

**Eminent Personalities**

===== OF THE =====

**AHL AL-BAYT**

By:

**Al-Sayyid Ḥasan al-Ḥusaynī**

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## Transliteration key

أ-'	ض - ḍ
آ - ā	ط - ṭ
ب - b	ظ - ṣ
ت - t	ع - ʿ
ث - th	غ - gh
ج - j	ف - f
ح - ḥ	ق - q
خ - kh	ك - k
د - d	ل - l
ذ - dh	م - m
ر - r	ن - n
ز - z	و - w, ū
س - s	ه - h
ش - sh	ي - y, ī
ص - ṣ	

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## Foreword

By Mabarrat al-Āl wa al-Aṣḥāb

All praises are due to Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى. We glorify Him, seek His assistance, and seek His clemency. We seek protection in Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى from the evil of our actions and selves. The one He guides cannot be misled. The one He misleads cannot come unto guidance. I bear witness that there is no god besides Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى, He is alone without any partner and I bear witness that Muḥammad صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ is His Servant and Messenger.

The most truthful of speech is undoubtedly the Book of Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى and the ultimate guidance is that of Muḥammad صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ. The most wicked of affairs are heretical doctrines. Every heretical doctrine is *bid'ah*<sup>1</sup>. Every *bid'ah* is misguidance and misguidance leads to hell fire.

Recollection of the pure lives of Ṣaḥābah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُمْ and awareness of the demands of love and closeness to our Creator through the lessons learnt from their lives and legacy has perhaps been lost on the Muslim. More worrisome though, is the sentiment of substituting sources of true knowledge; Qur'ān, Sunnah, and guidance of the pious predecessors. The unmindful have given way to unworthy sources in attaining the reality.

Take solace from the pristine sources, the Qur'ān and ḥadīth, which bear testimony to this era of individuals who have become a yardstick to humanity. Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى handpicked them to be the Companions of Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ, the best of the Prophets.

وَالسَّابِقُونَ الْأُولُونَ مِنَ الْمُهَاجِرِينَ وَالْأَنْصَارِ وَالَّذِينَ اتَّبَعُوهُمْ بِإِحْسَانٍ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ وَرَضُوا  
عَنْهُ وَأَعَدَّ لَهُمْ جَنَّاتٍ تَجْرِي تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ خَالِدِينَ فِيهَا أَبَدًا ۗ ذَٰلِكَ الْفَوْزُ الْعَظِيمُ

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1 Innovation in religious matters.

And the first forerunners [in the faith] among the Muhājirīn and the Anṣār and those who followed them with good conduct - Allah is pleased with them and they are pleased with Him, and He has prepared for them gardens beneath which rivers flow, wherein they will abide forever. That is the great attainment.<sup>1</sup>

إِنَّمَا يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ لِيُذْهِبَ عَنْكُمُ الرِّجْسَ أَهْلَ الْبَيْتِ وَيُطَهِّرَكُمْ تَطْهِيرًا

Allah intends only to remove from you the impurity [of sin], O people of the [Prophet's] household, and to purify you with [extensive] purification.<sup>2</sup>

It is no wonder that Rasūlullāh ﷺ would praise them thus:

خير الناس قرني ثم الذين يلونهم ثم الذين يلونهم

The best people are those of my era, then those who are after them and then those who are after them.<sup>3</sup>

The generation following the Companions, the Tābī'īn, called towards following their footsteps, realising their lifestyle and perspectives. Some of the Tābī'īn would opine, loving and recognising their excellence is divine tradition, whilst others would establish it to be compulsory. From amongst the pious predecessors we find those who would instruct their children on the love of the Ṣaḥābah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ just as one would instruct a child on a chapter of the Qur'ān.

This book that lay ahead of us, authored by Shaykh Ḥasan al-Ḥusayni, paints an accurate picture of this sentiment.

Mabarrat al-Āl wa al-Aṣḥāb presents this treatise with the hope of spurring individuals on to follow the trail of these august personalities together with correcting the improper thoughts that resonate with some unfortunate ones.

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1 Sūrah al-Tawbah: 100

2 Sūrah al-Aḥzāb: 33

3 Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī. Ḥadīth: 2509

It is not far-fetched that Allah ﷻ ready such persons who will tread their path, bringing back to its former glory the ummah which has been ravaged by its enemies.

We hymn your praise and attest to your purity O Allah. I testify there is no god except Allah. I seek your forgiveness and return to you. Peace and salutations be upon Muḥammad, his family and his Companions.

We end by saying; all praises are due to Allah ﷻ the lord of the worlds.

Da'wah Council.

Faculty of tutorage and investigation.

Kingdom of Bahrain.

## Preface

Shaykh Ḥasan al-Ḥusaynī al-Shafīʿī

All praises are due to Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى the Lord of the worlds. All praises are due to Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى creator of the skies and earths. Peace and salutations be upon our prophet Muḥammad—master of the Messengers—his family, and great Companions.

Brothers in faith across the world. I greet you with the Islamic greeting:

السلام عليكم ورحمة الله وبركاته

Peace, mercy and blessings of Allah be upon you.

I send my warmest greetings with the expressions of the blood of a yearning heart, of the deepest recesses of a throbbing heart, of the petals of a rose each time it blooms, of the narcissus each time it opens its layers, of a meet when it speaks of longing, of the vast universe, and of the stars moving in their orbit. My brothers, with Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى as my witness I express my love for you. I ask him to benefit through the words that follow.

I have chosen the theme of this book to be *August Personalities of the Ahl al-Bayt* as those whose lives we will delve into were truly magnificent, men and women. Not just any great individuals, rather ones who have an unbreakable tie to the house of prophethood. A tie to the greatest of Messengers; the household of Muḥammad صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ. It behoves us to flaunt their glory and raise high the banner of their greatness.

Fuḍayl ibn ʿIyād رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ would say:

إذا نظرت إلى رجل من أصحاب أهل البيت فكأنني أنظر إلى رجل من رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم

When I see someone from the Ahl al-Bayt, it is as though I am seeing a man from Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ.



Dear brothers and sisters, look at the cultures of the east and the west. They take pride in their great men with pomp and splendour. Even though some of these so called great men shed blood, killed many a man, and raised cities to the ground. Some built their greatness upon skulls and corpses, upon killing women and children. Some spent their lives opposing nobility and morality whilst embracing mischief and depravity. Despite this we find people who hold ties to them taking pride in them, hanging their portraits, commissioning their statues, and raising tokens of appreciation for them. These will be the worst of the creation in the eyes of Allah ﷻ on the Day of Qiyāmah.

The eminent personalities of our tradition, however, were something else. They were in a class of their own, unique examples of men.

إذا جمعنا يا جرير المجامع	أولئك آباي فجنني بمثلهم
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*Those are my forefathers so bring forth similar in stature;  
when the gatherings congregate us, O Jarīr.*

And why wouldn't they be? They are the followers of Muḥammad ﷺ who was truly the greatest of men. He was the Prophet who attained his knowledge from his Lord ﷻ. When you hear the praises of great men you will find their lustre to be severely lacking. When you, however, hear the praises of Muḥammad ﷺ then know he is far greater than the praises that are showered upon him. The great men of Islam, through its centuries, attained greatness only through following their beloved ﷺ. They reached out and took from his divine light, saturated their hunger from the knowledge he disseminated, treaded his path, and came unto true greatness. Greatness in the true meaning of the word. If we, today, desire rectification and success then we should take it upon ourselves to study the pages of our majestic past for radiant examples of our august personalities and see what greatness they possessed, making them the axis upon which our lives revolve and the centre of gravity that grounds us.

The one who puts his mind to studying our legacy and reads our history will be amazed at the multitudes of great men and women. In the pages to follow, however, we will concentrate on the sublime personalities that hail specifically from the house of prophethood. This is due to their added nobility together with a high lineage they enjoy. Wāthila ibn al-Asqa’ narrates the following:

ان الله اصطفى كنانة من ولد اسماعيل . واصطفى قريشا من كنانة. واصطفى من قريش بنى هاشم .  
واصطفاني من بنى هاشم

I heard the Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings be upon him, saying, “Verily, Allah has chosen Kinānah from the sons of Ismā’īl, and he has chosen the Quraysh from Kinānah, and he has chosen the tribe of Hāshim from the Quraysh, and he has chosen me from the tribe of Hāshim.”<sup>1</sup>

The following couplet sums it up beautifully:

شرفت له الاخوال والآباء	نسب شريف من خيار كله
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*The noblest of lineages gave;*

*honour to uncles and fathers alike.*

Allah ﷻ placed Muḥammad ﷺ in the noblest of tribes and highest of lineages. He was born into a sub-tribe of Muḍar which is the most famous of the Arab tribes who trace themselves back to Nizār ibn Ma’ad ibn ‘Adnān.

This has been the wisdom of Allah ﷻ amongst all the Messengers, they were of noble descent from respectable families. As we read in the above-mentioned narration, “He has chosen the tribe of Hāshim from the Quraysh, and he has chosen me from the tribe of Hāshim,” in it there is an indication toward the divine selection of the family of Rasūlullāh ﷺ from amongst other tribes and families. They are the premier lineage of the Arabs, most esteemed in rank, highest in honour, noblest in origin, and purest in its many branches.

1 Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim: 2276

What should be noted however is, encapsulating all the great luminaries of the Ahl al-Bayt is not intended in the ensuing chapters. This would prove extensive as time has recorded many a great personality born into the blessed family. Our aim is to concentrate on a few select personalities of the Banū Hāshim and Banū ‘Abd al-Muṭṭalib, starting with those who enjoyed the honor of being both companion and family; starting with the likes of ‘Alī, Ḥasan, Ḥusayn, Fāṭimah, ‘Ā’ishah, Ḥafṣah, Khadījah, ‘Abbās, and Ḥamzah رضي الله عنه. We will then move on to the some of the erudite scholars of the Ahl al-Bayt such as; Zayn al-‘Ābidīn, his son Bāqir, Ja‘far al-Ṣādiq, his son Kāzīm, Umm Kulthūm, Sukaynah, and the famed descendant of the Banū ‘Abd al-Muṭṭalib Muḥammad ibn Idrīs al-Shafī‘i. Furthermore, we will endeavour to mention those whom history has testified to their nobility and have distinctions that would be improbable to innumerate. Muḥammad ibn Ḥusayn al-Ājurrī رحمته الله has mentioned in his book *al-Sharī‘ah*<sup>1</sup>:

It is incumbent upon every believer, male and female to love the family of Rasūlullāh صلى الله عليه وآله, the Banū Hāshim and those that fall under its legion; ‘Alī, his children and progeny. Fāṭimah, her children and progeny. Ḥasan and Ḥusayn, their children and progeny. Ja‘far al-Ṭayyār, his children and progeny. Ḥamzah and his children. ‘Abbās, his children and progeny رضي الله عنه. These are the Ahl al-Bayt of Rasūlullāh صلى الله عليه وآله. It is compulsory upon every Muslim to love, revere, behave in an amicable fashion toward them, be patient with them, and pray for them. Whomsoever is good towards them and their progeny has imbued in himself the character of the noble, pious predecessors. Whoever is found to possess other than good qualities, we will pray for their rectification and protection.

I have not intended this book to be a mere historical recollection of their lives, I have rather hoped to relay some of the greatness from within their lives and pause at the junctions of evolution they endured. Perhaps we may follow them and find solace within them.

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<sup>1</sup> *Al-Sharī‘ah*: 2276/5.

فتشبهوا ان لم تكونوا مثلهم	ان التشبه بالكرام فلاح
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*Imitate them if you cannot be like them;*

*success is imitating nobility.*

In the pages to follow we will, Allah ﷻ willing, delve into the Ahl al-Bayt and mention some of their virtues. Thereafter, we will discuss the individuals of the Ahl al-Bayt beginning with Muḥammad ﷺ as he is the head of the house of prophethood. He is the best of creation and the pride of every Muslim. A man by whose life Allah ﷻ has taken an oath. An honor unparalleled. A nobility unmatched. Ibn ‘Abbās رضى الله عنه mentions under the commentary of the following verse:

لَعَدُّكَ إِنَّهُمْ لَفِي سَكْرَتِهِمْ يَعْمَهُونَ

*By your life, [O Muhammad], indeed they were, in their intoxication, wandering blindly.<sup>1</sup>*

Allah ﷻ has not created any soul more sacred to him than Muḥammad ﷺ. And I have not heard Allah ﷻ take an oath by the life of anyone besides his.<sup>2</sup>

Is there any nobility, greatness, and honor superior to this?

بمحمد خير البرية دينا	خلق الاله العالمين و زانهم
شرفا و مكن دينه تمكيننا	يكفيه ان حلف الاله بعمره

*The Lord created the world and weighed it;*

*against Muḥammad the best of creation.*

1 Sūrah al-Ḥijr: 72.

2 Narrated by Ibn Jarīr al-Ṭabarī: 526/7, Ḥarīth ibn Abī Usāmah as is in the *Zawā'id* of al-Ḥaythamī: 934/2, al-Suyūṭī in *al-Durr al-Manthūr*: 89/5 and has referenced Ibn Abī Shaybah, Abū Ya'la, Ibn al-Mundhir, Ibn Abī Ḥātim, Ibn Mardawayh, Abū Nu'aym, and Bayhaqī in his *Dalā'il*.

*Suffice to say the Lord swore by his life;  
a token of nobility and established his religion.*

Your brother,

Sayyid Ḥasan al-Ḥusaynī al-Shaf īī.



