali's companions withdrew their support and deserted him, Ibn `Abbas said to Imam `Ali: "O Commander of the Believers, grant me

permission to go to these people and speak to them." He replied: "I fear for you." Ibn `Abbas said: "No [do not fear], Allah willing [nothing bad will happen to me]." When he entered upon them, they said: "Welcome, Ibn `Abbas. What brings you here?" He replied: "I have come to speak with you." Some of them said: "Do not speak to him," while others said: "Speak, we will listen to you."

The Main Reasons Behind the Kharijites Withdrawing Their Support from `Ali

Ibn `Abbas said: "Tell me, what criticism do you have against the paternal cousin of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH), his son-in-law, and the first to believe in him [among the youth]?"

They said: "We criticize him regarding three matters."

Ibn `Abbas asked: "What are they?"

They replied: "First, he allowed human beings to arbitrate in a matter decided by Allah alone, although Allah (Exalted be He) says: ﴿Judgment belongs only to Allah﴾ (translated meaning of Yusuf 12:40)."

"Second, he fought, yet he did not take captives or spoils of war from his opponents. If they were disbelievers, then their property was lawful for him; and if they were believers, then their blood was forbidden to him [i.e., they argued `Ali acted inconsistently]."

"Third, he stripped himself of the title of the 'Commander of the Believers' in compliance with the request of his enemies; if he is not the 'Commander of the Believers,' then he is the 'Commander of the Disbelievers.'"

Ibn `Abbas Refutes Their Accusations with Reasoned Argument and Clear Logic

Ibn `Abbas said: "If I make you hear statements from Allah's Book and relate to you hadiths that you cannot deny, will you give up your stance?"

They replied: "Yes."

Ibn `Abbas said: "First, as for your accusation that he is allowing human beings to arbitrate in a matter decided by Allah alone, Allah (Exalted be He) says: ﴿O you who believe! Do not kill game while you are on pilgrimage, and whoever among you shall kill it intentionally, the compensation (of it) is the like of what he killed, from the cattle, as two just persons among you shall judge﴾ (translated meaning of Al-Ma'idah 5:95). I adjure you by Allah, is it more appropriate and preferable for men to judge in matters of preventing bloodshed and reconciling differences, or to judge over a rabbit worth a quarter of a dirham?"

They replied: "Rather, it is [more appropriate with] preventing the bloodshed of Muslims and reconciling differences among them."

Ibn `Abbas asked: "Has this issue been settled?"

They replied: "Yes, by Allah."

Ibn `Abbas said: "Second, as for your accusation that he fought but did not take captives, did you want him to take your Mother, `Aishah, as a captive and treat her as you would treat captives? If you say yes, then you have disbelieved. And if you say she is not your mother, you have also disbelieved. For Allah Almighty says: ﴿The Prophet is closer to the believers than their own selves, and his wives are their mothers﴾ (translated meaning of Al-Ahzab 33: 6). Therefore

you are wavering between two options that are both misguided, so choose whichever you wish."

Ibn `Abbas asked: "Has this issue been settled?"

They replied: "Yes, by Allah."

Ibn `Abbas said: "Third, as for your accusation that `Ali stripped himself of the title of the 'Commander of the Believers,' the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) asked the *Mushrikin* on the day of Hudaybiyah to write in the treaty he (PBBUH) concluded with them: 'This is what Muhammad, the Messenger of Allah, has agreed to.' They objected, saying: 'If we truly believed you were the Messenger of Allah, we would not have prevented you from entering the House (the Ka`bah) nor would we have fought you. But write: Muhammad, son of `Abdullah.' Consequently, he (PBBUH) complied with their request, saying: **'By Allah, I am indeed the Messenger of Allah, even if you deny me. Write, O `Ali, Muhammad son of `Abdullah.'**"

Ibn `Abbas asked: "Has this issue been settled?"

They replied: "Yes, by Allah."

The Fruit of Ibn `Abbas's Encounter with the Kharijites

The debate between Ibn `Abbas and the Kharijites followed this persuasive and logical manner. During it, Ibn `Abbas displayed profound wisdom and irrefutable arguments that left his Kharijite opponents speechless. As a result of this debate, twenty thousand Kharijites rose up, declaring they had been convinced by these arguments and rejoined the ranks of Imam `Ali. Only four thousand maintained their stance, persisting in their opposition to `Ali out of stubbornness and aversion to the truth.

5. Ibn `Abbas Acts Upon What He Knows

Ibn `Abbas was not one of those who commanded others to do something he himself did not practice or who forbade others from engaging in behaviors that he did not personally abstain from. He possessed not only a vast wealth of knowledge, but along with it an even greater noble wealth of the ethics needed to acquire and disseminate knowledge and of the characteristics of true scholars.

Here are some of Ibn `Abbas's admirable qualities:

His Devout Manner of Worship and Extreme Piety

Ibn `Abbas was a man of worship, praying during the night and fasting during the day. A track of tears was visible on his cheeks, for he wept often.

`Abdullah ibn Mulaykah narrated: "I accompanied Ibn `Abbas from Makkah to Madinah. Whenever we stopped at a place, he would stand for part of the night while the people slept." He was asked: "How was his recitation?" He replied: "When Ibn `Abbas recited: ﴿And the stupor of death will come in truth. This is what you have been avoiding!﴾ (translated meaning of Qaf 50:19), he began repeating it slowly and deliberately, sobbing loudly."

His Humility

Despite his immense knowledge and high standing, Ibn `Abbas was extremely humble and held scholars in high esteem. For example, Zayd ibn Thabit, the chief scribe of the divine revelation and the leading scholar of Madinah in jurisprudence and legal matters, was about to mount his animal when Ibn `Abbas stood before him with humility and respect, holding his

stirrup and taking the reins to help him mount. He then led the riding animal for him. Zayd said to him: "Do not trouble yourself, O paternal cousin of the Messenger of Allah!" Ibn `Abbas replied: "This is how we have been commanded to treat our scholars."

Comprehensive Generosity

Ibn `Abbas was an example of generosity in all its forms—spanning knowledge, wealth, and character. His generosity was not merely action but a lifestyle that prioritized the well-being of others. He shared his wisdom, knowledge, and information freely to empower others, saying of himself: "I come across an ayah in Allah's Book and I long that all people know what I know of it. I hear about a Muslim ruler who rules justly, and I feel happy and I supplicate Allah for him, even though I am not waiting for his decision on any case I have. And I hear that rain has fallen on a land, and I feel happy, even though I own no livestock there."

Ibn `Abbas was also very generous with his wealth, just as he generously shared his knowledge. His contemporaries said of him: "We have never seen a house with more [abundant] food, drink, fruit, or knowledge than the house of Ibn `Abbas."

Finally in this regard, Ibn `Abbas said of himself: "To support a Muslim family for a month, a week, or however long Allah wills, is dearer to me than performing one Hajj journey after another."

6. His Esteemed Status in the Hearts of the Companions and Followers

Ibn `Abbas held a special place in the hearts of the Companions and the Followers (the generation after the Prophet's Companions).

- Sa`d ibn Abu Waqqas said: "I have never seen anyone with a sharper understanding, greater intellect, vaster knowledge, or greater forbearance than Ibn `Abbas." He added: "I saw `Umar summon him to resolve complex problems in the presence of the veteran Companions of Badr from among the Muhajirun and the Ansar. `Ibn Abbas would speak, and `Umar would not contradict him."

- `Abdullah ibn `Utbah said: "I have not seen anyone who was more knowledgeable about hadith than Ibn `Abbas. Nor have I seen anyone more knowledgeable about the rulings issued by Abu Bakr, `Umar and `Uthman than him or more knowledgeable about poetry, Arabic, Qur'anic exegesis, or inheritance law than him"

- He also said: "I have never seen a scholar sit with him without submitting to him [i.e., his deep knowledge and immense integrity humbled other experts] nor a questioner ask him without finding knowledge with him."