## Who are the Ahl al-Bayt

عن زيد بن أرقم انه قال قال قام رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم يوما فينا خطيبا بماء يدعى خما بين مكة والمدينة فحمد الله وأثنى عليه ووعظ وذكر ثم قال أما بعد ألا أيها الناس فإنما أنا بشر يوشك أن يأتي رسول ربي فأجيب وأنا تارك فيكم ثقلين أولهما كتاب الله فيه الهدى والنور فخذوا بكتاب الله واستمسكوا به فحث على كتاب الله ورغب فيه ثم قال وأهل بيتي أذكركم الله في أهل بيتي أذكركم الله في أهل بيتي أذكركم الله في أهل بيتي

Zayd ibn Arqam رضي الله عنه narrates: One day Allah's Messenger صلى الله عليه وسلم stood up to deliver sermon at a watering place known as Khumm situated between Makkah and Madīnah. He praised Allah, extolled Him and delivered the sermon and exhorted (us) and said, "O people, I am a human being. I am about to receive a messenger (the angel of death) from my Lord and I, in response to Allah's call, (would bid good-bye to you), but I am leaving among you two weighty things: the one being the Book of Allah in which there is right guidance and light, so hold fast to the Book of Allah and adhere to it." He exhorted (us) (to hold fast) to the Book of Allah and then said, "The second are the members of my household I remind you in the name of Allah (of your duties) to the members of my family I remind you in the name of Allah (of your duties) to the members of my family."<sup>1</sup>

Beloved brethren, amongst the foundations of Islamic creed lay the love of the family of Rasūlullāh صلى الله عليه وسلم as he has exhorted us thus, "I remind you in the name of Allah (of your duties) to the members of my family I remind you in the name of Allah (of your duties) to the members of my family." He gave this advice as he was returning from the holy pilgrimage at a watering place known as Khumm situated between Makkah and Madīnah. When he reached this place, he stood to advise and lecture the Companions. He then mentioned leaving two weighty things. What are they? They are, the Qur'ān and his family. Some scholars have stated, they have been indicated to as weighty due to their greatness and high standing. Other scholars have cited the reason for them being called weighty is due to the difficulty in complying them.

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1 *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*: 2408.

Deconstructing the narration leads one to the conclusion that Rasūlullāh ﷺ advised the Muslims regarding two tremendously important matters; the first being the compulsion of holding fast to and complying with the Book of Allah ﷻ. To know that it is the straight path, the beginning lies in this world and its end if followed will lead one into Jannah. The second matter that Rasūlullāh ﷺ stressed upon was his advice regarding the duties one has towards his family members. He advised Muslims to respect the sanctity of his household, realize their rights, and not to be averse towards them by ill talk or by harming them.

عديد الحصى والرمل في الفلوات	عليهم سلام الله في كل ساعة
و بشرى لهم لقياه في الجنات	هنياً لهم قربي النبي محمد
و اخراهم بالبشر والبركات	به شرفوا حتى استنارت حياتهم

*May the peace of Allah be upon them every moment;*

*according to the number of pebbles and grains of sand in the desert.*

*Glad tidings to them on having family ties with Muḥammad ﷺ;*

*and so too their meeting him in paradise*

*Through him their lives lit up casting them into nobility;*

*forever earning glad tidings and blessings.*

## Who form the Ahl al-Bayt regarding whom Rasūlullāh ﷺ exhorted us?

The scholars have differed in defining the Ahl al-Bayt, however the view of the general body of scholars retain them to be those who cannot receive zakāh, and they comprise of the Banū Hāshim and Banū al-Muṭṭalib. Rasūlullāh ﷺ is reported to have said:

إنا وبنو المطلب لا نفرق في جاهلية ولا إسلام وإنما نحن وهم شيء واحد وشبك بين أصابعه صلى  
الله عليه وسلم



We and the Banū al-Muṭṭalib have been together before and after the advent of Islam. We are one. Rasūlullāh ﷺ then placed his fingers into each other.<sup>1</sup>

Together with them are the honorable consorts of Rasūlullāh ﷺ. They form part of the Ahl al-Bayt through marriage. Their bond is an unbreakable one as they are his wives in this world and the next. Linguistically too the words ‘Āl’ and ‘Ahl’ are inclusive of a man’s wives, progeny, and relatives. The Qur’ān indicates towards this as well in the story of Mūsa عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ:

إِذْ قَالَ مُوسَىٰ لِأَهْلِهِ إِنِّي آنَسْتُ نَارًا

[Mention] when Moses said to his family, “Indeed, I have perceived a fire.”<sup>2</sup>

His family here being his wife who was with him.

Similarly, Allah ﷻ speaks about Ibrāhīm عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ and his wife:

رَحِمْتُ اللَّهَ وَبَرَكَاتُهُ عَلَيْكُمْ أَهْلَ الْبَيْتِ إِنَّهُ حَمِيدٌ مَّجِيدٌ

May the mercy of Allah and His blessings be upon you, people of the house. Indeed, He is Praiseworthy and Honorable.<sup>3</sup>

Therefore, the term Ahl al-Bayt comprises of the Banū Hāshim, Banū al-Muṭṭalib, and the wives of Rasūlullāh ﷺ. They have been granted certain specialties by Allah ﷻ which makes them unique in some aspects of which we will mention four:

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1 Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī: 3989. Abū Dāwūd: 2980. The wording is of Abū Dāwūd through the narration of Jubayr ibn Muṭ‘im رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ.

2 Sūrah al-Naml: 7.

3 Sūrah al-Hūd: 73.

## 1. The Right of Love and Well Wishing

Love for every believer is a compulsion based on the creed we share, however love and well-wishing for the Ahl al-Bayt holds a special place in the heart of every believer. When the uncle of Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ ‘Abbās رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ complained to him on the untoward behavior of some of the Quraysh in relation to the Banū Hāshim, Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ offered the following:

والله لا يدخل قلب امرئ إيمان حتى يحبكم لله ولقرايتي

By Allah! Imān has not penetrated the heart of a man until he loves you (the Banū Hāshim) for the sake of Allah سُبْحَانَ رَبِّيَ الْعَلِيِّ and for the sake of my relation.<sup>1</sup>

## 2. The Right of the Ahl al-Bayt in One Fifth of the Ghanimah and in Fay’

Ghanimah is the spoils of war in contrast to fay which is achieved peacefully without battle. Allah سُبْحَانَ رَبِّيَ الْعَلِيِّ says:

وَأَعْلَمُوا أَنَّمَا غَنِمْتُمْ مِنْ شَيْءٍ فَإِنَّ لِلَّهِ خُمُسَهُ وَلِلرَّسُولِ وَلِذِي الْقُرْبَىٰ وَالْيَتَامَىٰ وَالْمَسَاكِينِ وَابْنِ السَّبِيلِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ أُمَّتُمْ بِاللَّهِ وَمَا أُنزِلْنَا عَلَىٰ عَبْدِنَا يَوْمَ الْفُرْقَانِ يَوْمَ التَّقَىٰ الْجَمْعَانِ وَاللَّهُ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ

*And know that anything you obtain of war booty - then indeed, for Allah is one fifth of it and for the Messenger and for [his] near relatives and the orphans, the needy, and the [stranded] traveller, if you have believed in Allah and in that which We sent down to Our Servant on the day of criterion - the day when the two armies met. And Allah, over all things, is competent.<sup>2</sup>*

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1 Narrated by Aḥmad in his *Musnad*: 1777/1755. The narration relies on Yazīd ibn Abi Yazīd regarding who there is a difference of opinion. Aḥmad Shākir has considered the narration to be ṣaḥīḥ in his examination of the *Musnad*: vol.3 pg. 210. Ibn Taymiyyah has considered it strong in his book *Iqtiḍā’ al-Sirāṭ al-Mustaqīm*: vol.1 pg.428 by citing other narrations which serve as a testimony to its meaning.

2 Sūrah al-Anfāl: 41.

This share is established for them after the passing of Rasūlullāh ﷺ as well.

### 3. The Impermissibility of Receiving Zakāh

The jurists are unanimous that the family of Rasūlullāh ﷺ are not allowed to take the monies of Zakāh just as it was impermissible for Rasūlullāh ﷺ himself. The Messenger ﷺ said:

إن الصدقة لا تنبغي لآل محمد، إنما هي أوساخ الناس

The Zakāh is not appropriate for the family of Muḥammad, it is but the filth of people.<sup>1</sup>

### 4. The Right of Sending Salutations upon them

Allah ﷻ says:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ وَمَلَائِكَتَهُ يُصَلُّونَ عَلَى النَّبِيِّ يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا صَلُّوا عَلَيْهِ وَسَلِّمُوا تَسْلِيمًا

*Indeed, Allah confers blessing upon the Prophet, and His angels [ask Him to do so]. O you who have believed, ask [Allah to confer] blessing upon him and ask [Allah to grant him] peace.<sup>2</sup>*

There is great virtue in this verse and it holds a high status as it shows us the manner of conferring salutations upon Rasūlullāh ﷺ. Sending salutations upon the family of Rasūlullāh ﷺ falls under the meaning of this verse as well. When Rasūlullāh ﷺ was asked regarding sending salutations upon him he replied with the following:

قولوا: اللهم صل على محمد وعلى آل محمد، كما صليت على إبراهيم وعلى آل إبراهيم إنك حميد مجيد، اللهم بارك على محمد وعلى آل محمد، كما باركت على إبراهيم وعلى آل إبراهيم إنك حميد مجيد

1 *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*: 1072.

2 *Sūrah al- Aḥzāb*: 56.

Say: O Allah! Send blessings upon Muḥammad and upon the family of Muḥammad as You sent blessings upon Ibrāhīm and upon the family of Ibrāhīm; indeed, you are praiseworthy and glorious. O Allah! Bless Muḥammad and the family of Muḥammad as You blessed Ibrāhīm and the family of Ibrāhīm; indeed, you are praise worthy and glorious.<sup>1</sup>

To reiterate, these chapters are in part a humble effort to bring to the fore some of the greatness of these giants, a concern on my part for the noble Ahl al-Bayt and illustrious Companions. They are, as the world has witnessed honourable and pious. The best of humanity after the prophets. Their noble endeavours in Islam are well accounted and are almost impossible to innumerate. Here are some of our responsibilities towards them. Make a concerted effort to study their legacy, read through the pages of their history, review their words and actions establishing upon it the yardstick of our life, and take them as our role models.

It is unfortunate that we suffice on displaying love for them without that love influencing our words, actions, and lives. True love demands the beloved be shadowed in every aspect by the lover. The poet aptly captures this with the following:

هذا محال في القياس بديع	تعصي الحبيب وأنت تزعم حبه
إن المحب لمن يحب مطيع	لو كان حبك صادقا لأطعته

*You disobey your beloved yet claim love;*

*this is an impossibility if you apply your mind.*

*If you genuinely love him then you would have obeyed him:*

*since the lover obeys the one, he loves.*

1 Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī: 319. Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim: 406. Both books have it from the narration of Ka'ab ibn 'Ujrah

رضي الله عنه.

## The Greatest Messenger

The self, pines for and becomes euphoric when conversing about our beloved. The heart softens and is restless when remembering him. The believer yearns to meet him in the Gardens of Paradise when he is mentioned. He is Muḥammad ibn ‘Abd Allāh ﷺ. The Messengers before him were made aware of his prophethood. The Jinn were in turmoil when he was sent. The skies were filled with powerful guards and burning flames to protect his message. When the time came close for him to be bestowed with prophethood, he would not walk past any tree or stone except to hear them offer greetings to him; Peace be upon you O Messenger of Allah.<sup>1</sup> The Arab lands bowed before him. The non-Arabs were in awe of him.

If you were to ask of his description it would be akin to your asking of the beauty of the full moon. He was the most handsome of men. He would inspire awe. Light and radiant in complexion. Of medium stature, not short nor was he too tall. His blessed head was moderately large with a large forehead. His nose was prominent and had a luster to it. Light would radiate from him. His blessed beard was thick and dense. The blessed mouth was moderately wide. The front teeth had a slight space between them. He was not fat nor was he too thin, his chest was broad and wide. His touch light and soft as though his hands were silk.

فكأنه قد صيغ كيف يشاء	بشر ولكن في صفات كامل
واللفظ در والشفاء شفاء	فالوجه بدر والسماط مليحة

*A man but one with qualities of perfection; as though he was created how he pleased.*

*His face as though the luminous moon; and his words pearls and means of cure.*

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1 The phenomenon of the trees and mountains greeting him is established in more than one narration. *Jāmi' al-Tirmidhī*, 3630 has recorded a portion of it. The following have also recorded it, al-Dāramī, vol. 1 pg. 12, Abū Nu‘aym in *Dalāil*, pg. 138. *Ḥākim*, vol. 2 pg. 620 from the narration of ‘Alī رضي الله عنه. Imām Muslim has narrated the incident of stones greeting him in his *Ṣaḥīḥ* from the narration of Jābir ibn Samurah رضي الله عنه wherein he narrates from Rasūlullāh ﷺ, “I know those specific stones which would greet me before prophethood.”

Allah ﷻ sent him in a time where the world was filled with the darkness of idol worship, soothsayers, bloodshed, and cutting off family ties. He called towards the worship of the Most Merciful. He was patient when belied, opposed, and threatened. Allah ﷻ raised his name and elevated his status. His miracles dazzled, and his proofs were apparent. Assisted by awe and forgiven of any mistakes. The first to rise from his grave and the first to intercede on the Day of Judgment. The Messenger with the most followers and the first to knock on the doors of Paradise. He was a grateful slave of Allah ﷻ standing for the night prayer vigil till his feet would swell. The coolness of his eyes lay in prayer. He would stand before Allah ﷻ sincere and fearful.

‘Abd Allāh ibn Shikhār رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ says:

أتيت النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم وهو يصلي ولجوفه أزيز كأزيز المرجل

I came into the presence of Rasūlullāh ﷺ while he was praying. The sound of a boiling cauldron could be heard from within him due his sobbing.<sup>1</sup>

He was most humble. He would sit with the poor and eat with the needy. He would mend his own footwear and help his family in their chores. Neither would he feel superior to the help nor would he rebuke them.

Anas ibn Mālik رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ says:

خدمت رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم عشر سنين ، والله ما قال لي أفا قط ، ولا قال لشيء لم فعلت كذا ، وهلا فعلت كذا

I served Rasūlullāh ﷺ for ten years. I swear by Allah not once did he utter a word of displeasure nor did he ever ask if I did such and such or why I did so and so.<sup>2</sup>

1 Abū Dāwūd, 904; Nasaī, 1214.

2 Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī, 5691; Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim, 3309, with its wording.

He would honour the elderly and be humble with the young. Far from pride, haughtiness and ostentation. He would say, “I am merely a servant, therefore say the servant and Messenger of Allah.”<sup>1</sup>

He had turned his attention away from this life and focused on the everlasting one. He would often say, “What have I to do with this world? What am I to this world? I am like a traveller who has taken shade under a tree then left and went on his way.”<sup>2</sup>

Months would go by and no cooking fire would be lit in his house. He would spend nights in succession with nothing to eat nor would his family have supper. ‘Umar ibn al Khaṭṭāb رضي الله عنه says:

لقد رأيت رسول الله -صلى الله عليه وسلم-، يظل اليوم يلتوي ما يجد دَقْلاً ما يملأ به بطنه

I had seen Rasūlullāh صلى الله عليه وسلم spend days in adversity not finding even poor-quality dates to fill his stomach.<sup>3</sup>

و سما لآخرة بها النعماء	زهد الدنيا مترفعاً متواضعاً
و مضى يجوع لتشبع الفقراء	جاءت مفاتيح الكنوز فردّها
إلا تميرات لديه و ماءً	يمضي الهلال مع الهلال ولا يرى

*He distanced himself from the world humbly; his gaze on the hereafter and its blessings.*

*The keys of treasures were dangled in front of him; he ignored it preferring hunger, so the poor may have their fill.*

*Months would go by and would not be seen; except a few dates and water.*

He was not fond of bragging. Some people came to him and said, “O Messenger of Allah, O the best of us and the son of the best of us, O our master and son of our

1 Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī, 3261;

2 Jāmi' al-Tirmidhī, 2377 and has termed it as ḥasan ṣaḥīḥ; Ibn Mājah, 4109.

3 Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim, 2978.

master.” He replied to them saying, “O people keep your speech moderate and do not let the devil entice you.”<sup>1</sup>

Where are the extremists who go beyond the bounds in his love? Where are those who ascribe to him that which he is not? Where do you fall in comparison to his teachings?

He would say:

انا محمد بن عبد الله أنا عبد الله ورسوله ما أحب أن ترفعوني فوق منزلتي التي أنزلني الله

I am Muḥammad ibn ‘Abd Allāh. The servant of Allah ﷻ and his Messenger. I swear by Allah! I do not like you to raise me to a status above that which Allah ﷻ has placed me upon.<sup>2</sup>

A man came to him and said, “As Allah ﷻ wishes and as you wish.” Rasūlullāh ﷺ retorted by saying, “Do you make me as partner with Allah ﷻ? Rather say, as Allah wishes exclusively.”<sup>3</sup>

The Companions loved him immensely. When he spoke, they would listen attentively. When he issued a command, they would vie with each other in fulfilling the same. Anas رضي الله عنه says, “There wasn’t a soul more beloved to them than Rasūlullāh ﷺ.”<sup>4</sup> The Companions had achieved the honour of meeting him, and it was they who revered him more than any other generation to come could. ‘Urwah ibn Mas‘ūd al-Thaqafī رضي الله عنه relates this in his own words as he returns to the Quraysh after the Ḥudaybiyah incident:

اي قوم! والله! لقد وفدت على الملوك؛ وفدت على قيصر وكسرى والنجاشي، والله! إن رأيت ملكاً قط يعظمه أصحابه ما يعظم أصحاب محمد محمداً والله! إن نتخمن نخامة إلا وقعت في كف رجل منهم،

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1 Aḥmad in his *Musnad*, 13041; Nasa’ī in *al-Kubrā*, 10078; ‘Abd ibn Ḥumayd in his *Musnad*, 1309 from the narration of Anas ibn Mālik.

2 Ibid

3 Al-Bukhārī in *al-Adab al-Mufrad*, 783. Ibn Mājah in his *Sunan*, 2117.

4 *Jāmi‘ al-Tirmidhī*, 2754; *Mishkāt al-Maṣābiḥ*, 4698.



فذلك بها وجهه وجلده، وإذا أمرهم ابتدروا أمره، وإذا ترضأ كادوا يقتتلون على وِضْوئِهِ، وإذا تكلم خفضوا أصواتهم عنده، وما يُحْدُونَ إِلَيْهِ النِّظْرَ تَعْظِيمًا لَهُ

O people of Quraysh, I have visited the kings of the world, and I have had audiences with Caesar and Khosrow -the Persian emperor, and with the Negus, and I have never seen the followers of a king so devoted to their leader like the Companions in their devotion to Muḥammad ﷺ! And I have never seen any obedience amongst the followers of the kings like I have seen of the Saḥābah with the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ. When Muḥammad ﷺ spits, they rush to receive the saliva in their hands before it touches the ground and wipe their faces with it. Whenever he would give them a command they would rush to do it. When he makes Wudhu, they fight with one another to collect some drops of the used water before it falls to the ground. When they speak in his presence, they speak softly. They do not lift their eyes to look at his face, out of respect for him.<sup>1</sup>

He had imbued in himself the purest of character and noblest of qualities. He would venerate his family and deal with them in the best of manners. When his daughter Fāṭimah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا comes to him, he stands, takes her by her hand, kisses her, and makes her sit in his place.<sup>2</sup> Rasūlullāh ﷺ is reported to have said, “The best amongst you are those who are best to their families, and I am the best to my family.”<sup>3</sup> His creator attested to his high character:

وَإِنَّكَ لَعَلَىٰ خُلُقٍ عَظِيمٍ

*And indeed, you are of a great moral character.*<sup>4</sup>

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1 Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī, 2581

2 Sunan Abū Dāwūd, 5217; Jāmi' al-Tirmidhī, 3872; Ibn Ḥibbān in his Ṣaḥīḥ, 6953; al-Bukhārī in al-Adab al-Mufrad, 948.

3 Jāmi' al-Tirmidhī, 3895; Ibn Mājah, 1977.

4 Sūrah al-Qalam: 4.

He faced the hardest of lives and lived the most intense challenges. His people harmed him with their tongues and hands. Slandered him with insanity, sorcery, and falsification. The disbelievers said, “He is a liar and a sorcerer!” In the Battle of Uḥud a part of his tooth broke, the links of armor penetrated his face, and his blood flowed. They hurt him, caused him to shed tears, ousted him, exiled him from his land, and stripped him of everything. All because he called toward the oneness of his Lord and protected his creed. He would stand before his Lord, hurt and grieving, complaining to him:

اللهم إليك أشكو ضعف قوتي ، وقلة حيلتي ، وهواني على الناس ، أرحم الراحمين ، أنت أرحم الراحمين ، إلى من تكلني ، إلى عدو يتجهمني ، أو إلى قريب ملكته أمري ، إن لم تكن غضبان علي فلا أبالي ، غير أن عافيتك أوسع لي ، أعوذ بنور وجهك الذي أشرقت له الظلمات ، وصلح عليه أمر الدنيا والآخرة ، أن تنزل بي غضبك ، أو تحل علي سخطك ، لك العتبي حتى ترضى ، ولا حول ولا قوة إلا بك

O Allah, unto you alone do I complain of my weakness, lack of means and helplessness before the people – O Most Merciful! You are the Lord of the weak, and you are my Lord. Whom do you entrust me to, someone who treats me harshly, or to an enemy whom you have given power over me? But if you are not angry with me, I do not mind. However, your comfort is easier for me. I seek refuge by the light of your countenance that removes the darkness, and which sets things right in this world and the hereafter, that your anger should descend on me. Unto you I submit my will until you are pleased with me. And there is no power nor might except yours.<sup>1</sup>

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1 This is known as the prayer of Ṭāif. After the passing of Abū Ṭālib the Makkans intensified in their persecution. He went out to Ṭāif hoping that perhaps they may come to his aid. They however ran him out of the city and pelted him with stones till his feet bled. With him was his freed slave Zayd رضي الله عنه who was protecting his life till they returned to Makkah where he said this prayer in a state of grief. *Al-Sīrah al-Nabawīyah* of Ibn Kathīr, vol. 2 pg. 150. *Zād al-Ma‘ād* of Ibn Qayyim, vol.3 pg.28. Al-Suyūṭī has narrated it in *Al-Jāmi‘ al-Saghīr* citing al-Ṭabarānī. Al-Ṭabarānī recorded this Ḥadīth in his *al-Kabīr* as a report of ‘Abd Allā ibn Ja‘far, briefly. In it the supplication is mentioned. Al-Haythamī said in his *Majma‘* (6/35), “In it falls Ibn Ishāq, who dropped down names of narrators although himself trustworthy. The rest of the narrators are reliable.” Therefore, the report is weak because of Ibn Ishāq not naming the transmitter according to some like al-Albānī. Al-Ṣābūnī mentions in *Sīrah al-Nabawīyah al-Ṣaḥīḥah* (pg. 108) that the narrations of Ibn Ishāq strengthen each other. Similarly, Ibrāhīm al-‘Alī has graded it as strong in *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Sīrah* pg. 98. And Allah سبحانه وتعالى knows best.

After suffering these hardships did Rasūlullāh ﷺ give up calling to the oneness of Allah ﷻ? Never! This path is taken by great men of valour. The path of calling towards monotheism. The Beloved ﷺ was subjected to untold hardships and tasted the bitter reality of those who belied him for twenty-three years. Neither did he sleep, nor did he rest. He gave his blood and tears for the cause of Islam. He gave his wealth and his possessions. His day and night. He did not rest until he established this creed and spread Islam. Until he proclaimed, “There is no God besides Allah.”

Respected reader, it is a grave injustice to Rasūlullāh ﷺ to measure him against any of these thousands of great men whose names shine through the dark pages of history. Some were great thinkers they however lacked sentiment. Some were eloquent with unearthly imaginations, they however lacked depth of thought. Some were great leaders however their lives and character matched the depraved in society. As for Muḥammad ﷺ, he defined true greatness. With other great men, there was always some skeletons in their closets which they would attempt to hide; to keep from people, which exposed their depravity, feebleness, or family problems.

Muḥammad ﷺ on the other end of the spectrum, left his life bare for anyone to examine. His life was an open book, no pages hidden, nor any lines smudged. Anyone could read therein whatever he pleased. Point me in the direction of any other, who would dare to say to the world, “This is my entire life and actions, study it friend and foe alike and find what you may in it.” Show me another great whose life has been compiled so meticulously, whose life, both public and private we study after the passing of fourteen hundred years like we do with Muḥammad ﷺ.<sup>1</sup>

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1 Sayyid Rijāl al-Tārikh, ‘Alī al-Ṭanṭāwī. pg. 12 with some variations.

## Khadījah bint Khuwaylid رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا

The Muslim women of today can achieve true success by following in the footsteps of the best of women who lived in the best of eras. The pious will be thrilled to stick behind such women who were nurtured in the best of homes; the home of *nubuwwah*.<sup>1</sup> Allah ﷻ raised their status and elevated their rank. He revealed verses of the Holy Qur’ān in praise of them:

يَا نِسَاءَ النَّبِيِّ لَسْتُنَّ كَأَحَدٍ مِّنَ النِّسَاءِ إِنِ اتَّقَيْتُنَّ

*O wives of the Prophet, you are not like anyone among women. If you fear Allah.*<sup>2</sup>

They had most definitely inculcated *Taqwā*<sup>3</sup> within themselves. Allah ﷻ had chosen them for his beloved Prophet ﷺ from all of creation. He bestowed upon them superiority; they transcended the women of the world by the virtue of nobility and greatness. He cleansed them from physical and spiritual maladies, freeing their hearts from disbelief, polytheism, hypocrisy, and evil disposition. He purified the honourable consorts of Rasūlullāh ﷺ from actions which beget calamities. Allah the High says:

يَا نِسَاءَ النَّبِيِّ لَسْتُنَّ كَأَحَدٍ مِّنَ النِّسَاءِ إِنِ اتَّقَيْتُنَّ فَلَا تَخْضَعْنَ بِالْقَوْلِ فَيَطْمَعَ الَّذِي فِي قَلْبِهِ مَرَضٌ وَقَلْنَ قَوْلًا مَّعْرُوفًا

*O wives of the Prophet, you are not like anyone among women. If you fear Allah, then do not be soft in speech [to men], lest he in whose heart is disease should covet, but speak with appropriate speech.*<sup>4</sup>

وَقَرْنَ فِي بُيُوتِكُنَّ وَلَا تَبَرَّجْنَ تَبَرُّجَ الْجَاهِلِيَّةِ الْأُولَىٰ وَأَقِمْنَ الصَّلَاةَ وَآتِينَ الزَّكَاةَ وَأَطِعْنَ اللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُ إِنَّمَا يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ لِيُذْهِبَ عَنْكُمُ الرِّجْسَ أَهْلَ الْبَيْتِ وَيُطَهِّرَكُمْ تَطْهِيرًا

1 Prophethood.

2 Sūrah al- Aḥzāb: 32.

3 Consciousness of Allah ﷻ.

4 Sūrah al- Aḥzāb: 32.

*And abide in your houses and do not display yourselves as [was] the display of the former times of ignorance. And establish prayer and give zakāh and obey Allah and His Messenger. Allah intends only to remove from you the impurity [of sin], O people of the [Prophet's] household, and to purify you with [extensive] purification.<sup>1</sup>*

As we have previously established the wives of Rasūlullāh ﷺ form part of the Ahl al-Bayt.

This chapter is dedicated to one of the wives of Rasūlullāh ﷺ. The mother of the believers, an intelligent woman of noble heritage; Umm al-Qāsim Khadījah bint Khuwaylid ibn Asad رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهَا. She grew up having instilled in herself qualities of good and having adorned herself with refined mannerisms. She was known for her chastity and nobility. In Makkah her title was *Ṭāhirah*<sup>2</sup>. Rasūlullāh ﷺ married her and she was an enviable spouse. She was a pillar of support for Rasūlullāh ﷺ with herself, her money and her intelligence. She was also an emotional stronghold for her husband, confiding in her his worries and challenges.

Strange is the sentiment that envelopes us with the mere mention of the name Khadījah. It takes us back centuries to the first call towards Islam. The faith emerged from her home and she was the first person of this ummah to believe. The historian Ibn al-Athīr رَحِمَهُ اللهُ writes:

خديجة أول خلق الله أسلم بإجماع المسلمين ، لم يقدمها رجل ولا امرأة

There is consensus of the Muslims that Khadījah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهَا was the first of the creation to accept the creed of Islam, no woman or man preceded her in accepting Islam.<sup>3</sup>

When Allah ﷻ intended sending guidance to a world devoid of the light of tawhīd<sup>4</sup>, he sent Muḥammad ﷺ with a message of mercy to every individual

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1 Ibid: 34

2 Pure.

3 *Usud al Ghābah*, vol. 5 pg. 434.

4 Monotheism.

in all times. Whilst meditating in the cave of Ḥirā truth came to him by way of an angel.