- Ibn Mas`ud said: "What an excellent interpreter of the [meanings of] Qur'an Ibn `Abbas is!"

- Mujahid said: "When Ibn `Abbas explained something, I saw a light upon him."

- He also said: "Ibn `Abbas was called a 'Sea' because of the vastness of his knowledge."

- Muslim, from Basra, summed up Ibn `Abbas's manner when he served as the governor of Basra under Imam `Ali ibn Abu Talib, saying: "He always does three things and always abandons three things: He attracts the hearts of people when he speaks. He listens attentively when he is spoken to. And he chooses the easier of two options when faced with disagreement. He always abandons arguing and hypocrisy, befriending mean people, and saying or doing something that requires an apology."

- Masruq ibn Al-Ajda`—one of the senior Followers—said about him: "Whenever I saw Ibn `Abbas, I would say: 'He is the handsomest of people.' Whenever he spoke, I would say: 'He is the most eloquent of people.' Whenever he talked, I would say: 'He is the most knowledgeable of people.'"

The Final Chapter of Ibn `Abbas's Life

After a long life filled with knowledge, wisdom, understanding, and piety, Ibn `Abbas reached the age of seventy-one. In the year 68 A.H., the 'Scholar of the *Ummah*' was summoned to meet his Lord.

The city of Ta'if witnessed a grand scene; the Companions who were still alive and the Followers came out to bid him farewell.

A Miraculous Sign of Honor from Allah Appears at His Burial

While they were laying his body to rest, a bird appeared, unlike any seen before, and entered his coffin. It was not seen to leave. After Ibn `Abbas was buried, they heard the Qur'an being recited, specifically this ayah: ﴿O reassured soul, return to your Lord, well-pleased and pleasing to Him. Enter among My [righteous] servants. And enter My Paradise﴾ (translated meaning of Al-Fajr 89:27-30). They did not know who recited it.

May Allah's Mercy and Blessings be upon you, O 'Scholar of the *Ummah*', O youth of the elders, O you who possessed a questioning tongue and a reasoning heart.

May Allah be pleased with you and please you, O `Abdullah ibn `Abbas.

35. Abu Qatadah Al-Ansari

May Allah Be Pleased with Him

35. Abu Qatadah Al-Ansari

Here we are, dear readers, eager to learn about another noble Companion. This Companion was distinguished by his courage, horsemanship, and intrepidity, to the point that he was nicknamed 'The Horseman of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH)'. He played many significant roles in the history of Islam. Our hero is Abu Qatadah Al-Ansari (may Allah be pleased with him).

Abu Qatadah Embraces Islam

Abu Qatadah was among those who were searching for a way out of the ignorance in which humanity lived. Then came the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH), bringing the light of *Tawhid* (belief in the Oneness of Allah) and faith to all people. As soon as the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) emigrated to Madinah, Abu Qatadah was among the first to believe in him, affirm his truthfulness, and follow him.

From that moment, Abu Qatadah dedicated himself and his life to serving Islam.

Honorable Situations and Heroic Deeds in the Life of Abu Qatadah

Abu Qatadah wrote with his actions some of the most magnificent chapters in the history of Islamic battles, from the moment that Allah Almighty permitted the believers who were being wronged and oppressed to fight back and remove oppression. Indeed, Allah is Capable of granting victory to the believers. Abu Qatadah adhered to that path of *Jihad* until he met his Lord, the Exalted.

Here are some scenes in which our hero displayed marvelous acts of courage:

- Abu Qatadah established himself as an example of heroism, chivalry, and bravery, and earned many honors and titles which were bestowed upon him by the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH).

- He participated in the Battle of Uhud and the subsequent battles. There is some disagreement among scholars regarding his participation in the Battle of Badr, but in all the battles he took part in, he was a valiant soldier who fought with the zeal of one seeking martyrdom.

"Our Finest Horseman Today Is Abu Qatadah"

During the Expedition of Dhu Qarad (also known as Al-Ghabah), some neighboring tribes raided a pasture in a location called Al-Ghabah, northwest of Madinah. A number of camels belonging to the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) were in that pasture, guarded by a man from Ghifar and his wife. The raiders killed the man, captured the woman, and drove off with the camels. When the

Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) learned of this attack, he (PBBUH) sent some horsemen, including Abu Qatadah, after the intruders. Their task was to forestall the raiders by shooting them with arrows before they could escape, thereby allowing the Muslim reinforcements to catch up with them.

The horsemen advanced and attacked the raiders. Abu Qatadah quickly charged at their leader and killed him. Then the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) caught up with them along with five hundred of his Companions. Through swift action, the Muslims were able to recover the camels. The woman managed to escape, while the enemies fled.

The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) marched until he (PBBUH) reached the mountain of Dhu Qarad, where he (PBBUH) made camp for a day and a night, and then departed to Madinah after teaching the raiders a lesson they would never forget.

On that day, the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) said: **"Our best horseman today is Abu Qatadah, and our best foot soldier is Salamah ibn Al-Akwa`."**

"May Allah Bless His Hair and Skin"

For this raid, Abu Qatadah demonstrated a prompt response to duty. He narrated, saying: "I was washing my head. I had only washed one side of it when I heard the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) shouting: **'Hurry to give help! Hurry to give help!'** I thought: 'This must be a war that has broken out!' I got up without washing the other side of my head. I was wearing my cloak, and I took my horse and caught up with Al-Miqdad. I rode with him for a while, and he told me that Mas`adah [a member of the raiding party] had killed Muhriz—the Muslim shepherd. On hearing this, I said to Al-Miqdad: 'Either I die or I kill Muhriz's killer.'"

Abu Qatadah continued: "I caught up with Mas`adah and killed him. Then I placed my cloak on him. When the people passed by, they saw my cloak and recognized it. Therefore they said: 'Abu Qatadah has been killed!' The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) said, **'No, but this is the man that Abu Qatadah killed** [in revenge for the killing of the Muslim shepherd], **with Abu Qatadah's cloak on him.'** When the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) caught up with me, he (PBBUH) said: **'O Allah, bless his hair and skin. May your face be radiant. Did you kill Mas`adah?'** I said: 'Yes, O Messenger of Allah.' He (PBBUH) asked: **'What is on your face?'** I replied, 'An arrow struck me.' He (PBBUH) said: **'Come closer to me,'** and he (PBBUH) spat on it [the wound]. My face was no longer harmed, nor did it fester."

Abu Qatadah lived to the age of seventy, remaining as youthful as a fifteen-year-old because of the Prophet's supplication for him.

One of the Lions of the Prophet (PBBUH)

Abu Qatadah fought valiantly in the Battle of Hunayn. He was among the bravest of the horsemen, to the extent that Abu Bakr Al-Siddiq described him as 'One of the Lions of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH)'.

"May Allah Protect You as You Protected His Prophet"

The following incident is another honor bestowed upon Abu Qatadah by the Prophet (PBBUH).

Abu Qatadah narrated: "We were with the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) on one of his journeys. The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) proceeded on his mount until night fell, and I was beside him. He (PBBUH) began to doze and leaned on his camel. I hurried to him and supported him, making sure he (PBBUH)

did not wake, until he (PBBUH) was upright on his camel. He (PBBUH) continued traveling for the rest of the night, and I was beside him. Whenever he (PBBUH) became drowsy and leaned on his camel, I supported him without waking him up. This continued until it was near dawn, when he (PBBUH) leaned even more than before, so I hurried to him and supported him. He (PBBUH) lifted his head and asked: **'Who is with me?'** I said: 'Abu Qatadah, O Messenger of Allah.' He (PBBUH) said: **'How long have you been riding by my side?'** I replied: 'I have been riding like this since last night, [that is, throughout the night].' He (PBBUH) said: **'May Allah protect you as you protected His Prophet.'"**

Abu Qatadah, One of the Knights of the Islamic Conquests

The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) passed away while being pleased with Qatadah, who remained a valiant knight of the Islamic conquests under the rule of the Rightly Guided Caliphate. `Abdullah ibn `Ubaidullah ibn `Umayr said: "`Umar dispatched Abu Qatadah, who then killed the Persian king. The king had a belt worth fifteen thousand, which `Umar gave Abu Qatadah as a share of the booty."