The angel came to him and asked him to read. The Prophet ﷺ replied, “I do not know how to read.” The Prophet added, “The angel caught me [forcefully] and pressed me so hard that I could not bear it any more. He then released me and again asked me to read and I replied, ‘I do not know how to read.’ He caught me again and pressed me a second time till I could not bear it any more. He then released me and again asked me to read but again I replied, ‘I do not know how to read.’ He caught me for the third time and pressed me, and then released me and said:

اقْرَأْ بِاسْمِ رَبِّكَ الَّذِي خَلَقَ خَلَقَ الْإِنْسَانَ مِنْ عَلَقٍ اقْرَأْ وَرَبُّكَ الْأَكْرَمُ الَّذِي عَلَّمَ بِالْقَلَمِ عَلَّمَ  
الْإِنْسَانَ مَا لَمْ يَعْلَمْ

*Read in the name of your Lord who created. Created man from a clinging substance.  
Recite, and your Lord is the most generous. Who taught by the pen. Taught man  
that which he knew not.<sup>1</sup>*

The Messenger of Allah returned with the inspiration and with his heart beating fast. He went to his wife, Khadījah bint Khuwaylid رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا and said, “Cover me! Cover me!” She covered him until his fear had passed. He then told her what had transpired, following it by saying, “I fear something may happen to me.” What was the response of the intelligent Khadījah? She pacified him with a strong heart and said, “Never! By Allah, Allah will never disgrace you. You keep good relations with your kith and kin, carry the weak, help the poor, serve your guests generously, and assist the calamity-afflicted ones.”<sup>2</sup>

Such was her reaction – she had such confidence in his integrity and soundness of mind and spirit, and she possessed such maturity of thought, that she immediately

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1 Sūrah al-‘Alaq

2 The Messenger of Allah ﷺ was famed for these characteristics toward friend or foe. The narration appears in *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, 6467 and *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, 231. Narrated by ‘Ā’ishah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا.

quelled his anxiety and doubts of sanity, instead gave him support from the very first moment his Prophethood came into being.

This is how a pious intelligent woman reacts. She stands at the side of her husband, helping and supporting him with her speech and actions.

Rasūlullāh ﷺ began spreading the message of his Lord in Makkah while being on the receiving end of taunts, jeers, and physical abuse from his own clan and family. ‘Urwah ibn Zubayr رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ once asks ‘Abd Allāh ibn ‘Amr ibn al-Ās رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ of the worst Rasūlullāh ﷺ had been subjected to by the polytheists of Makkah. He replies by saying, “While Allah’s Apostle was praying in the courtyard of the Ka’bah, ‘Uqbah ibn Abī Mu’īṭ came and seized Allah’s Messenger and twisted his garment round his neck and throttled him severely. Abū Bakr رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ came and seized ‘Uqbah’s shoulder and threw him away from Allah’s Messenger ﷺ and said, “Would you kill a man because he says, ‘My Lord is Allah’?”<sup>1</sup>

Abū Lahab would follow Rasūlullāh ﷺ in the markets and gatherings of people with the sole purpose of belying him publicly whilst his wife, Umm Jamīl, would gather thorns and place it in the path of Rasūlullāh ﷺ.<sup>2</sup>

Oppression and torment. Harm and ridicule. Degradation with no end in sight. Through these tough times Khadījah bint Khuwaylid رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ was there for Rasūlullāh ﷺ at every turn. She gave him her heart and mind. Sympathy and a strong mind was from amongst her strengths. He would return to her after having abuses hurled at him, she would pacify him and keep him steadfast. She was a great woman and a devoted spouse. Never once did she rudely talk back to Rasūlullāh ﷺ nor did she harm him in any way. The result of this devotion can be gauged by the following narration:

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1 *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, 3475.

2 *Ṣaḥīḥ Ibn Khuzaymah*: 159, ‘Allāmah Ḥabīb al-Raḥmān al-Ā‘zamī has graded it as Ṣaḥīḥ in his critical analysis of the book. *Ṣaḥīḥ Ibn Ḥibbān*, 6562. ‘Allāmah al-Dhahabī has graded it as Ṣaḥīḥ in *al-Talkhīs ‘alā al-Mustadrak*, 4219

أتى جبريلُ النبيَّ صلى الله عليه وسلم فقال: يا رسولَ الله، هذه خديجةٌ قد أتت معها إناء فيه إدام، أو طعام، أو شراب، فإذا هي أتتك فاقرأ عليها السلام من ربها، ومَنِّي، وبشْرُها بيت في الجنة من قصب، لا صخب فيه ولا نصب

It had been related by Abū Hurayrah رضي الله عنه that on one occasion, Jibrīl عليه السلام came to the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and said, “O Messenger of Allah, Khadījah is coming with a bowl of soup (or food or drink) for you. When she comes to you, give her greetings of peace from her Lord and from me, and give her the good news of a palace of jewels in Jannah, where there will be neither any noise nor any fatigue.”<sup>1</sup>

Ibn al-Qayyim expounding on her receiving greetings from Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى says, “This is an honour not known by any other women besides her.”<sup>2</sup> Suhaylī mentions her palace in Jannah is a reflection and reward for the calm and tranquil environment that she herself generated for her husband. Neither did she raise her voice above his, nor did she cause him distress.<sup>3</sup>

Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم worked to be sure that Khadījah رضي الله عنها was remembered in the best light, and he would comment, “I have been instilled with her love.”<sup>4</sup> ‘Ā’ishah al-Ṣiddīqah رضي الله عنها says, “When Rasūlullāh صلى الله عليه وسلم would talk of Khadījah رضي الله عنها, he wouldn’t tire in enumerating her virtues nor would he stop seeking forgiveness on her behalf.”<sup>5</sup>

1 *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, 3609, *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, 2432.

2 *Zād al-Ma’ād*, vol.1 pg.102

3 *Al-Bidāyah wa al-Nihāyah*, vol. 3 pg. 128. Ibn Kathīr has narrated it in his book on Sīrah as well, vol. 2 pg. 133.

4 *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, 2435.

5 *Al-Ṭabarānī in al-Kabīr*, vol. 13 pg. 13/21. Al-Haythamī classified the chain of narrators as sound in his *Majma’* vol. 9 pg. 224. Ibn ‘Asākir comments after mentioning this narration in his book *al-Arba’in fi Manāqib Ummahāt al-Mu’minīn*, vol. 1 pg. 56, “The narration is gharīb no one is known to have narrated it from ‘Abd Allāh al-Bahī besides Wā’il ibn Dāwūd al-Laythī al-Kūfī رضي الله عنه, and Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى knows best.”



She was pious, and she imbued piety in her house, the rewards of which she reaped in the form of her and her daughter being the best women of Jannah.

The best of the women of Paradise are Khadījah bint Khuwaylid, Fāṭimah bint Muḥammad, Āsiyah bint Mazāḥim the wife of Pharaoh, and Maryam bint ‘Imrān.<sup>1</sup>

يا خدرها كم كنت مشرق رحمة	و كم استفاض النور فيك و غردا
ويجيء جبريل الامين محييا	من ربه يلقي السلام مرددا
و مبشرا بالبيت من قصب لها ما	في قمة الفردوس ربي شيئا
مثل خدرك يا خديجة رفعة	طهرا و تشريفا و مجدا مفردا
لولا حراء لكنت اول منزل	اهدى الى الدنيا الرسالة والهدى

*O, her room so radiant with mercy, illuminated by divine light.*

*Jibrīl would come with greetings, from his Lord repeatedly.*

*Giving glad tidings of a palace of jewels, in the highest stations of Paradise.*

*Where to find a room like yours, O Khadījah, brimming with purity and honour.*

*If it weren't for the cave of Ḥirā your house would have been, the first to receive guidance.*

<sup>1</sup> Musnad Imām Aḥmad: 2668/2903. Ṣaḥīḥ Ibn Ḥibbān: 7010. Musnad Abū Ya'la: 2722.

## ‘Ā’ishah bint al-Ṣiddīq

Beloved reader, we now present before you the life of Umm al-Mu’minīn ‘Ā’ishah bint al-Ṣiddīq رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهَا. Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى had bestowed her with acute intelligence, a sound mind, and great knowledge. Her contribution to the legacy of Islam was profound just as her narrations are many. She bared to the world the blessed life of Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ, expounding on its many angles. Together with this, her divinely inspired juristic reasoning led her to be the teacher of the ummah in its entirety. She is Umm al-Mu’minīn ‘Ā’ishah bint al-Imām al-Ṣiddīq al-Akbar. The daughter of the vicegerent of Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ, Abū Bakr ‘Abd Allāh ibn Abī Quḥāfah ‘Uthmān ibn ‘Āmir ibn ‘Amr ibn Ka’b ibn Sa’d ibn Taym ibn Murrah ibn Ka’b ibn Lu’ay. She is the Mother of the Believers, the noble Consort of Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ. She is amongst the most well versed in the sciences of the Qur’ān, Sunnah, Fiqh, Arabic literature, Arabic poetry, and medicine.

Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ says:

كَمَلُ مِنَ الرِّجَالِ كَثِيرٌ وَلَمْ يَكْمَلْ مِنَ النِّسَاءِ غَيْرُ مَرْيَمَ بِنْتِ عِمْرَانَ وَأَسِيَةَ امْرَأَةِ فِرْعَوْنَ وَإِنْ فَضَلَ عَائِشَةَ عَلَى  
النِّسَاءِ كَفَضَلَ الثَّرِيدَ عَلَى سَائِرِ الطَّعَامِ

Many amongst men attained perfection but amongst women none attained perfection except Maryam—the daughter of ‘Imrān, and Āsiyah—the wife of Fir’aun. And the superiority of ‘Ā’ishah to other women is like the superiority of *Tharīd*<sup>1</sup> to other meals.<sup>2</sup>

What knowledge, intellect and deep understanding did she possess to receive such an accolade! ‘Allāmah al-Dhahabī رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ writes regarding the Mother of the believers, the noble Consort of Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ, ‘Ā’ishah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهَا, “She is the most knowledgeable woman of this ummah without any doubt.”<sup>3</sup>

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1 An Arabic dish prepared from meat and bread.

2 *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, 3230; *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, 2431.

3 *Siyar A’lām al-Nubalā’*, vol. 2 pg. 135.

She was born in Makkah al-Mukarramah eight years before the emigration and was married to Rasūlullāh ﷺ in the second year after the Hijrah. She has narrated from him more than any of his other wives and was from amongst his most beloved of wives.

‘Amr ibn al-Ās رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ once asked the Prophet of Allah ﷺ, “Who amongst people are most beloved to you?”

He replied, “‘Ā’ishah.”

I then said, “And from the males?”

He replied, “Her father.”<sup>1</sup>

Abū Mūsa al-Ash’arī رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ paying tribute to her knowledge says:

ما أشكل علينا أصحاب رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم حديث قط، فسألنا عنه عائشة إلا وجدنا عندها منه علما

When we—the Ṣaḥābah—were faced with difficulty in understanding any narration, we went to ‘Ā’ishah and promptly found her to have some knowledge regarding it.<sup>2</sup>

She was unique in her understanding of matters with her sound mind, sharp intellect, deep knowledge, and enviable memory. It was her insatiability of the sciences that led her to question and seek clarification on matters she did not fully grasp. Take for example, when Rasūlullāh ﷺ said, “Whoever is taken to account on the Day of Resurrection will be punished.”

‘Ā’ishah said, “Has not Allah ﷻ said, ‘He will soon have an easy reckoning?’

The Prophet ﷺ said, “That is not the reckoning, for that is only the presentation of deeds. Whoever is thoroughly taken to account will be punished.”<sup>3</sup>

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1 Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī, 3462; Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim, 2384.

2 Jāmi’ al-Tirmidhī, 3883; Mishkāt al-Maṣābiḥ, 6185.

3 Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī, 3462; Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim, 2384.

Her exposure to the Qur’ān from a young age through the recitation of her father is one of the reasons that established her as an authority in the science of *tafsīr* (exegesis of the Qur’ān). We can appreciate this sentiment through the following statement of hers:

The verse:

بَلِ السَّاعَةُ مَوْعِدُهُمْ وَالسَّاعَةُ أَدْهَىٰ وَأَمَرٌ

*But the Hour is their appointment [for due punishment], and the Hour is more disastrous and more bitter.*<sup>1</sup>

was revealed upon Rasūlullāh ﷺ in Makkah whilst I was playing as a young girl. Additionally Sūrah al-Baqarah and Sūrah al-Nisā was revealed to him whilst I was in his presence.<sup>2</sup>

She was honoured by being the only consort who would attest to the revelation, as has been narrated from Rasūlullāh ﷺ:

والله ما نزل علي الوحي وأنا في لحاف امرأة منكن غيرها

By Allah! revelation does not descend upon me when I am under the (same) sheet with any woman except ‘Ā’ishah.<sup>3</sup>

Furthermore, she would question Rasūlullāh ﷺ on the meaning of certain verses and the indication of others. She was therefore blessed with being in his company at the time of revelation thereby listening to the revelation immediately, together with gaining the understanding of the said verses from Rasūlullāh ﷺ himself. Consider all of this with her knowledge of the Arabic language, her eloquence, and fluency of expression.

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1 Sūrah al-Qamar: 46.

2 *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, 4707.

3 *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, 3564.

Looking at her accomplishments in the field of ḥadīth, we find her to be amongst the giants of this field. She is in the top tier of narrators, together with Abū Hurayrah, ‘Abd Allāh ibn ‘Umar, ‘Abd Allāh ibn ‘Abbās, and Anas ibn Mālik رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُمْ. Her narrations are however unique as they deal with the noble actions of Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ, more so those moments which pertain to his marital and private life, which none besides his noble consorts had access to.

It would be unwise to think that she reached this status solely due to knowledge. Her good actions were far greater than her knowledge. One is astounded reading through her life story, her patience in teaching the masses, her steadfastness in the worship of Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى and standing before him. Her nephew, Qāsim ibn Muḥammad رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ, relates:

كنت إذا غدوت بدات بيت عائشة أسلم عليها فغدوت يوماً فإذا هي قائمة تسبح وتقرأ فممن الله علينا ووقانا عذاب السموم انا كنا من قبل ندعوه انه هو البر الرحيم وتدعو وتبكي ترددها فقممت حتى مللت القيام فذهبت إلى السوق لحاجتي ثم رجعت فإذا هي قائمة تصلي وتبكي رضي الله عنها.

I would begin my day passing the house of my aunt, ‘Ā’ishah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهَا, greeting her. On one such occasion I came by her home whilst she was standing in prayer, crying, whilst reciting and repeating the verses:

فَمَنْ اللَّهُ عَلَيْنَا وَوَقَانَا عَذَابَ السَّمُومِ

So Allah conferred favour upon us and protected us from the punishment of the Scorching Fire.