The Final Chapter of Abu Qatadah's Life

Abu Qatadah continued to enjoy the respect and esteem of the Companions. He reached seventy years of age with his face as radiant as if he were fifteen years old. This was due to the supplication of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH)—as was mentioned earlier: **"O Allah, bless his hair and his skin."**

The valiant knight lay on his deathbed, ready to answer the call of his Lord. His pure soul departed to its Creator during the reign of Imam `Ali ibn Abu Talib. Imam `Ali led the Funeral Prayer over him, and the Companions of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) bid him farewell to his final resting place, to meet the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) and his loved ones.

May Allah's Mercy and Blessings be upon you, O horseman of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH),

O lion of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH).

May Allah be pleased with you and please you, O Abu Qatadah Al-Ansari.

36. `Abdullah Dhul-Bijadayn

May Allah Be Pleased with Him

36. `Abdullah Dhul-Bijadayn

To you, my dear readers, I present this venerable Companion, whose name may not be widely recognized. He is not ranked among the famous Companions, yet he attained a degree of closeness to the Prophet (PBBUH) that many Companions craved.

Had all the kings of the earth known of his degree of proximity, they would have fought him for it. He is a Companion who forsook the world with its fleeting adornments [wealth, power, and luxuries] and turned wholly to Allah, thus attaining the love and good pleasure of Allah and His Messenger. He is `Abdullah Dhul-Bijadayn.

`Abdullah's Upbringing

Let us begin the story from the beginning. It all started in a mountain pass called 'Warqan' located near Madinah. `Abdul-`Uzza ibn `Abd Nahm Al-Muzani was born to poor parents from the Muzaynah tribe that inhabited Warqan Mountain. His father died when he was a young child, leaving him to face both orphanhood and poverty.

Under His Paternal Uncle's Care

The poor orphan boy had a wealthy uncle who lived a life of luxury and comfort. This uncle had no children or descendants of his own to inherit his wealth. He became very fond of his young nephew; he took him and brought him up, treating him as his own son.

The little orphan boy thus grew up in luxury, enjoying abundant food, drink and clothing.

The Muzani Youth Embraces Islam

Breezes of Faith Gently Knock on the Door of the Muzani Youth's Heart

The Muzani youth reached manhood, but still he heard no news about the new religion or about the emergence of Prophet Muhammad (PBBUH). Then came the day he met some emigrants traveling from Makkah to Madinah. They passed by him, hurrying along.

He stopped them to find out why they were rushing. He discovered they were emigrants fleeing the persecution of Quraysh, seeking refuge for their faith. Upon hearing some glorious ayahs of the Qur'an and some hadiths, the light and blessings of faith entered his heart and mind. He became deeply fond of the Prophet (PBBUH), even before seeing him in person, and began to eagerly seek any news of him with intense longing. He often spent his entire day on the roadside leading to Madinah, asking the emigrants traveling there about the new religion, the Prophet (PBBUH), and his teachings.

Secret Conversion to Islam

The Muzani youth was quick to accept Allah's guidance and testify that there is no god but Allah and that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah. This was before his eyes had ever beheld the Prophet (PBBUH) and before his ears had heard him speak. He was the first of his people on the Warqan Mountain to embrace Islam.

The young believer kept his conversion to Islam secret from his people, in general, and from his uncle, in particular. He would retreat to the mountain passes, far from prying eyes, to worship Allah alone. He eagerly awaited the day his uncle's heart would open to Islam so he could declare his own faith.

Days passed, and the time came for Prophet Muhammad (PBBUH) to emigrate to Madinah. The young man's longing for him intensified.

The Muzani youth Declares His Faith in Islam and Faces the Greatest Challenge

The young Muzani believer felt that his patience had run out. He could not wait any longer, and his paternal uncle was far from embracing Islam. He resolved to act, fully aware of the consequences of his decision. He approached his paternal uncle and said: "O my uncle, I have waited so long for you to convert that I have run out of patience. If you wish to embrace Islam and find happiness, that is the best step to take. But if not, grant me permission to declare my Islam publicly."

Upon hearing this, his paternal uncle flew into a rage. He said to him menacingly: "If you become a Muslim, I will take away everything I have given you. You will return to your former state of hunger and destitution." This threat did not affect the believing youth, who said: "Do as you please. By Allah, I will keep following Muhammad, abandoning the worship of idols. Here is what I have; take it." His uncle took everything he had given him. He even stripped him of his loincloth.

Dhul-Bijadayn (the Man with Two Coarse Cloths)

The young believer entered upon his mother in this state—without clothing. As soon as his mother saw him, she cut a coarse cloak that belonged to her into two pieces. He used one piece as a loincloth and the other as his outer garment.

The Muzani youth departed as an emigrant for the sake of his faith, desiring Allah and His Messenger (PBBUH). He left behind his family, his home, and the playgrounds of his youth. He abandoned his uncle's wealth and luxurious living to pursue what is with Allah.

The youth hastened his steps to Madinah, having no provisions with him except his coarse cloth but holding within himself an intense longing to meet the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH); his love and passion for the Messenger (PBBUH) had filled his heart even before his eyes had seen him (PBBUH).

Dhul-Bijadayn in the Company of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH)

A Meeting After a Deep Lengthy Longing

The young believer arrived at the Prophet's Mosque and spent the night there. When dawn came, he anxiously stood near the Prophet's chamber, eagerly waiting for him to come out. At last, the wish he had long held and yearned for was fulfilled: the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) appeared.

He prayed the *Fajr* (dawn) Prayer in congregation behind the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH). When the prayer was finished, the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH), as was his custom, stood and looked at the faces of the people. He (PBBUH) looked at the stranger and asked him: **"Who are you?"** The Muzani youth told him his lineage and recounted his story. The Prophet (PBBUH) asked him: **"What is your name?"** He replied: "`Abdul-`Uzza (slave of the goddess `Uzza)." The Prophet (PBBUH) said: **"Rather, it is `Abdullah (slave of Allah)."** Then he (PBBUH) approached him and said: **"Stay near us and be among our guests."**

From that day onward, people called him `Abdullah. The Companions nicknamed him Dhul-Bijadayn (the man with two coarse cloths), after they had learned his story and saw the two cloths. `Abdullah Dhul-Bijadayn thus became the name by which he was most commonly known.

"He Sincerely and Persistently Returns in Repentance to Allah"

`Abdullah Dhul-Bijadayn kept himself constantly in the company of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH), learning from his guidance and character. His happiness with his companionship was indescribable. `Abdullah's relationship with Allah deepened, and he became one of His obedient worshipers, supplicating, remembering Him, and reciting the Qur'an with humility.

Al-Adra` narrated: "The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) went out one night while I was guarding him. He took my hand, and we passed by a man praying and reciting the Qur'an aloud. I said: 'Perhaps he is showing off.' The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) said: **'No, indeed, he is *Awab*** (one who sincerely and persistently returns in repentance to Allah)'. I looked and saw it was `Abdullah Dhul-Bijadayn."

The Final Chapter of Dhul-Bijadayn's Life

Dhul-Bijadayn participated in all battles alongside the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH). He fought valiantly without fear of death, desiring entirely what is with Allah and recognizing that true, lasting rewards and fulfillment reside with Him, not in the fleeting pleasures of this world.

"Supplicate for Me to be Granted Martyrdom, O Messenger of Allah!"

When the Battle of Tabuk came, and Dhul-Bijadayn went out to fight, he said to the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH): "Supplicate for me to be granted martyrdom, O Messenger of Allah!" The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) patted him on the shoulder and said: **"O Allah, forbid his blood to the disbelievers."** Dhul-Bijadayn exclaimed: "May my father and mother be sacrificed for you, O Messenger of Allah! This is not what I meant!" The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) said: **"If you set out to fight in Allah's Cause and caught a fever and die because of it, you are a martyr. If you are thrown from your riding animal and die because of it, you are a martyr."**

"I Wish I Were the Owner of This Hole (Grave)!"

A few days after this conversation, `Abdullah Dhul-Bijadayn caught a fever and died. The emigrant and fighter in Allah's Cause died, far from his family and tribe and away from his homeland. He gave up this world and its transient pleasures, and Allah compensated him with something far better and superior, granting him a virtue that even the close Companions of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) craved.

Let us listen to Ibn Mas`ud as he recounts this awe-inspiring scene that made him wish he had been the one in the grave.

Ibn Mas`ud narrated: "I rose up in the middle of the night while I was with the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) during the Battle of Tabuk. I saw a flame at one side of the camp, and I followed its glow to see what was happening. There I saw the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH), Abu Bakr, and `Umar. And behold, I saw that `Abdullah Dhul Bijadayn had died! The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) was digging his grave. When he (PBBUH) finished digging the hole, he said to Abu Bakr and `Umar: **'Bring your brother closer to me and be gentle with him.'** They both held his body and lowered him to the Prophet (PBBUH), who, when he (PBBUH) had placed him in his burial niche, said: **'O Allah, I have entered the night pleased with him, so be pleased with him.'** Hearing this, Ibn Mas`ud said: 'I wish I were the owner of this hole (grave).'"

What a radiant chapter in the life of Dhul-Bijadayn! The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) himself entered his grave, smoothing and leveling the soil with his own blessed hands. The two senior Companions, Abu Bakr and `Umar, lowered him into his grave, and the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) carried him and laid him in his burial niche, asking Allah Almighty to be pleased with him.

What a beautiful ending, and what a great honor bestowed upon `Abdullah Dhul-Bijadayn!

May Allah's Mercy and Blessings be upon you, O you who traded this world for the Hereafter,

O penitent one!

May Allah be pleased with you and please you, O `Abdullah Dhul-Bijadayn.

37. `Abdullah ibn Jahsh

May Allah Be Pleased with Him

37. `Abdullah ibn Jahsh

Dear readers, let us move on to the story of another noble Companion, a man with a unique aura: distinct, memorable, and long-lasting. He was connected to the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) by two forms of kinship: he was the son of the Messenger's paternal aunt, Umaymah bint `Abdul-Muttalib, and was also the Messenger's son-in-law; his sister, Zaynab bint Jahsh, was the wife of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH). He was one of the first to embrace Islam, the first to be entrusted a standard in Islam [to lead the first military expedition], and the first to be called 'Commander of the Believers.' Our hero is `Abdullah ibn Jahsh.

One of the First to Embrace Islam

`Abdullah ibn Jahsh grew up in Makkah, thereby facing the distressing experience of witnessing its people worshiping idols and committing sins. Once the sun of Islam rose and Allah sent His Messenger (PBBUH) with the monotheistic religion, `Abdullah ibn Jahsh was among the first believers. He embraced Islam before the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) took the house of Al-Arqam as a secret and strategic sanctuary for preaching Islam and educating early converts, when the number of Muslims, men and women, did not exceed thirty. Thus, he was truly one of the first to embrace Islam.

As soon as `Abdullah ibn Jahsh embraced Islam, he began calling those around him to Allah's true religion. He invited his two brothers and his sister to Islam, and they all accepted, seeking success through this religion and striving for Allah's good pleasure.

`Abdullah ibn Jahsh Emigrates for Allah's Sake

The severity of the persecution faced by the Prophet (PBBUH) and his Companions at the hands of Quraysh intensified. In order to find relief, the Prophet (PBBUH) advised his Companions to emigrate to Abyssinia to live under the protection of its just [Christian] king, the Negus. `Abdullah ibn Jahsh was among the Muslims who emigrated to Abyssinia, along with some of his family and relatives.

Later, when the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) gave the Muslims permission to emigrate to Madinah, `Abdullah ibn Jahsh complied and emigrated, becoming the second emigrant after Abu Salamah. His emigration this time involved a wider circle of people, as his family, relatives, and all his paternal kin, men and women, emigrated with him.

"Would You Not Be Content If Allah Gave You a Better Abode?"

Not long after `Abdullah ibn Jahsh and his family emigrated, the leaders of Quraysh went out to inspect the districts of Makkah. When they saw the houses of Banu Jahsh, which were now completely deserted, one of them said: "The houses of Banu Jahsh have become empty, weeping for their occupants."

Abu Jahl responded with: "Who are these people that houses should weep for them? These houses are no longer their homes." He then seized `Abdullah ibn Jahsh's house, which was the most beautiful and wealthiest of all, and began to dispose of it and its contents as an owner would dispose of his property.

`Abdullah ibn Jahsh heard of this and told the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) what Abu Jahl had done to his house. The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) said to him: **"O `Abdullah, would you not be pleased if Allah gave**

you a better house in Paradise in its place?" He replied: "Yes." The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) said: **"Then that is yours."** `Abdullah was satisfied and his heart was filled with joy.

The Expedition Led by `Abdullah ibn Jahsh: The Toughest Test

`Abdullah ibn Jahsh emigrated to Madinah to settle among his brothers from the Ansar, away from the harm inflicted upon him by Quraysh and the hardship and toil he endured during his two emigration trips. However, he had hardly settled and began to enjoy some peace from his difficulties when Allah willed that he be subjected to the toughest test he had to face in his life. Let us listen to the story of this arduous experience.

A Reconnaissance Expedition

In the last days of Rajab 2 A.H., the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) appointed `Abdullah ibn Jahsh as commander of eight men—all of them Muhajirun (emigrants from Makkah). He (PBBUH) told him his destination and gave him a letter, instructing him not to read it until he had traveled for two days. `Abdullah would then proceed according to its contents, without forcing anyone to accompany him.

`Abdullah marched forth, and after two days, he read the letter. It stated: **"When you read this letter of mine, proceed until you halt at Nakhlah** (a place between Ta'if and Makkah). **Observe the caravans of Quraysh there and gather information about them for us."** It was a purely reconnaissance mission.

Upon finishing reading the letter of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH), `Abdullah ibn Jahsh said: "I hear and obey." Then he informed his companions of what was in the letter of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) and said to them: "The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) forbade me to compel any of you [to

participate]. Whoever wishes to accompany me may do so, and whoever does not wish to [join me] may return without blame." They all said: "We hear and obey."

However, Sa`d ibn Abu Waqqas and `Utbah ibn Ghazwan had lost their camel [which they had been riding in turns] and went to search for it, thus separating from the group. The expedition was then reduced to only six men, in addition to its leader, `Abdullah ibn Jahsh.

Fighting on the 30th Day of Rajab[1]

The group marched until they reached Nakhlah, when a caravan passed by carrying raisins, leather goods, and merchandise belonging to Quraysh and guarded by four men: `Amr ibn Al-Hadrami, `Uthman and Nawfal, the two sons of `Abdullah ibn Al-Mughirah, and Al-Hakam ibn Kaysan, the freed slave of Hisham ibn Al-Mughirah.

The men of the detachment decided to fight them, believing it was the first day of Sha`ban, not the last day of Rajab[2]—Rajab being one of the sacred months when fighting is forbidden. They killed `Amr ibn Al-Hadrami and captured `Uthman ibn `Abdullah ibn Al-Mughirah and Al-Hakam ibn Kaysan, while Nawfal escaped. `Abdullah ibn Jahsh and his men took the two captives and the caravan and headed back to Madinah.

[1] Rajab is one of the four sacred (inviolable) months in which fighting is strictly prohibited. The sacred months in Islam are Rajab, Dhul-Qa`dah, Dhul-Hijjah, and Muharram.

[2] The lunar months alternate between 29 and 30 days; hence, the actual lunar month may start a day earlier or later than predicted. In clearer words, sometimes the last day of Rajab may actually be the first day of Sha`ban.