إِنَّا كُنَّا مِنْ قَبْلُ نَدْعُوهُ إِنَّهُ هُوَ الْبَرُّ الرَّحِيمُ

Indeed, we used to supplicate Him before. Indeed, it is He who is the Beneficent, the Merciful.<sup>1</sup>

I waited till I tired of standing and carried on to the market place fulfilling my needs of the day. Much later I returned only to find her standing in prayer just as she was when I had left her.<sup>2</sup>

1 Sūrah al-Ṭūr: 27,28.

2 *Ṣifah al-Ṣafwah*, vol. 2 pg. 31

Subḥān Allāh, such steadfastness and perseverance in worship!

لفضلت النساء على الرجال	ولو كان النساء كمن ذكرنا
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*If all women were like her, they would be given preference over men too.*

‘Urwah ibn Zubayr رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ mentions regarding her:

كانت عاتشة رضي الله عنها لا تمسك شيئاً مما جاءها من رزق الله تعالى إلا تصدقت به وتصدقت بسبعين ألف درهم وانها لترقع جانب درعها

‘Ā’ishah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهَا wouldn’t come by any provisions expect that she would give it in charity. She had, in one day, given in charity seventy thousand silver coins, whilst her garment was filled with patches.<sup>1</sup>

Allah ﷻ tests those slaves of his whom he loves, and the severity of the test is according to one’s level of faith. ‘Ā’ishah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهَا was slandered in the incident of Ifk whilst only twelve years of age. She says, “My tears were incessant, and I never had a wink of sleep, my parents feared my crying would claim my life.”<sup>2</sup> Ibn Kathīr رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ says, “Allah ﷻ responded on her behalf and revealed her innocence in ten verses of the Qur’ān which will be read till the end of time, thereby elevating her status and proving her chaste nature while she was still a young girl. Allah ﷻ has given testimony to her purity and has promised her forgiveness and noble provision. Allah ﷻ is pleased with her, pure and chaste, truthful and noble, ‘Ā’ishah, Mother of the believers, noble Consort of Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ.

‘Ā’ishah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهَا passed away at the age of sixty-six, etching a rich legacy into the sciences of ḥadīth and Islamic jurisprudence, having committed to memory thousands of narrations from Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ. She lived on after Rasūlullāh

1 The latter portion of the narration is found in *Ṭabaqāt ibn Sa’d*, vol. 8 pg. 66 and Hannād ibn Sarī in *Zuhd*, 612. The beginning is part of narration found in *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, 3314.

2 *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, 3910; *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, 2770.

صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ, clearing misconceptions and exemplifying the Muslim women. She had amassed all angles of Islamic knowledge ḥadīth, fiqh, and tafsīr supplementing it with her knowledge of medicine, poetry and genealogy. ‘Urwah ibn Zubayr رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ says regarding her:

ما رأيت أحدا أعلم بالقرآن ولا بفريضة ولا بحرام ولا بحلال ولا بشعر ولا بحديث العرب ولا بنسب  
من عائشة

I have yet to come across someone more knowledgeable than ‘Ā’ishah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا in the sciences of the Qur’ān, in the intricacies of inheritance, in the matters of the lawful and unlawful, in poetry and history of the Arabs, and in genealogy.<sup>1</sup>

‘Allāmah al-Dhahabī makes mention of her in the following words:

وكانت امرأة بيضاء جميلة ، ومن ثم يقال لها : الحميراء ، ولم يتزوج النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم بكرة غيرها ، ولا أحب امرأة حبها ، ولا أعلم في أمة محمد صلى الله عليه وسلم ، بل ولا في النساء مطلقا ،  
امرأة أعلم منها

She was of fair complexion, beautiful and therefore known as *Ḥumayrā’* (little red one). Apart from her, all the other wives of Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ were previously married and his love for her was unparalleled. I do not know of any women in this ummah or otherwise more knowledgeable than her.<sup>2</sup>

May Allah سُبحانه وتعالى be pleased with her and shower her with his choicest blessings.

As I conclude this brief glimpse into the life of this great stalwart of Islam, I ask of you, where are the women of Islam today in relation to the fields of knowledge in which she excelled, ḥadīth, fiqh, and tafsīr.

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1 *Ḥilyat al-Awliyā’*, vol. 2 pg. 50; *Muʿjam al-Kabīr*, vol. 23 pgs. 128/294; *Muṣannaf ibn Abi Shaybah*, 26048/31038.

2 *Siyar A’lām al-Nubalā’*, vol. 2 pg. 135.

## Umm Salamah al-Makhzūmiyah

Let us now delve into the life of this virtuous and patient woman, Umm Salamah رضي الله عنها. Her name is Hind bint Abū Umayyah al-Makhzūmiyah al-Qurashiyyah, though she is famous by her *kuniyah*<sup>1</sup>, Umm Salamah, and is no doubt amongst the most noble of women in character and mind. Her father, from the chiefs of the Quraysh and she, the cousin of both Khālid ibn Walīd رضي الله عنه and Abū Jahal ibn Hishām. She was from amongst the first to accept the faith in Makkah in the early days of Islam, due to which she suffered various kinds of torment as was the case with the early Muslims. Before coming into the marriage of Rasūlullāh صلى الله عليه وسلم she was married to Abū Salamah ibn ‘Abd al-Asad al-Makhzūmī, a pious man in his own right. She emigrated with him to Abyssinia fleeing the persecution of the Quraysh and safeguarding their faith. In the interim a son was born to her who was named Salamah.

News from several avenues reached those who emigrated to Abyssinia of the relative safety in Makkah for the Muslims, as their numbers had increased. Furthermore, news of ‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb and Ḥamzah ibn ‘Abd al-Muṭṭalib رضي الله عنه embracing Islam, giving strength to the cause, and stopping the persecutions of the Quraysh spread like wildfire. A group of the recent emigrants decided to travel back to their home land in view of these changes, amongst them were Umm Salamah and her husband. No sooner had they reached Makkah, that the reality of the matter lay before their eyes. The news that had reached them was nothing more than a ploy, the polytheists had devised much more forbidding torments for them. At this sensitive juncture Rasūlullāh صلى الله عليه وسلم now gave permission to his Companions to emigrate to Madīnah. Umm Salamah and her husband resolved to be amongst the first to take part in this blessed journey, safeguarding their faith, and freeing themselves from the shackles of the Qurayshī torment. Unfortunately, the journey would not be an easy one for them as they had envisioned, it would in turn remain a bitter and arduous time for them.

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1 Kuniyah is a teknonym in Arabic names, the name of an adult derived from his or her eldest child.



Her clan, the Banū Makhzūm refused to allow her to leave, forcing her husband to leave without her. As for their child, Salamah, the Banū ‘Abd al-Asad—her husband’s clan—snatched him from his parents. This was the bitter breaking of her family; her test was a great one. She would go out to the empty plains of Makkah daily, crying and laying bare her pain. The moments of separation between her, her husband, and child would flash before her eyes and she would sob till the darkness of night covered her. She spent one year in this pitiable condition.

A man from her clan one day happened to pass by her in this condition and felt a twinge of mercy in his heart for her. He went to the clan asking them to free her from their captivity and to allow her to reunite with her husband and child. He continued softening their hearts and appealing to their emotions till they allowed her to leave if she so wished. She countered the following, “How can I join my husband whilst I leave my child, the apple of my eye in Makkah with the Banū ‘Abd al-Asad?” Seeing her distress and grief some felt mercy for her and spoke to the clan regarding her plight till they returned her child, Salamah, to her.

She then left heading to Madīnah towards her husband, a reunion of the separated after a lengthy exile. Her eyes were cooled by his sight and his heart gained strength by theirs. She was then blessed with two daughters and another son. Time seemed to fly, one incident after another like the blinking of an eye. Here we have the Battle of Badr in which Abū Salamah took part returning home safe and sound, the Muslims overcoming with divine assistance. This was followed by the Battle of Uḥud, plunging into it not long after Badr, in which the Muslims were sorely tested. Returning from Uḥud severely injured he appeared at first to respond well to treatment; however, the lasting effects would persist and Abū Salamah remained bed ridden.<sup>1</sup>

Facing these challenges and difficult days, Umm Salamah continued repeating the supplication she had heard from Rasūlullāh ﷺ:

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1 For further reading see *Sīrah ibn Kathīr*, vol. 2 pg. 215, *Sīrah ibn Hishām*, vol. 2 pg. 315.

ما من مسلم تصيبه مصيبة فيقول ما أمره الله إنا لله وإنا إليه راجعون اللهم أجرني في مصيبي وأخلف لي خيرا منها إلا أجره الله في مصيبته وأخلف الله له خيرا منها

When a Muslim suffers from a calamity and utters, “We belong to Allah and to Him we shall return. O Allah! Compensate me in my affliction, recompense my loss and give me something better in exchange for it,” then Allah ﷻ surely compensates him with reward and better substitute.

After some time, the fateful day of his journey from this world to the next came, his wife Umm Salamah patient and hopeful of reward from Allah ﷻ again repeating, “We belong to Allah and to Him we shall return. O Allah! Compensate me in my affliction, recompense my loss and give me something better in exchange for it.”

Umm Salamah remembered the prayer her husband had quoted on his deathbed from the Prophet ﷺ and began repeating it, “O Lord, with you I leave this my plight for consideration” But she could not bring herself to continue ... “O Lord give me something better from it”, because she kept asking herself, “Who could be better than Abū Salamah?” But it did not take long before she completed the supplication. The recompense for her would be the best of creation, Muḥammad ﷺ.<sup>1</sup>

The Muslims were greatly saddened by the plight of Umm Salamah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهَا. Both the Muhājirīn and Anṣār felt they had a duty to Umm Salamah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهَا. When she had completed the ‘iddah, Abū Bakr رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ proposed to marry her, see to her affairs and look after her children but she refused. Then ‘Umar asked to marry her, but she also declined the proposal. The Prophet then sent a proposal to her with Ḥaṭīb ibn Abī Balta‘ah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ asking for her hand in marriage to which she replied, “I have a daughter and I am very possessive.” What she meant by this is that there are two factors which hold me back from accepting this proposal firstly, the fear of incompatibility due to my being preoccupied with my daughter and secondly,

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1 Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim, 918.

I am by nature a very possessive woman and this may cause you discomfort. The reply of Rasūlullāh ﷺ was as follows, “As for her daughter we will ask Allah ﷻ to make her independent of her mother and for her we will ask Allah ﷻ to remove her possessiveness.”<sup>1</sup>

In this manner they were forever joined by the blessed marriage. Allah ﷻ accepted both of their prayers; very soon her daughter became independent of her and her possessive nature was removed, and her prayer of a better recompense was accepted in the form of Rasūlullāh ﷺ. The recompense of her sincere prayer and great patience. From that day onward, she was not simply Hind al-Makhzūmī, mother of Salamah; she was now Umm al-Mu’minīn, Mother of the Believers. Allah ﷻ says:

النَّبِيُّ أَوْلَىٰ بِالْمُؤْمِنِينَ مِنْ أَنفُسِهِمْ وَأَزْوَاجُهُ أُمَّهَاتُهُمْ

*The Prophet is more worthy of the believers than themselves, and his wives are [in the position of] their mothers.*<sup>2</sup>

May Allah ﷻ enlighten her countenance in Jannah and may he be pleased with her.

She was granted the honour of seeing Jibrīl عليه السلام in the form of Dihya al-Kalbī رضي الله عنه and was blessed by Rasūlullāh ﷺ attesting to her intellect and foresight.

Her wisdom and foresight were displayed on the Day of Ḥudaybiyyah when the Prophet ﷺ instructed his Companions to slaughter their animals and shave their heads. The Prophet ﷺ issued this instruction three times but the Companions رضي الله عنهم still clinging on to the hope that they may yet enter Makkah did not carry out this instruction immediately. The Prophet ﷺ returned to Umm Salamah رضي الله عنها and said, “O Umm Salamah, what is the matter with the people?”

1 Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim, 918.

2 Sūrah al- Aḥzāb: 6.

She replied, “O Messenger of Allah, the conditions you have witnessed have come upon them. Do not speak to any of them but proceed to your animal and sacrifice it, thereafter shave your head. When they see that you have done so, they will follow suit.” The Prophet ﷺ then left and without speaking to anyone slaughtered his animal and shaved his head. As soon as the Companions saw this they too slaughtered their animals and shaved their heads.<sup>1</sup> The advice which she offered to the Prophet ﷺ on this occasion indicates the intelligence and wisdom she was blessed with.

She possessed great beauty and was of high lineage, she lived a long life and was the last of the Ummahāt al-Mu’minīn to leave this temporary abode. She lived till she heard of the murder of Ḥusayn رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ at Karbalā’ upon which she was rendered speechless and later unconsciousness. Her grief knew no bounds on this news and not long after she continued her journey to Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى . May Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى be pleased with her and shower her with his choicest blessings.

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1 *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, 2581.

## Ḥaḥṣah bint al-Fārūq

There are some women who haven't simply left their mark on the pages of history, they have in fact become a catalyst for the revelation Qur'ān, its laws and injunctions, to be remembered eternally. They are like guiding stars for the public and private lives and dealings of the masses. Amongst those great women we find Umm al-Mu'minīn Sayyidah Ḥaḥṣah bint 'Umar al-Khaṭṭāb رضي الله عنها, the sister of 'Abd Allāh ibn 'Umar رضي الله عنه and the daughter of Zaynab bint Maḥ'un ibn Ḥabīb. An august personality, pious and obedient.

She was born five years before Nubuwwah whilst the Quraysh were spear heading the mammoth project of the construction of the Ka'bah. She was married to Khunays ibn Ḥudhāfah al-Sahmī رضي الله عنه who had undertaken the journey of both emigrations, first to Abyssinia to protect his faith and creed and second to Madīnah in assistance of his Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. She emigrated with him to Madīnah complying with the directive of Rasūlullāh صلى الله عليه وسلم safeguarding her faith. Khunays رضي الله عنه took part in Badr and in Uḥud, and was wounded in the latter which led to his passing away, leaving behind a young wife in the prime of her life.

The passing of her husband, Khunays ibn Ḥudhāfah رضي الله عنه, was hard on 'Umar al-Khaṭṭāb رضي الله عنه. He was pained at the loss his young daughter had suffered, coupled with the sight of losing her youth to widowhood. Hoping to comfort her and somehow replace the loss she endured, he took it upon himself to find a pious spouse for her after she had completed her 'iddah. His keen eye fell on 'Uthmān ibn 'Affān رضي الله عنه to whom he took her proposal. 'Uthmān رضي الله عنه considered the proposal, however respectfully declined sighting the lack of need for marriage at the time. 'Umar رضي الله عنه then took the proposal to Abū Bakr رضي الله عنه to which he did not respond, upon which 'Umar رضي الله عنه felt hurt and angry. He proceeded to Rasūlullāh صلى الله عليه وسلم laying the order of events before him.

Rasūlullāh صلى الله عليه وسلم pacified him with the following, "One who is better than 'Uthmān will marry Ḥaḥṣah, and 'Uthmān will marry one who is better than

Ḥaḥḥḥah.” Perhaps ‘Umar رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ had no inkling of the intent of Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ, and he waited a few nights in this manner. Not long after, a proposal for Ḥaḥḥḥah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ was sent by the Prophet صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ himself which he acceded to. This was the meaning of his statement, “One who is better than ‘Uthmān will marry Ḥaḥḥḥah.” As for the second part of the prophecy, ‘Uthmān رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ married Umm Kuthūm رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ, the daughter of Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ, after the passing of her sister Ruqayyah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ.

A few days after the blessed union was sanctified by the nikāḥ ritual. Abū Bakr رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ approached ‘Umar رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ asking if he had felt snubbed by his silence in the matter, to which ‘Umar رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ replied in the affirmative. Abū Bakr رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ then explained his silence with the following, “I knew that Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ had expressed an interest in her and I am not one to expose the secret affairs of the Messenger صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ. If he had not married her I would have surely done so.”<sup>1</sup> In this manner Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى blessed her with an undying union to Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ, gaining from his effulgence and knowledge over and above the intelligence, fever for worship, and spirit of obedience Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى had blessed her with. May Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى be pleased with her.

Ḥaḥḥḥah and ‘Umar رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ, father and daughter were both pleased. Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ had honoured this blessed family by including them in his family and had released her from the pains of widowhood as a token of appreciation for her patience and emigration and so too for her husband’s sacrifice in emigrating, fighting and ultimately giving his life for the cause of Islam. Their marriage was in the third year of the Hijrah with the dowry stipulated at four hundred Dirhams. Ḥaḥḥḥah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ was at the time of marriage, twenty years of age.

After some time Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ had given her one revocable divorce which caused ‘Umar رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ great pains and she too was distraught, however Jibrīl عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام came down with a divine decree, “Take back Ḥaḥḥḥah into your Nikāḥ, she is *ṣawwāmah qawwāmah* (one who often fasts and spends lengthy periods of time

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1 For further reading see *Ṭabaqāt ibn Sa’d, al-istī’āb*, vol. 1 pg. 584, *Usd al-Ghābah*, vol. 5 pg. 425, *al-Iṣābah*, vol. 7 pg. 582.

standing before Allah) and she is to be your wife in Jannah.”<sup>1</sup> What an honour to be given the mantle of *ṣawwāmah qawwāmah* by the angel Jibrīl, the carrier of revelation, furthermore she was given glad tidings of being the wife of Rasūlullāh ﷺ in Jannah!

Ḥafṣah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا had imbued within herself the message of the Qur’ān to perfection, reading, pondering over its meaning, and going to great lengths to understand it. Her respect and connection to the words of Allah ﷻ were unrivalled. It was for this reason that her father ‘Umar رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ entrusted her with a great trust. The responsibility of keeping the single copy of the Qur’ān prepared in the era Abū Bakr رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ based on the last complete rendition of the Qur’ān by Rasūlullāh ﷺ to Jibrīl عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام in his final Ramaḍān. This was to be forever held amongst her great virtues, her being selected to safeguard this copy, the first written copy gathered by Abū Bakr رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ from the hearts of the great Companions and from what was written by them on bones and hides after many *Qurrā’* had passed on. This precious trust stayed with her till the era ‘Uthmān رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ. In his era, he requested the copy from her from which other copies were made. No sooner had this been completed that the original was returned to her safe and sound.

Writing these words are simple, yet to fathom the mammoth responsibility entrusted to her is staggering. Her trustworthiness and connection to Qur’ān was such that she was delegated to keep the only copy of the Qur’ān! An honour and virtue unparalleled. She safeguarded the Qur’ān with complete trust and so too did the *Ṣaḥābah* and *Tābi’īn* after her and so on and so forth to this day, so will it be till the end of time. She will be remembered whenever the compilation of the Qur’ān in book form will be discussed. The first in the time Abū Bakr رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ and the second in the time of ‘Uthmān رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ.

After spending a life creating a deep link to the Qur’ān and exerting herself in the worship of Allah ﷻ, standing in prayer and fasting, she left this world

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1 *Al-Mustadrak of al-Ḥākim*, 6753/6754; *al-Ṭabarānī in al-Kabīr*, 17/804-291, 23/188-307; *Ḥilyat al-Awliyā’*, vol. 2 pg. 51.

behind in the forty-first year after the hijrah at the age of sixty, the year the Muslims united under Mu'āwiyah رضي الله عنه. The people of Madīnah bid-farewell to her at her final resting place with the other Ummahāt al-Mu'minīn in the Baqī graveyard.



## Şafiyah bint Ḥuyay

It is our duty as Muslims to know the names, attributes and life stories of the Ummahāt al-Mu'minīn. They are the noble Consorts, great women, and guiding stars. Discussing their lives is discussing the Prophet ﷺ, the most virtuous of discussions. Here is a glimpse into a life of another one of these stalwarts of Islam who Rasūlullāh ﷺ had elected his spouse. Umm al-Mu'minīn Şafiyah bint Ḥuyay ibn Akhṭab رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهَا, she converted to Islam from a Jewish clan, her father the chief of the clan—the Banū Naḍīr—who are descendants of the Prophet Hārūn عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام.

Umm al-Mu'minīn Şafiyah bint Ḥuyay رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهَا relates an incident of her childhood before her Islam. She says:

كنت أحب ولد أبي إليه ، وإلى عمي أبي ياسر ، . قالت : فلما قدم رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم المدينة ، ونزل قباء ، ، غدا عليه أبي أبو ياسر ، مغلسين . قالت : فوالله ما جاءنا الا مع مغيب الشمس . قالت : فأتيا كالين ساقطين يمشيان الهوينى . قالت : فهششت إليهما ، فوالله ما التفت إلي واحد منهما ، مع ما بهما من الغم . قالت : وسمعت عمي أبا ياسر ، وهو يقول لأبي : أهو هو ؟ قال : نعم والله ؛ قال : تعرفه بنعته و صفته ؟ قال : نعم والله ، قال : فما في نفسك منه ؟ قال : عداوته والله ما بقيت ابدا

I was my father's favourite and a favourite of my uncle Yāsir. When the Messenger of Allah ﷺ came to Madīnah and was in Qubā', my father and my uncle went to see him. It was very early in the morning and between dawn and sunrise. They had gone to see this man, if he is true in his claim of prophethood and what his attributes and qualities are. They did not return until the sun was setting. They came back worn out and depressed, walking with slow, heavy steps. I smiled to them as I always did, but neither of them took any notice of me because they were so miserable.

I head Abū Yāsir ask my father, "Is it him?"

"Yes, it is," he replied

Abū Yāsir then asked, "Can you recognize him? Can you verify it?"

“Yes, I can recognize him well,” my father answered.

“What do you feel towards him?” Abū Yāsir asked.

My father replied, “Enmity, enmity as long as I live.”<sup>1</sup>

These are the Jews. The name Muḥammad is clearly mentioned in the Torah just as the name Aḥmad is clearly mentioned in the Gospel, but oh such disdain, denial, and rejection.

أَمْ لَمْ يَعْرِفُوا رَسُولَهُمْ فَهُمْ لَهُ مُنْكَرُونَ

*Or did they not know their Messenger, so they are toward him disacknowledging?*<sup>2</sup>

الَّذِينَ أُتِينَاهُمُ الْكِتَابَ يَعْرِفُونَهُ كَمَا يَعْرِفُونَ أَبْنَاءَهُمْ وَإِنَّ فَرِيقًا مِنْهُمْ لَيَكْتُمُونَ الْحَقَّ وَهُمْ يَعْلَمُونَ

*Those to whom We gave the Scripture know him as they know their own sons. But indeed, a party of them conceal the truth while they know [it].*<sup>3</sup>

On the of day Khaybar, a battle between the Muslims and Jews took place in which Kinānah the husband of Ṣafīyyah was killed. She was taken with the other prisoners of war and Rasūlullāh ﷺ took her for himself, giving her the option of becoming a Muslim or remaining on her religion.

He said to her thus, “Choose between Islam and Judaism, if you do become a Muslim I intend to marry you and if you choose to remain on your religion I will free you and you can return to your people.”

She replied, “O Rasūlullāh! I love Islam and have deemed you to be true before you even spoke to me and gave me the choice between Kufr and Islam. Allah ﷻ and his Messenger are more beloved to me than returning to my people.”<sup>4</sup>

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1 Sīrah Ibn Hishām: vol. 2 pg. 363.

2 Sūrah al-Mu'minūn: 69.

3 Sūrah al-Baqarah: 146.

4 Ṭabaqāt ibn Sa'd vol. 8 pg. 132.

This intelligent woman then came into the fold of Islam after which she was freed and married to Rasūlullāh ﷺ who stipulated her freedom as her dowry.<sup>1</sup> The walimah meal consisted of dates, dried yoghurt, and butter. An easy blessed marriage. The intent of Rasūlullāh ﷺ marriage to her was to raise her status, honour her, and replace her loss of family and clan with that which was better. Together with this another objective was to build relations with the Jews, perhaps it might lessen their enmity and bring them closer to accepting the truth.

Anas رضي الله عنه says,

رأيت النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم يحوي لها وراءه بعباءة ثم يجلس عند بعيره فيضع ركبته وتضع صفية رجليها على ركبته حتى تركب

I saw Rasūlullāh ﷺ preparing a seat for her behind his seat using a sheet, thereafter kneeling beside the camel with his knee extended as Şafiyyah رضي الله عنها would take support whilst mounting the conveyance.<sup>2</sup>

When the Messenger of Allah ﷺ saw Şafiyyah's رضي الله عنها eye was slightly green (i.e. bruised), he asked her why this was so, to which she responded, “When I was the wife of Kinānah, I saw the sun (in a dream and it was) as if it had descended in my lap. I told my husband and he slapped me very hard and said, ‘Are you wishing to be the wife of the king of the Arabs?’”<sup>3</sup>

When Rasūlullāh ﷺ took ill it had a profound effect on her and she wished she could be in his place suffering for him to be at ease. Ibn Sa’d has reported on the authority of Zayd ibn Aslam رضي الله عنه who said:

The Prophet's ﷺ wives gathered around him when he was in his sickness, (the same sickness) due to which he passed away.

1 Şaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī, 1539; Şaḥīḥ Muslim, 1365.

2 Şaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī, 2120.

3 Şaḥīḥ Ibn Ḥibbān, 5199; al-Ṭabarānī in al-Kabīr, 24/177-67, al-Bayhaqī, 18168.

يا نبي الله! لوددت أن الذي بك بي. فتغامزت زوجات النبي، فقال صلى الله عليه وسلم والله إنها لصادقة

Şafiyah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهَا said, “O Prophet of Allah! I wish I was suffering from that which you are suffering from!”

Upon hearing this, the Prophet’s wives began winking towards each other.

Rasūlullāh رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ turning to them said, “By Allah! She is truthful.”<sup>1</sup>

She was a woman of outstanding qualities, from a noble lineage, and the beauty which her family was famed for had reached its pinnacle in her features. It was this beauty that kindled the sentiments of possessiveness in the other wives of Rasūlullāh رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ. This did not go unnoticed by him and now and again he would pacify her. On one such occasion our mother Ḥaḥṣṣah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهَا slighted Şafiyah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهَا because of her Jewish ancestry and this was simply due to the possessiveness co-wives feel from time to time. After some time Rasūlullāh رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ came to her home and found her crying. Upon inquiring the source of her sorrow, she related the incident of Ḥaḥṣṣah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهَا calling her the daughter of a Jew. Rasūlullāh رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ then said to her:

إنك لابنة نبي وإن عمك لني وإنك لتحت نبي ففيم تغر عليك ثم قال اتقي الله يا حفصة

Certainly, you are the daughter of a Prophet (Hārūn), your uncle is a Prophet (Mūsā), and you are married to a Prophet (himself); so what is she boasting to you about?”

Subḥān Allāh! This was the character of Rasūlullāh رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ in his household, resolving disputes between his wives with a few well delivered words of wisdom. He wiped her tears, brought out her brilliant smile, and gave her a reason to take pride in which the other wives could not attain. Rasūlullāh رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ did not stop there, he reprimanded Ḥaḥṣṣah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهَا saying to her, “Fear Allah O Ḥaḥṣṣah!”<sup>2</sup>

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1 Ṭabaqāt ibn Sā’d: vol. 2 pg. 313/ vol. 8 pg. 128; al-Isābah, vol. 7 pg. 741; Muṣannaf’ Abd al-Razzāq, 20922.  
2 Jāmi’ al-Tirmidhī, 3894.

Her forbearance and intelligence shines through in an incident recorded in the books of history thus, once a slave girl she owned went to the Amīr al Mu'minīn 'Umar and said, "Amīr al Mu'minīn! Ṣafīyyah loves the Sabbath and maintains ties with the Jews!" 'Umar رضي الله عنه asked Ṣafīyyah رضي الله عنها about that and she said, "I have not loved the Sabbath since Allah سبحانه وتعالى replaced it with Friday for me, and I only maintain ties with those Jews to whom I am related by kinship."

Subḥān Allāh her character does not allow her to break ties with them even after her Islam. She then asked her slave girl what had possessed her to carry lies to 'Umar and the girl replied, "Shayṭān!" Ṣafīyyah رضي الله عنها said, "Go, you are free."<sup>1</sup>

Can we claim to recompense evil with good as she had? Not many can claim such noble character, these are great people indeed.

She was not one to hold back in advising and guiding people as can be ascertained from the following. Some people gathered at her home remembering Allah سبحانه وتعالى and reciting the Qur'ān till they reached a verse of prostration upon which they prostrated. From behind the veil they heard her voice admonishing them, "I hear recitation of Qur'ān and prostration, alas where are the tears that go with it?"<sup>2</sup>

She lived through the lives of the rightly guided Khulafā' till the era of Mu'āwiyah رضي الله عنه wherein she came to her appointed time and left this world for the next in the fiftieth year of the hijrah. Her life, one of worship and kinship. Not forgetting the love she shared with her co-wives, leaving a bequest of a thousand gold coins for 'Ā'ishah al-Ṣiddīqah رضي الله عنها.<sup>3</sup> She was laid to rest in the Baqī' graveyard. May Allah سبحانه وتعالى be pleased with her and all the Ummahāt al-Mu'minīn.