The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) Disapproves of the Action Taken at Nakhlah in the Sacred Month

The detachment arrived before the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH), and he (PBBUH) learned what they had done. He (PBBUH) strongly disapproved of their action, stating: **"By Allah, I did not command you to fight during the sacred month."** Consequently, the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) refused to take the caravan and the two captives. `Abdullah ibn Jahsh and the men of his detachment were overwhelmed with regret and felt doomed for disobeying the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH).

Matters only grew worse as they faced much blame and criticism from their fellow Muslims, who said to them: "You have disobeyed the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH)."

Quraysh Aggravate the Incident

`Abdullah ibn Jahsh and the men of his detachment were even more distressed when they learned that Quraysh had used this incident as a pretext to vilify the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH); they found it an opportunity to defame him among the tribes, saying: "Muhammad and his Companions have violated the sanctity of the sacred month, shedding blood, seizing property, and taking men captive." However, the Muslims in Makkah responded to them, saying: "They only committed what they did in Sha`ban [which is not a sacred month]."

`Abdullah ibn Jahsh and his companions were deeply sorrowful because of what they had done and the predicament they had created for the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH).

The Glorious Qur'an Settles the Matter and Brings Relief to Ibn Jahsh

Distress intensified and misinformation began to circulate and be amplified by the disbelievers when divine revelation came down to decisively settle the matter, refuting these unjust claims and stating that what the *Mushrikin* were doing was far worse than what the Muslims had done. The Almighty says: ﴿They ask you concerning fighting in the Sacred Months. Say: 'Fighting therein is a great transgression, but a greater transgression with Allah is to prevent humankind from following the Way of Allah, to disbelieve in Him, to hinder access to *Al-Masjid Al-Haram* (the Sacred Mosque at Makkah), and to drive out its inhabitants, and persecution (i.e., forced conversion into paganism) is worse than killing﴾ (translated meaning of Al-Baqarah 2:217).

Meaning: The polytheists of Makkah considered a fight that mistakenly occurred in a sacred month to be a grave matter, but graver still was what the polytheists were doing: hindering people from following Allah's Way and from praying at the Sacred Mosque, as well as harming the Muslims until they were forced to leave Makkah. Of all people, Quraysh had no right to talk about sanctities and sacred obligations—fighting in the sacred month paled in comparison to the crimes they themselves committed against the Muslims.

Thus, Allah relieved `Abdullah ibn Jahsh and his companions of their distress and sorrow through the revelation of this glorious ayah. Quraysh sent a ransom for the two captives, but the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) said: **"We will not accept any ransom for them until our two Companions return"**—meaning until they know the fate of Sa`d ibn Abu Waqqas and `Utbah ibn Ghazwan. Two days later, Sa`d and `Utbah arrived, and the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) accepted the ransom for the two captives and released them. He (PBBUH) also paid the blood money owed to the family of the killed man.

The Final Chapter of Ibn Jahsh's Life

In the Battle of Uhud, `Abdullah ibn Jahsh fought with the fervor of one who sought and yearned for martyrdom.

"The Supplication That `Abdullah ibn Jahsh Made Was Better Than Mine"

A dialogue took place between `Abdullah ibn Jahsh and his companion Sa`d ibn Abu Waqqas before the Battle of Uhud. It was a truly memorable dialogue. Let us listen to Sa`d ibn Abu Waqqas telling us his story and the story of his companion, as part of their mental preparation for the coming confrontation and before going into the battlefield.

Sa`d ibn Abu Waqqas narrated that on the day of Uhud, `Abdullah ibn Jahsh said: "Will you come with me so that we may supplicate Allah [together]?" They went aside, and Sa`d supplicated, saying: "O Lord, if we meet the enemy tomorrow, grant me a man of great strength and fierce anger, so that I may fight him for Your Sake and he may fight me. Then grant me victory over him so that I may kill him and take his spoils." `Abdullah ibn Jahsh stood up and said: "O Allah, grant me tomorrow a man of great strength and fierce anger, so that I may fight him for Your Sake and he may fight me. Then he will seize me and cut off my nose. So when I meet You tomorrow, You will say: 'O `Abdullah, why were your nose and ears cut off?' I will say: 'It was for Your Sake and for the sake of Your Messenger.' You will say: 'You have spoken the truth.'" Sa`d bin Abu Waqqas added: "The supplication that `Abdullah ibn Jahsh made was better than mine. I saw him at the end of the day, and his ear and nose were hanging by a thread."

`Abdullah ibn Jahsh fought fiercely and valiantly, determined to attain martyrdom, until Abu Al-Hakam ibn Al-Akhnas battled him and delivered a fatal blow, causing him to fall as a martyr. He was forty years old.

The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) Weeps for the Martyrs of Uhud

After the battle ended, the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) stood near `Abdullah ibn Jahsh and wept for him and for the other martyrs. He (PBBUH) ordered that he be buried with his maternal uncle, Hamzah ibn `Abdul-Muttalib, in a single grave.

May Allah's Mercy and Blessings be upon you, O martyr who longed for martyrdom in Allah's Cause and attained it.

May Allah be pleased with you and please you, O `Abdullah ibn Jahsh.

38. Nu`aym ibn Mas`ud

May Allah Be Pleased with Him

38. Nu`aym ibn Mas`ud

Let us explore another dazzling star that shines brightly in the vast night sky, acting as a brilliant white beacon for us to emulate and be guided by—as the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) taught us.

Our hero is a vigilant, active, and exceptionally intelligent young man whom no difficulty could deter nor any problem overwhelm.

He represents a son of the desert, shaped by the harsh conditions of its environment, endowed by Allah with a vigorous mind, robust body, quick wit, and sharp intellect. He harnessed his intelligence and energy to serve Allah's religion, and Allah made him the reason behind the victory of the Muslim army and its deliverance from certain destruction. He is Nu`aym ibn Mas`ud.

Nu`aym's Upbringing

Nu`aym ibn Mas`ud grew up in the Ghatafan tribe in the Najd region. He had close ties with the Jews of Yathrib—especially Banu Qurayzah. They loved him and trusted him completely. He enjoyed himself in their company more than anywhere else. Each time he longed for pleasure, he would leave Najd and head toward Madinah, to the Jewish tribe of Banu Qurayzah, to sit, converse, drink, and have a good time with them.

Nu`aym Serves His Faith and Performs Miracles on the Day of His Conversion

The religion of guidance and truth appeared and transformed the region and valleys of Makkah with the light of Islam, bringing an end to the pre-Islamic era of ignorance and firmly establishing the message of the Qur'an.

Nu`aym ibn Mas`ud rejected this new faith and remained adhering to the religion of his forefathers. Soon he found himself driven to join the enemies of Islam, compelled to draw his sword against its followers.

However, on the day of the Battle of Al-Ahzab (the Confederates), Allah granted Nu`aym guidance, allowing him to see the truth of Islam, which led to a transformative fresh start in his life. He began a new page that brought a new phase in the history of the Islamic call. On this page, he wrote one of the most remarkable stories of war stratagems and ingenuity to defeat Islam's larger and better-equipped opponents.

It is a story that history will never forget and continues to recount with great fascination and admiration for its clever and astute hero.

Let us review the Battle of the Trench (also known as the Battle of the Confederates) a little, to learn about the story of Nu`aym ibn Mas`ud.

The Confederate Army

A group of Jews of Banu Nadir formed a coalition of tribes to wage war against the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) and to eradicate his religion. They succeeded in inciting and rallying Quraysh, Ghatafan (the tribe of Nu`aym ibn Mas`ud) and other disbelieving Arab tribes to fight the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH). Quraysh marched from Makkah and Ghatafan from Najd. Among the vanguard of the Ghatafan men was the hero of our story, Nu`aym ibn Mas`ud.

The confederates formed a mighty army that advanced toward Madinah. But upon reaching the city, they encountered the trench dug by the Muslims, standing as a formidable obstacle that prevented their advance.[1]

Banu Qurayzah Break Their Treaty

The confederate tribes failed to enter Madinah, so they besieged it. As the siege dragged on, despair began to creep into the hearts of the confederate tribes. The warmongers, the Jews of Banu Nadir, were left with no alternative but to resort to the chiefs of Banu Qurayzah, who were living inside Madinah and had a treaty and covenant with the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH). They began to incite them to join the war against the Muslims and support the confederate army.

After a long debate and relentless attempts of persuasion, the chiefs of Banu Qurayzah agreed to break their treaty with the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) and support the confederate tribes.

The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) Beseeches Allah's Help

The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) and his Companions learned of the plot being planned against them; the news struck them like a thunderbolt. The Muslims became trapped in the ravenous jaws of the enemy, with no obvious route of escape. Quraysh and their allies were camping in front of the Muslims, from outside Madinah, while Banu Qurayzah lay in wait at the back, preparing to attack from within Madinah. The hypocrites and those with diseased hearts[2]

[1] For further information on the details of the Confederates, please refer to the first part of the book: *A Biography of the Best Man in Creation,* by the same author.

[2] Individuals who outwardly profess Islam but conceal disbelief, doubt, or malice within, aiming to undermine the Muslim community.

began to reveal their hidden intentions, saying: "Muhammad promised us that we would gain possession of the treasures of Chosroes (Persian King Khosrau) and Caesar but, as matters stand now, not a single one of us is safe even to go and relieve himself (in view of the terror we are suffering)." Then they began to desert the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) in groups, one after another.

In the midst of this intensely hard situation, the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) turned to Allah (the Most Exalted) and supplicated Him, saying: **"O Allah, Revealer of the Book, Swift Taker of Accounts! Defeat the confederates! O Allah, defeat them, shake them, and grant us victory over them. O Allah, I beseech You to fulfill Your Covenant and Your Promise. O Allah, I beseech You to fulfill Your Covenant and Your Promise."**

Allah's Providence Makes a Way Out of This Crisis

Allah Almighty answered the supplication and earnest pleas of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH), and the miracle occurred. Two great and momentous events took place that shook the confederate army, and through them, Allah granted victory to His Messenger and his Companions.

First: The Conversion of Nu`aym ibn Mas`ud to Islam

One night during the siege, which lasted approximately twenty days, Nu`aym ibn Mas`ud reflected on why he traveled all the way from his homeland in Najd to fight the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) and his Companions. He was not fighting to reclaim a usurped right or to restore dignity or security to his community. He said to himself: "What makes me fight this righteous man who commands his followers to be just, kind, and generous to their relatives?" Nu`aym made up his mind and resolved to abandon the ways of his people and embrace Islam.

"Ward Them Off Us, for Indeed War Is Stratagem"

Under cover of darkness, Nu`aym slipped away and went to the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH), who said, when he saw him: **"Nu`aym ibn Mas`ud?"** He replied: "Yes, O Messenger of Allah." He (PBBUH) asked: **"What brings you here at this hour?"** He replied: "I have come to bear witness that there is no god but Allah and that you are the servant of Allah and His Messenger." Nu`aym continued: "I have embraced Islam, O Messenger of Allah, but my people are unaware of my conversion. Give me whatever orders you wish."

The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) replied: **"You are only one man among us** (i.e., if you join us, our situation will not greatly improve), **but try to incite disruption among them** (i.e., break up the enemy's political cohesiveness and trustworthiness) **to ward them off us as much as you can** (an achievable one-man task), **for indeed war is stratagem."**

Nu`aym said: "Yes, O Messenger of Allah. You will see what pleases you, Allah willing."

Nu`aym's Brillant Ploy to Stir Distrust Between the Confederates and Banu Qurayzah

Endowed with the capabilities for the mission, Nu`aym knew exactly what needed to be done, and he immediately headed for Banu Qurayzah. He said to them: "You know my affection for you and my sincerity in advising you. I am going to tell you something, but keep it a secret." They agreed. He said: "The situation of Quraysh and Ghatafan is different from yours in this war. This is your land; your wealth, children, and women are here, and you cannot abandon it for another. As for Quraysh and Ghatafan, their land, wealth, children, and women are elsewhere. They have come to fight Muhammad, and you have

supported them against him. If they triumph over him, they will seize the spoils. But if they do not win, they will return to their lands safely, leaving you with Muhammad for him to take the worst revenge on you."

They said: "You speak the truth. What do you think [we should do]?"

Nu`aym said: "I think you should not fight with them until they give you hostages from among their noblemen who will stay with you. In this way, you will compel them to fight Muhammad alongside you until you triumph over him or until the last man from both sides perishes."

They said: "You have given sound advice and counsel," and they approved of his opinion and resolved to act upon it forthwith.

Nu'aym left them and went directly to the leaders of Quraysh and said to them: "You know my friendship with you, my enmity toward Muhammad, and my sincere advice to you. I have been informed of an issue which I consider it my duty to divulge to you, but you must keep it a secret."

They said: "You have it (our word)."

Nu`aym said: "Banu Qurayzah have regretted what they did with Muhammad (i.e., breaching their covenant with him). They sent a message to him, saying: 'We regret what we have done. We have resolved to return to our treaty with you. Would you be satisfied if we take some noblemen from the tribes of Quraysh and Ghatafan and hand them over to you for you to behead? Then we will fight with you against any of them that remain until we eliminate them.' If they ask you for hostages, do not give them a single man from among you."

Then Nu`aym left the leaders of Quraysh and went to his people, Ghatafan, to tell them the same thing he had told Quraysh and to give them the same warning.

Suspicion and Distrust Creep into the Hearts of the Confederates

No sooner had Nu`aym finished his tour than the seeds of suspicion and discord had taken root in the hearts of the confederate tribes. Abu Sufyan wanted to test the true intentions of Banu Qurayzah. He sent them a message on Saturday night, saying: "We cannot stay where we are, and our horses and camels have perished (for lack of fodder). We have resolved to fight Muhammad, so rise with us to fight him tomorrow." They replied: "Tomorrow is Saturday (the Jewish Sabbath), and we do not do anything on that day. Furthermore, we will not fight with you until you give us hostages from among your nobles and the nobles of Ghatafan, to keep them in our hands (as security). We fear that if the fighting becomes fierce, you will return to your lands and leave us alone to face Muhammad, a battle we cannot withstand."

When Abu Sufyan heard this response, he no longer had any doubt about Nu`aym's words. He said: "May they be disgraced! By Allah, even if they asked for a sheep as a hostage, we would not give it to them."

Abu Sufyan then spoke to Ghatafan, but they hesitated to engage in battle against the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH). After they heard Banu Qurayzah's reply, they said: "By Allah, Nu`aym has told you the truth." They sent the following message back to Banu Qurayzah informing them of their decision: "By Allah, we will not send anyone to you. If you want to fight, come out and fight."

On receiving this message, Banu Qurayzah said: "By Allah, Nu`aym has told you the truth."

Thus, Nu`aym succeeded in disrupting the ranks of the confederate forces and sowing discord among them. Disunity spread among them, and they feared one another.

Second: A Cold Furious Wind Uproots the Tents of the Confederate Tribes

The second miracle with which Allah Almighty responded to the Prophet (PBBUH) was a very cold and furious wind which He sent upon Quraysh and their allies. It uprooted their tents, extinguished their fires, and overturned their cooking pots. They found no escape but to break away from this doomed situation and leave. Abu Sufyan stood up and said loudly: "I am departing. Depart with me." And they departed in the dead of night.

In the morning, the Muslims awoke to find that the enemies of Allah had hastily fled homeward. They wholeheartedly thanked Allah for granting them victory and for defeating the confederates.

Lessons Learnt From the Clever Action of Nu`aym ibn Mas`ud

We would like to pause for a moment to reflect upon this clever and courageous action of Nu`aym ibn Mas`ud and learn some practical life lessons from this noble Companion.

- Only moments after Nu`aym ibn Mas`ud embraced Islam in the presence of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) did he begin to reflect how he could serve this religion and the truth it advocates. Let us ask

ourselves: What have we offered to Allah's religion? How can we serve our religion?