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1 *Al-Istī'āb*, vol. 1 pg. 605

2 *Ḥilyat al-Awliyā'*, vol. 2 pg. 55

3 *Sunan al-Kubrā* of al-Bayhaqī, 12431.



## Fāṭimah al-Zahrā'

There is a narration of a man who was extremely bashful, whose brother would reprimand him on his ḥayā (modesty) alluding to the losses he suffers due to his disposition. He would encourage him to be more open. On one such occasion when he was berating his shy brother Rasūlullāh ﷺ happened to pass by and upon hearing the exchange commented:

دعه فان الحياء من الايمان

Leave him be, for bashfulness forms part of imān.<sup>1</sup>

Ḥayā, a trait that gives to pleasant character and saves one from evil. It is from the praiseworthy qualities that necessitates one to leave all that which is inappropriate and is a common trait amongst the people of great virtue.

Dear reader, today we converse of Fāṭimah al-Zahrā' رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهَا, the daughter of the Beloved ﷺ. A woman yes, but a woman of what value and honour? A woman who history has failed to replicate or bring forth someone close to her elevated status. She was blessed with the goodness of the world, as though the fountain of virtue was continuously being showered upon her. Alas, these short chapters cannot do justice to her life just as enumerating her virtues remains a tedious task. I find myself at a crossroads of sorts, yearning to pen down some of her graciousness and unpacking some of her greatness, together with the feeling of immense awe at this task. I intend to gingerly take a few steps into that direction with you as my companion on this path dear reader. Perhaps it may serve as a gift to the young girls of this ummah who search for a pious guide and a sound role model.

ممن تقفت خطى حمالة الحطب

ممن تقفت خطى حمالة الحطب

*Where are those that selected al-Zahrā' as their role model from those who followed the footsteps of the carrier of firewood [wife of Abū Lahab].*

1 Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī, 24/5767; Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim, 36.

She is Fāṭimah, the daughter of Muḥammad ﷺ, radiant and pure who spent her days in worship and her nights in prostration. She is *al-batūl*; one who removed herself from the soot of this world to spend her life in devotion. This is a conversation of her purity and ḥayā.

Umm Ja'far bint Muḥammad ibn Ja'far relates from Fāṭimah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهَا:

يا أسماء! إني قد استقبحت ما يصنع بالنساء أن يطرح على المرأة الثوب فيصنها

I truly abhor the practice of covering females after they pass away O Asmā'.  
A cloth is merely thrown over them which hardly conceals their features.

When Fāṭimah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهَا took ill which was to be her final illness Asmā' bint 'Umays رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهَا, the wife of Abū Bakr رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ, came to visit her. Turning her attention to Asmā' she addressed her thus, "Is it not abhorrent how the women are treated after their death? They are simply covered with a cloth which leaves the shape of her body discernible by onlookers." The biers of those times would be a plank upon which the dead would be placed with a cloth thrown over them, this would allow the shape of the body to be apparent.

Subḥān Allāh! Her modesty was a concern for her not only in life but after death as well. In her final days her worry is of the preservation of her modesty. She knew from her father that she would be the first to meet him the next life from his family which caused her great worry. She could not allow her bier to be carried in this manner in front of all and sundry. Pause for a moment and think. Was she concerned of showing her face, hands, or legs? Was she perhaps worried of being taken out without a something covering her? No, no, her concern was that while being totally covered the shape of her body must not be discernible. The daughter of the Prophet ﷺ, anxious about keeping her modesty intact in the throes of death! A mind so sound that death too could not snatch her ḥayā.

في مهد فاطمة فما اعلاها	المجد يشرق في ثلاث مطالع
من ذا يداني في الفخار اباه	هي بنت من هي زوج من هي ام من
هادي الشعوب اذا تروم هداها	هي ومضة من نور عين المصطفى



*Honour rises from three horizons, for Fāṭimah O how honoured.*

*The daughter of who, the wife of who and the mother of who, is there anyone to vie with her father in honour?*

*She was the spark in the eyes of the Prophet, guiding in the darkness of the valleys.*

Dear sister, do you think that Fāṭimah رضي الله عنها would be taken to task for what happened after her passing? Undoubtedly, she would be free from any blame regarding the actions of those around her after her, she still however persisted in making provisions to keep intact her modesty after her death. Modesty is the adornment of pious young women together with it being an integral part of faith. For this reason, she poured her heart out to Asmā' bint 'Umays رضي الله عنها who pacified her by revealing to her an Abyssinian custom:

يا ابنة رسول الله - صلى الله عليه وسلم - ألا أريك شيئاً رأيته بالحبشة؟ فدعت بجرائد رطبة فحتها ثم طرحت عليها ثوباً فقالت فاطمة: ما أحسن هذا وأجمله تعرف به المرأة من الرجل.

O daughter of Rasūlullāh صلى الله عليه وسلم shall I not show you what I had encountered in Abyssinia? She then called for fresh palm leaf stalks which she intertwined creating a canopy like covering over the bier upon which a sheet was placed. This was then used for her bier which allowed her body to be shielded. Fāṭimah رضي الله عنها became jubilant upon seeing this and exclaimed, “How wonderful of an innovation this is, this will differentiate between the biers of men and women.”<sup>1</sup>

Subḥān Allāh, strange is the sentiment of this pure modest women. She is elated upon finding a way to cover her body, not in life but after death.

Where are the women of today who boast of the latest styles and fashion trends? Where are the women who are enamoured with fashion magazines and blogs?

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<sup>1</sup> *Siyar A'lām al-Nubalā'*, vol. 2 pg. 132. In a similar narration Fāṭimah رضي الله عنها then prayed for her thus, “May Allah سبحانه وتعالى cover you just as you have covered me.”

Where are the women who are in love with the trends which seek to violate the very fabric of modesty?

Fāṭimah رضي الله عنها then gives her final instructions:

إذا مت أنا فاغسليني أنت وعلي ولا يدخل علي أحد

When my soul leaves O Asmā', wash and shroud me together with 'Alī and do not let anyone enter.

This was the parting advices of this great woman of Islam.

When she passed away a canopy of fresh palm leaf stalks was used to cover her completely. She was the first women in Islam to have a bier constructed for her in this manner. Hearing the sad news of her demise 'Ā'ishah رضي الله عنها came to her home to help with the washing and shrouding. She was however barred from entering by Asmā' رضي الله عنها as per the instruction of Fāṭimah رضي الله عنها to not to allow anyone in. 'Ā'ishah رضي الله عنها perplexed goes to her father Abū Bakr رضي الله عنه and relates to him what had occurred adding too that a canopy like bier has been constructed unlike anything we have seen before except, in the instance of a bride being carried! Abū Bakr رضي الله عنه not sure what to make of this goes himself to the house to ask his wife Asmā' رضي الله عنها:

يا أسماء ما حملك على أن منعت ازواج النبي صلى الله عليه وآله وسلم أن يدخلن على بنت رسول الله وجعلت لها مثل هودج العروس؟ فقالت: أمرتني ألا يدخل عليها أحد، وأريتها هذا الذي صنعت، وهي حية، فأمرتني أن أصنع ذلك لها، قال أبو بكر: فاصنعي ما أمرتك، ثم انصرف وغسلها علي وأسماء

[Abū Bakr said,] “What has led you to stop the wives of Rasūlullāh صلى الله عليه وسلم from entering and what is this canopy like bier I hear off?”

Asmā' رضي الله عنها replies, “This was the final wish of Fāṭimah رضي الله عنها, as for the bier I had presented before her during her final days and she had opted for it to be used.”

Abū Bakr رضي الله عنه tells his wife, “Carry out her wishes as she wanted.”

He then left, and the ritual washing of the body was done by Asmā’ and ‘Alī رضي الله عنه.<sup>1</sup>

How excellent and complete is her modesty. It is nor farfetched either since we are talking about Fāṭimah رضي الله عنها and this is her relation to modesty. This led me to think dear reader, if her modesty was such in death I wonder what it was like in life? A rhetorical question. Something to reflect on.

There comes a narration in the books *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* and *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, that Rasūlullāh صلى الله عليه وسلم said:

الحياء لا يأتي إلا بخير

Modesty does not come except with goodness.<sup>2</sup>

In another narration modesty is celebrated thus:

الحياء خير كله

Modesty is goodness through and through.<sup>3</sup>

One may ask then what goodness did Fāṭimah رضي الله عنها gather through her intense modesty? An angel comes down from the heaven to Rasūlullāh صلى الله عليه وسلم giving

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1 *Sunan al-Kubrā*, 6721. Commentating on this narration in *Jilbāb al Mar’ah al-Muslimah*, pg. 30 the author writes, “Look at Fāṭimah رضي الله عنها, the daughter of Rasūlullāh صلى الله عليه وسلم, she abhors that the cloth covering her body be seen after her demise, she would obviously be much more opposed to exposing her beauty in life. Ponder over this Muslim sisters who opt to wear clothes that leave not much to the imagination. Pause for a moment and reflect, turn to Allah سبحانه وتعالى and seek his forgiveness and always keep in mind the following narration, modesty and īmān are intertwined. If one goes so too does the other.”

2 *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, 5766; *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, 37.

3 *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, 37.

him glad tidings that Fāṭimah عليها السلام is the Queen. Is it perhaps that she is the queen of her house? No. City? No. Is she the queen of the women of the world? Not that either. The queen of the universe? Alas no. She is the Queen of Jannah!<sup>1</sup>

Can we dear reader, take the lesson of modesty from her life?

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1 *Jāmi' al-Tirmidhī*, 3781; *Musnad Imām Aḥmad*, 22240; *Al-Mustadrak lil Ḥākim*, 4721/4722. 'Allāmah al-Dhahabī has authenticated it.

## Ibrāhīm ibn Muḥammad

Ibrāhīm ibn Sayyid al-Bashar Muḥammad ibn ‘Abd Allāh ibn ‘Abd al-Muṭṭalib ibn Hāshim. He was the last-born child of Rasūlullāh ﷺ, born to Sayyidah Māriyah al-Qibṭiyah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهَا, who had been a gift of Muqawqis, the ruler of Egypt in the sixth year of the Hijrah. Rasūlullāh ﷺ was overjoyed by the birth of his son Ibrāhīm, who he would often show his love to by kissing and inhaling his scent deeply as one does with a baby. On his birth Rasūlullāh ﷺ comes out of his house saying:

ولد لي الليلة غلام فسميته بأبي إبراهيم

A boy was born to me last night, I have named by the name of my forefather, Ibrāhīm.<sup>1</sup>

On the seventh day his head was shaved and equal to the weight of it, silver was distributed amongst the poor.

The women of the Anṣār all aspired to be selected as the wet nurse however this honour was given to Umm Burdah, Khawlah bint al-Mundhir from the Banū ‘Adī ibn Najjār clan. She would be his foster mother, her husband the foster father of Ibrāhīm was Abū Sayf al-Barā’ ibn Aws who was a blacksmith by trade. Rasūlullāh ﷺ would often go the Banū Najjār clan to see his son.

Ibrāhīm رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ did not survive toddlerhood and passed away at eighteen months. His soul left his body whilst in the hands of the Rasūlullāh ﷺ which grieved Rasūlullāh ﷺ to no end. Anas ibn Mālik رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ narrates:

دخلنا مع النبي صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ على أبي سيف القَيْنِ، وكان ظُفْرًا لإبراهيم ابن النبي صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ  
وسلم، فأخذه، فقبَّله وشمه

1 *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, 3315.

We entered with Rasūlullāh ﷺ the house of Abū Sayf the blacksmith, who was the husband of the wet nurse of Ibrāhīm ؑ. Rasūlullāh ﷺ held Ibrāhīm, kissed him and inhaled his scent.

This show of love and affection is from the mercy of Rasūlullāh ﷺ had for his children. Where are the fathers in relation to the love we show to our children? Kissing and displaying affection towards a child has great positive effects on the emotional growth of a child. It calms a child in distress and strengthens the bond between the child and his/her caregiver.

ثم دخلنا عليه بعد ذلك وإبراهيم يجود بنفسه، فجعلت عيننا رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم تذر فان

We then came at another time and Ibrāhīm ؑ was breathing heavily [in the pangs of death]. Tears streamed from the eyes of Rasūlullāh ﷺ.

The Ṣaḥābah seeing this emotional response from Rasūlullāh ﷺ showed signs of wonder. How is it that the Prophet cries on the demise of his son?

فقال له عبد الرحمن بن عوف رضي الله عنه: وأنت يا رسول الله؟

‘Abd al-Raḥmān ibn ‘Awf ؑ said to him surprisingly, “Even you [cry], O Rasūlullāh?”

Their surprise was due to the misconception that crying was a show of impatience on the decree of Allah ﷻ. Rasūlullāh ﷺ then went on to explain shedding tears is in fact not a show of impatience. It is rather the natural softening of the heart upon the loss of someone.

فقال: يا ابن عوف! إنها رحمة، ثم أتبعها بأخرى

Rasūlullāh ﷺ explained, “O Ibn ‘Awf! It is mercy.” Whilst continuously shedding tears.

This narration is an indication to the permissible show of sorrow and crying without causing the displeasure of Allah ﷻ.

فقال صلى الله عليه وسلم: إن العين تدمع، والقلب يحزن، ولا نقول إلا ما يرضي ربنا وإنا بفراقك يا إبراهيم! لمحزونون

He [Ibrāhīm] then breathed his last upon which Rasūlullāh ﷺ lamented, “Certainly, the eye tears and the heart grieves, but we only utter that which our Sustainer is pleased with. O Ibrāhīm, we are bitterly grief-stricken at your separation.”<sup>1</sup>

From the above narration we conclude that shedding tears upon the loss of a close one is encouraged and it in no way alludes to being displeased with the decision of Allah ﷻ, provided it is out of compassion and not for personal gain.