- Within each individual lies latent potential, talent, and ability often described as a 'hidden treasure' placed inside us by Allah. Therefore, how can each one of us direct his energies and abilities to serve Allah's religion? Nu`aym ibn Mas`ud utilized the quick wit, astuteness, and intelligence that Allah had granted him. His ingenious trick broke the unity of the enemy ranks and sowed distrust among them, causing them to disperse. It became the key to victory and saving the Muslims from certain destruction.

"How Terrible Was What Nu`aym Did to Us on the Day of the Trench!"

Nu`aym ibn Mas`ud remained a trusted confidant of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH). He was entrusted with important missions, shouldered responsibilities, and carried banners. On the day of the victorious entry into Makkah, Abu Sufyan stood watching the Muslim armies entering the city. He saw a man carrying the banner of Ghatafan. He asked: "Who is this?" The people replied: "Nu`aym ibn Mas`ud." He said: "How terrible was what he did to us on the day of the Trench[1]! By Allah, he was the most hostile of all people to Muhammad, and now he is carrying his people's banner before him and is ready to fight us under his own flag!"

[1] Nu`aym devastated the coalition of enemy forces, specifically breaking the alliance between Quraysh, Ghatafan, and Banu Qurayzah through strategic deception.

The Final Chapter of Nu`aym's Life

Nu`aym ibn Mas`ud remained true to his pledge and promise, and the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) passed away while being pleased with him. He continued to strive with his life and wealth in the service of Islam; his journey of serving this religion continued during the era of the Rightly Guided Caliphs under Abu Bakr, `Umar, and `Uthman.

Our hero lay on his deathbed during the caliphate of `Uthman ibn `Affan. His pure soul peacefully ascended to its Creator, to join the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) and his noble Companions.

May Allah's Mercy and Blessings be upon you, O you whom Allah made a means of saving the Muslim army.

May Allah be pleased with you and please you, O Nu`aym ibn Mas`ud.

39. Khubayb ibn `Adi

May Allah Be Pleased with Him

39. Khubayb ibn `Adi

Dear readers, let our souls and hearts, before our minds, listen to this unparalleled hero, unmatched in courage, bravery, piety, and faith. His story is truly awe-inspiring. He was a hero even on the cross, unafraid of death. His trust in Allah was boundless, and Allah bestowed on him several *Karamah*s (extraordinary events caused by Allah for or through a pious person). Our hero is Khubayb ibn `Adi.

Khubayb's Attributes

A Valiant Hero

Khubayb was from the Aws tribe of Madinah. He was among the first to believe in the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) upon his arrival in Madinah. He remained a constant Companion of the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH), unwavering, inseparable, loyal, and supportive through all challenges.

During the Battle of Badr, Khubayb was a valiant soldier and a courageous hero. Al-Harith ibn `Amir ibn Nawfal was one of the polytheists whom Khubayb killed in that battle. After the battle ended and Quraysh returned to Makkah defeated, Banu Al-Harith learned of their father's death and that the one who killed him was Khubayb ibn `Adi.

Then came the Battle of Uhud, where Khubayb fought valiantly. On that day, Abu Ihab Al-Tamimi was among those whom he fought and killed.

A Devout and Humble Worshiper

In addition to his heroism and courage, Khubayb was an ardent hermit-like worshiper. He devoted himself to worship with the fervor of a lover, spending his nights praying and his days fasting. He was among those whom Allah granted success, becoming deeply learned in religion and acting as a caller to Allah.

The Treacherous Event at Al-Raji`

Quraysh Announce Massive Prizes for Capturing Muslims

Quraysh announced massive prizes for anyone who would hand over to them the Muslims who had killed their leaders and dignitaries at Badr and Uhud. They resorted to inciting the surrounding tribes to deceive any Muslims they could into coming to Makkah in order to exact revenge on them.

The Tribes of `Adal and Al-Qarah Betray the Trust

Driven by greed for the prizes that Quraysh had offered, a group from the tribes of `Adal and Al-Qarah came to the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) after the Battle of Uhud. They claimed that Islam was growing and more and more from among their community had accepted it. They added that they needed some Muslim men to teach them the principles of Islam and recite the Qur'an to them.

The Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) sent a group of senior Companions known for their knowledge and piety, and he (PBBUH) appointed `Asim ibn Thabit as their leader. Among them was our hero Khubayb ibn `Adi.

The group of the Muslim preachers set out with the tribesmen of `Adal and Al-Qarah until they reached Al-Raji`—a watering place located between `Usfan and Makkah that belonged to the Hudhayl tribe. There, the Muslim preachers were betrayed. The tribesmen of `Adal and Al-Qarah sought the aid of the Hudhayl tribe against the Companions. Hudhayl quickly dispatched a hundred of their most skilled archers.

Once the group of Muslim preachers sensed the treachery and the malicious action that was taking place, they escaped and almost succeeded to flee the spot. But at the last moment, one of the pursuers saw some date pits scattered on the sand and shouted: "These are date pits from Yathrib!" They followed the track of discarded date pits, hurrying along the path until they reached their target and found the preachers.

When `Asim ibn Thabit, the leader of the expedition, realized that the pursuers were close to catching up with them, he ordered his men to climb a nearby high hill. The hundred archers approached, encircled the preachers, and tightened the siege around them.

Khubayb Taken Captive

The Muslim preachers drew their swords and stood prepared for battle, but the archers of Hudhayl called upon them to come down and surrender, assuring them that they had no intention of harming them. They said to them: "By Allah, we do not want to fight you, but we want to take you to Makkah. We give you Allah's promise and covenant that we shall not kill you." As was previously mentioned, their action was driven by a desire for the prizes offered by Quraysh for anyone who would bring them those who had killed their leaders and dignitaries.

The group of Muslim preachers realized that being taken to Makkah was an option worse than death; it was nothing but humiliation and disgrace. They decided to fight, knowing that their small numbers against a vastly superior enemy meant they were unlikely to survive. The hundred archers quickly showered them with arrows until they killed all the preachers on the hill except for three: Khubayb ibn `Adi, Zayd ibn Al-Dathnah, and `Abdullah ibn Tariq.

They called out to them again, promising them safety in return for their coming down the hill and surrendering.

The remaining three preachers came down. The archers betrayed them, bound them fast, and took them to Makkah to sell them. While they were partway through the journey, `Abdullah ibn Tariq managed to free his hand from the shackles of captivity and took his sword to fight, but they killed him. Khubayb ibn `Adi and Zayd ibn Al-Dathnah remained, and they were taken to Makkah.

Selling Zayd and Khubayb to Revenge-Seeking Relatives

In Makkah, the treacherous tribesmen offered Khubayb and Zayd for sale. As soon as the sons of Al-Harith ibn `Amir—who was killed at the Battle of Badr—learned that their father's killer, Khubayb ibn `Adi, was being offered for sale, they rushed to buy him.

According to another account, Khubayb was sold to Hujayr ibn Abu Ihab Al-Tamimi to kill him in revenge for his killing his father at Uhud. The revenge-seeking relatives surrounded Khubayb and competed to buy him.

Most of the Makkans who had lost their fathers and leaders joined them. Finally, they all conspired against Khubayb and began preparing him for a fate that would satisfy their grudges, not only against him but against all Muslims. As for Zayd, he was sold to other people who tortured him until they killed him.

The Final Chapter in Khubayb's Life and an Unforgettable Lesson

We come to the final chapter in the life of this exceptional hero, in which he exemplified the highest ideals of heroism and sacrifice, giving an unparalleled lesson in faith, piety, and love for the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH).

"I Have Never Seen a Better Captive than Khubayb!"

Khubayb surrendered his heart, his affairs, and his fate to Allah, the Lord of the Worlds, and engaged himself in deep worship with profound tranquility of spirit and steadfastness. He moved beyond his concerns and anxieties to a heartfelt connection with Allah. Allah (Exalted be He) was with him, and he was with Allah.

One of the daughters of Al-Harith, in whose house Khubayb was detained as captive, entered upon him one day. Once she saw him, she hurried away calling people to witness this marvel. She said: "By Allah, I have never seen a better captive than Khubayb. By Allah, one day I found him eating a bunch of grapes in his hand while he was chained in irons, at a time when no fruit was available in Makkah. I believe it was a provision that Allah had [directly] bestowed upon Khubayb."

Desperate Attempts by Quraysh to Break Khubayb's Resolve

Khubayb remained imprisoned by the Makkans for a period of time, during which they subjected him to psychological and physical torture. They brought him news of the death of his companion and brother in faith, Zayd ibn

Al-Dathnah, thinking that this would break his spirit and inflict upon him a double suffering. But they failed, for serenity remained radiant upon Khubayb's face all the time, regardless of the hardships he was facing. They continued to torture him, flogging him and pelting him with stones, but he remained steadfast as the firmest mountains. Then they tried to bargain with him to abandon his faith in exchange for his life and freedom.

However, all these attempts were futile; they only increased Khubayb's faith and steadfastness, and increased the fear, panic, and folly of his tormentors.

"Let Me Pray Two *Rak`ahs*"

When they despaired of breaking or manipulating Khubayb, they led the hero to his fate, taking him from the sanctuary to Al-Tan`im, where he would be killed.

There, Khubayb said to them: "Let me pray two *Rak`ahs*." They allowed him to pray. Therefore Khubayb prayed two *Rak`ahs* with focused humility and peace, during which the sweetness of faith flowed into his soul, enabling him to maintain his mental fortitude and courage to continue enduring hardship for Allah's Sake. He wished he could continue praying and praying, but he turned to his captors and said to them: "By Allah, were it not that you might think I was afraid of death, I would have prayed more." Then he raised his arms toward the sky and said: "O Allah, count them one by one and kill them one by one, giving each his share and portion!" The people were terrified at hearing his invocation.

They had prepared a large cross from palm trunks on which they fastened Khubayb, tightening his bonds. The *Mushrikin* gathered and began pelting him

with stones, while the archers sharpened their spears. Yet, throughout all this, our hero did not close his eyes and serenity still shone upon his face.

"I Would Not Wish That the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) Experience the Pain of Even a Small Thorn Prick"

The highest expressions of faith, trust in Allah, and absolute love for the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) were manifested when Abu Sufyan approached Khubayb in this state and said to him: "O Khubayb, would you not like Muhammad to be in your place, having his head cut off, while you are safe and sound with your family?"

Swift and furious as a whirlwind, Khubayb shouted at Abu Sufyan, saying in response: "By Allah, I would not like that Muhammad experience even a thorn prick and that I were sitting with my family and children, enjoying all the comforts and luxuries of this world."

The leaders of Quraysh had heard the same words from Zayd ibn Al-Dathnah as they were about to kill him. When Abu Sufyan heard this from Khubayb, he clapped his hands together in wonder and said: "By Allah, I have never seen anyone whose companions love him the way the companions of Muhammad love Muhammad."

The Location of Khubayb's Grave Remains Unknown

These firm words of Khubayb were a signal for the spears and swords to hit their target. He was killed as a hero, a martyr, a believer, and a proud man. His body fell to the ground.

Ibrahim ibn Isma`il narrated: "Ja`far ibn Umayyah told me, on the authority of his father, that the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) sent him alone to gather information on Quraysh. He said: 'I went to the wooden structure on which Khubayb was killed—that is, after he had been killed—to look at him. I found him lying on the ground. I moved away from him, not far, then I turned around and I did not see Khubayb. It was as if the earth had swallowed him up. No trace of Khubayb has been found to this day.'"

According to another account of this incident: "When Khubayb was crucified and bound, he turned his face toward the sky and supplicated to his Lord, saying: 'O Allah, we have delivered the message of Your Messenger, so inform him this morning of what is being done to us.'"

Allah answered Khubayb's supplication. While the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) was in Madinah, he (PBBUH) learned of the matter and saw Khubayb's body hanging on the cross. He summoned Zubayr ibn Al-`Awwam and Al-Miqdad ibn `Amr to go secretly to Makkah to investigate the matter. Allah brought them to the desired place. They took down the body of their companion, Khubayb, to a pure spot that awaited him to embrace him beneath its soil. To this day, the location of Khubayb's grave remains unknown.

May Allah's Mercy and Blessings be upon you, O faithful hero who taught humanity a lesson in heroism, sacrifice, and steadfastness in faith.

May Allah be pleased with you and please you, O Khubayb ibn `Adi.

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The Companions Whose Lives, Characters, Virtues, and Sacrifices Are Explored in this Work

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2. Salman the Persian

3. Bilal ibn Rabah

4. Mus`ab ibn `Umair

5. Anas ibn Malik

6. Ja`far ibn Abu Talib

7. Abu Hurairah

8. Zayd ibn Harithah

9. Usamah ibn Zayd

10. `Abdullah ibn Rawahah

11. Abu Dhar Al-Ghifari

12. `Amr ibn Al-`As

13. Al-`Abbas Ibn `Abdul-Muttalib

14. Suhayb Al-Rumi

15. Zayd ibn Thabit

16. Sa`d ibn Mu`adh

17. `Abdullah ibn Mas`ud

18. Hamzah ibn `Abdul-Muttalib

19. Hudhayfah ibn Al-Yaman

20. The Family of Yasir

(Yasir ibn `Amir—Sumayyah bint Khibbat—`Ammar ibn Yasir)

21. Sa`d ibn `Ubadah

23. Abu Ayyub Al-Ansari

24. Zayd ibn Arqam

25. `Abdullah ibn Umm Maktum

26. Abu Musa Al-Ash`ari

27. Abu Al-Darda’

28. Al-Bara’ ibn Malik

29. Usayd ibn Hudayr

30. `Abdullah ibn `Umar

31. Mu`adh ibn Jabal

32. `Abdullah ibn `Amr ibn Al-`As

33. Ka`b ibn Malik

34. `Abdullah ibn `Abbas

35. Abu Qatadah Al-Ansari

36. `Abdullah Dhul-Bijadayn

37. `Abdullah ibn Jahsh

38. Nu`aym ibn Mas`ud

39. Khubayb ibn `Adi

The noble Companions of Prophet Muhammad (PBBUH) are bright stars of guidance who help souls find their way to Allah Almighty, acting like full moons who attained complete spiritual illumination and fulfilled their highest spiritual potential. They were monks of the night and knights of the day, dedicating their nights to worship and their days to action. Allah (Exalted be He) praised them in the Glorious Qur'an, testifying to their full submission to Him by aligning their lives with His Will, which ultimately led them to peace, success, and blessings. Allah gave them glad tidings of having their sins forgiven, their endeavors accepted, and various types of bliss in Paradise.

The Prophet (PBBUH) emphasized the Companions' superiority over all other generations of Muslims. He (PBBUH) informed us that they are the best community and showed their merit, loftiness, and exceptional status. They were the first believers in Allah and His Messenger, forsaking their homes and possessions to emigrate in support of Islam, to call people to Allah, and to strive in Allah's Cause. They opposed the people on the earth to remain loyal to Messenger Muhammad (PBBUH), believing in him and obeying him before the proofs of his prophethood had spread, before his call to Islam had gained momentum, and before his supporters and helpers had become strong.

Despite their small number, the Companions stood firm against the large number of disbelievers and deniers. They spent their wealth and sacrificed their lives, seeking Allah's Good Pleasure. No one among the Muslims after them could achieve any of the heights they succeeded in reaching, nor could they attain a reward equal to theirs. They are the ones who took over the flag of Islam after the Messenger of Allah (PBBUH) passed away, and they kept it high and fluttering throughout the world. Through them, Allah elevated Islam and its followers from a position of weakness and obscurity to one of success and prominence. We shall forever remain indebted to them and committed to follow their path, tread in their footsteps, and shape our lives according to their character and example.