Is the show of sorrow more virtuous or is a calm demeanour sought after, in our faith? Fuḍayl ibn ‘Iyāḍ رَحِمَهُ اللهُ ﷻ smiled at the loss of his son and commented, “I have come to a decree of Allah ﷻ and I wish to be happy with what has been decreed for me.” A point of note here is, which act holds more virtue? That of Rasūlullāh ﷺ or that of Fuḍayl ibn ‘Iyāḍ رَحِمَهُ اللهُ ﷻ?

The above question was posed to Ibn Taymiyyah upon which he delivered the following, “The act of Fuḍayl ibn ‘Iyāḍ رَحِمَهُ اللهُ ﷻ is praiseworthy when compared to those who exceed the bounds in grief. However, compassion and a show of emotion together with being pleased with the decree of Allah ﷻ is an act of perfection as Allah ﷻ mentions:

تُمْ كَانٍ مِنَ الدِّينِ أَمْنُوا وَتَوَاصَوْا بِالصَّبْرِ وَتَوَاصَوْا بِالْمَرْحَمَةِ

And then being among those who believed and advised one another to patience and advised one another to compassion.<sup>2</sup>

As we see here Allah ﷻ mentions advising one-another with patience and compassion.”<sup>3</sup>

1 *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, 1241; *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, 2315.

2 *Sūrah al-Balad*: 17.

3 *Majmū‘ al-Fatāwā*, vol. 10 pg. 47.

Fuḍayl ibn ‘Iyāḍ رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ though praiseworthy in his act, was however bereft of compassion in this instance, as for Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ he had imbued in himself both being pleased with the decree of Allah سُبحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى as well as carrying a heart full of compassion. It is for this reason that tears flowed freely from his eyes at the loss of his son with the following words on his tongue, “Certainly, the eye tears and the heart grieves, but we only utter that which our Sustainer is pleased with. O Ibrāhīm, we are bitterly grief-stricken at your separation.” The guidance of Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ is perfect, his way the best, and his Sunnah the most beautiful.

Dear reader, the perfect believer is one who has both patience and compassion. As for the one who exceeds the bounds by slapping his face, tearing his collar, and shrieking has opposed the correct way of grieving as these acts are of the times of ignorance. It does not befit a Muslim who is pleased with the decisions of Allah سُبحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى and believes that he is the best of planners. Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ has said:

ليس منا من لطم الخدود وشق الجيوب ودعا بدعوى الجاهلية

A man who slaps his face, rends his collar, and promotes the legacy of the Age of Ignorance (before the advent and rise of Islam) is not from us.<sup>1</sup>

The condition of a true Muslim is as Allah سُبحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى has declared in the Qur’ān:

وَلَنَبْلُوَنَّكُمْ بِشَيْءٍ مِّنَ الْخَوْفِ وَالْجُوعِ وَنَقْصٍ مِّنَ الْأَمْوَالِ وَالْأَنْفُسِ وَالثَّمَرَاتِ وَبَشِّرِ الصَّابِرِينَ

*And We will surely test you with something of fear and hunger and a loss of wealth and lives and fruits, but give good tidings to the patient,*

الَّذِينَ إِذَا أَصَابَتْهُمُ مُصِيبَةٌ قَالُوا إِنَّا لِلَّهِ وَإِنَّا إِلَيْهِ رَاجِعُونَ

*Who, when disaster strikes them, say, “Indeed we belong to Allah, and indeed to Him we will return.”*

1 Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī, 1232; Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim, 103.



أُولَئِكَ عَلَيْهِمْ صَلَوَاتٌ مِّن رَّبِّهِمْ وَرَحْمَةٌ وَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْمُهْتَدُونَ

*Those are the ones upon whom are blessings from their Lord and mercy. And it is those who are the [rightly] guided.*<sup>1</sup>

From amongst the strange happenings on the day Ibrāhīm رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ passed away, the sun eclipsed. It was a common superstition that era that the sun would eclipse on either the birth or the death of a great person, due to the eclipse coinciding with the death of Ibrāhīm رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ people began assuming it was due to his demise. Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ gathered the people to teach them a lesson in monotheism on hearing their assumptions. Muḡhīrah ibn Shu‘bah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ relates:

كسفت الشمس على عهد رسول الله ﷺ يوم مات إبراهيم، فقال الناس كسفت الشمس لموت إبراهيم، فقال رسول الله ﷺ: إن الشمس والقمر لا ينكسفان لموت أحد ولا لحياته فإذا رأيتم فصلوا وادعوا الله

On the day of Ibrāhīm’s death, the sun eclipsed, and the people said that the eclipse was due to the death of Ibrāhīm (the son of the Prophet). Allah’s Apostle said, “The sun and the moon are two signs amongst the signs of Allah. They do not eclipse because of someone’s death or life. So, when you see them, invoke Allah and pray.”<sup>2</sup>

In this manner Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ established that the movement of the stars is not in relation to matters happening on the earth therefore, the belief that natural phenomena happens due to the birth or death of someone is erroneous. Some have taken it a step further due to these types of mistaken beliefs and attribute changes in the lives of people based on the movement of the stars. It is unfortunate that some others attribute the blessing of rain to the stars, the hadith states:

أصبح من عبادي مؤمنٌ بي وكافرٌ، فأما من قال: مُطِرْنَا بفضل الله ورحمته، فذلك مؤمنٌ بي كافرٌ بالكوكب، وأما من قال: مطرنا بنوء كذا وكذا، فذلك كافرٌ بي مؤمنٌ بالكوكب

1 Sūrah al-Baqarah: 155-157.

2 *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, 996; *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, 915.

Some of my bondsmen entered the morning as my believers and some as disbelievers. He who said, “We have had a rainfall due to the blessing and mercy of Allah,” he is my believer and a disbeliever of stars, and who said, “We have had a rainfall due to the rising of such and such star,” disbelieved me and affirmed his faith in the stars.<sup>1</sup>

A true believer always has conviction only in Allah سُبْحَانَكَ وَبِحَمْدِكَ.

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1 *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, 810; *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, 71.

## Zaynab bint al-Rasūl

As we continue our journey through the lives of great men and women, we pause to reflect on the life of Sayyidah Zaynab bint Muḥammad ﷺ and the immense sacrifices she bore in assisting Rasūlullāh ﷺ. One who studies her life will be left amazed at her spirit to opt for a life of sacrifice over one of peace and ease with her husband. She gave up her life of comfort and determined to help the cause of Islam bearing much difficulty in doing so, emigrating and lending her assistance in the path of Allah ﷻ. Let us start from the beginning.

Abū al-‘Āṣ ibn Rabī the maternal cousin of Zaynab ﷺ [the son of Hālah bint Khuwaylid, sister of Khadījah] comes with a marriage proposal for her which is accepted by Rasūlullāh ﷺ. The marriage takes place, an animal slaughtered and the walīmah meal laid out. A time of joy and happiness. Zaynab ﷺ lived a blissful life beside her husband and was the model wife to her husband. Pious and noble. He too was a gem, showering her with his love and safety. Allah ﷻ had decreed for them two beautiful children from this union, ‘Alī ibn Abī al-‘Āṣ who was saddled with Rasūlullāh ﷺ on the day of the Conquest of Makkah. Sadly, he passed away in his childhood. And secondly Umāmah bint Abī al-‘Āṣ whom ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib ﷺ married after the demise of his wife Fāṭimah ﷺ.

It was not long after the marriage that revelation descended upon Rasūlullāh ﷺ, upon which Khadījah and her four daughters, Sayyidah Zaynab, Ruqayyah, Umm Kulthūm, and Fāṭimah ﷺ accepted Islam, professing the *shahādah*<sup>1</sup>. After accepting the creed, they stood by their father firm and unwavering, their faith strong knowing full well the truthfulness of their father. Even the disbelievers knew him as *Al-Amīn* (the trustworthy). There were not many men who believed in the early stages, with the likes of Abū Bakr, ‘Uthmān, ‘Alī, and Zubayr ibn al-‘Awwām ﷺ helping the cause and bearing the brunt of the Quraysh with Rasūlullāh ﷺ.

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1 I bear witness that there is no God but Allah, and I bear witness that Muhammad is His Messenger.

At the advent of Islam her husband Abū al-‘Āṣ had been out of Makkah with a trading caravan, upon his return he was soon informed of the new faith towards which Muḥammad ﷺ calls to. Perturbed he goes to his wife Zaynab رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهَا and recounts the statements of the polytheists regarding her father and his faith. In that moment Zaynab رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهَا held her ground, brave and unwavering, a stance of the greats and informs her husband of her acceptance of Islam. She professes her conviction in all that which Muḥammad ﷺ has brought, not stopping there she then lays out the beauty of Islam before him calling him to accept the faith. He however, persisted on his disbelief and polytheistic ideologies for fear of disrepute saying:

اكره ان يقال : ان زوجك خذل قومه و كفر بدين آباؤه ارضاء لامرأته

I dislike people to say that I have brought shame to my people and disregarded the faith of my forefathers to please my wife.

At the call for the Battle of Badr, he leaves his wife and two children behind in Makkah coming out with the Quraysh to fight against the Rasūlullāh ﷺ not heeding the pleas of Zaynab رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهَا to remain behind in Makkah and not join the ranks of the polytheists. Allah ﷻ سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى wished that the Muslims overcome in this decisive battle and Abū al-‘Āṣ is taken as a prisoner. When the people of Makkah came to know of the ransom of the prisoners, Zaynab رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهَا sent wealth which included a necklace as ransom for her husband. The necklace held great sentimental value in the eyes of Rasūlullāh ﷺ as it belonged to his wife Khadijah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهَا which was given to Zaynab رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهَا on the occasion of her marriage.

As soon as the Messenger of Allah ﷺ saw the necklace, he was engulfed in a moment of extreme sadness and his heart filled with overwhelming emotion at the memories which flooded his mind and the moment. The Companions who were present there gazed in amazement having been captivated by the magnitude of such an emotional situation. After what seemed to be a long silence, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ stood up and said:

ان رأيتم ان تطلقوا لها اسيرها و تردوا لها مالها فافعلوا

O my people, if you deem fit to release her prisoner and return her wealth then do so.

Being a part of the intense moment, they all answered in unison, “Yes,” and agreed to the suggestion and let him go on the condition that he will allow Zaynab رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا to come to Madīnah, which he complied with sending her to Madīnah to her father صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ.<sup>1</sup>

Before the Conquest of Makkah Abū al-‘Āṣ was travelling in a caravan from Makkah to Syria, carrying with him the wealth of the Quraysh which was entrusted to him. During the journey, he was intercepted by a raiding party headed by Zayd ibn Ḥārithah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ who captured the wealth. He managed to escape and sought out Zaynab’s home taking respite there as a fugitive. She extended her protection to him and when the Prophet صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ came to know of this he advised her to treat him kindly however not to have relations with him as she would not be permissible for him so long as he is a polytheist.<sup>2</sup>

Subḥān Allāh! The character of greatness shines through this incident. This is the character of the Prophets.

Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ gathered the Companions to discuss the matter of the wealth that the raiding party had brought with them. He said, “O people, I declare that this man was a very good son-in-law, he never broke his promise, and neither did he tell lies. So, if you accept, I will return his money back to him and let him go. If you refuse, it’s your decision your right.” The Companions themselves, as kind hearted as their Prophet, agreed, “We will give him his money and grant him his freedom.”

Abū al-‘Āṣ then took his money and returned to Makkah returning to the Quraysh their trust after being satisfied that he owed no one and he loudly proclaimed, “I testify that there is no god but Allah, and that Muhammed is His Messenger. I swear by Allah! Nothing prevented me from accepting Islam before this except

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1 *Abū Dāwūd*, 2692; *Ibn al-Jārūd*, 1090; *Ibn Ishāq* in his *Sīrah*, vol. 2 pg. 307/308.

2 *Al-Mustadrak lil Ḥākim*, 5038; *al-Ṭabarānī* in *al-Kabīr*, 1050; *al-Bayhaqī fī al-Sunan al-Kubrā*, 17957.

that you would slander me with wanting to eat your wealth. Now that I have returned it to you I proclaim my Islam.”

Abū al-‘Āṣ gathered his things and returned to Madīnah, heading to the Masjid of Rasūlullāh ﷺ where he found the Prophet ﷺ and his Companions seated. They were overjoyed by his return and the joy was complete upon hearing of his acceptance of Islam. Rasūlullāh ﷺ then returned Zaynab رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا to him in marriage by renewing their nikāḥ according to some, whilst according to others without renewing their nikāḥ.<sup>1</sup> Living together as a newly married couple after many years of separation.

As the days passed so too did their lives, happy and content with their children ‘Alī and Umāmah in a pure Islamic society. Not long after, Zaynab رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا fell ill and her health continued to deteriorate after she had become bed ridden. In the eighth year of the hijrah this pure soul left the struggles of this world behind. Abū al-‘Āṣ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ was overtaken by grief and shed hot tears on her death. His excessive grief drove those who were around him to tears. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ himself was overcome with grief, his eyes full of tears and his heart full of sorrow. Not long after he too left this world to join his beloved wife in the next.

Dear reader, the lessons from the life of Sayyidah Zaynab رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا are many just as they are profound. She placed the happiness of her Lord before that of her husband and sacrificed their love for the love of Rasūlullāh ﷺ and her faith. However, though her husband a disbeliever, she came to his aid in his time of need not forgetting the tie of kinship between them which led him to accept Islam.

Are we prepared to build the courage to place the happiness of Allah ﷻ and his Prophet ﷺ ahead of the pleasure of the creation? Perhaps many of us will fail. The great ones of this ummah however, were great in the true sense. They had no qualms in letting the pleasure of Allah ﷻ reign supreme in their lives.

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1 *Al-Bidāyah wa al-Nihāyah*, vol. 3 pg. 332.

## Ruqayyah bint al-Rasūl

Just as the rays of the prophethood of Muḥammad ﷺ lit up the horizon, the rays of guidance and divine light shone through from Ruqayyah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهَا. A woman of Islam, an embodiment of taqwā. She was born and raised before the mission of prophethood was conferred onto Rasūlullāh ﷺ. Her attributes and qualities like that of her mother, Khadijah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهَا, unique in the pure house of nubuwah which Allah ﷻ had cleansed from all impurities.

Dear reader, have you any knowledge of this exceptional woman? Have you heard the stories of her patience, sacrifice and unwavering faith? Let us journey through her life perhaps we may find solace and strength.

She is the second daughter of Rasūlullāh ﷺ and the daughter of Khadijah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهَا who herself was an extraordinary woman of incredibly high status. Ruqayyah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهَا accepted Islam with her sisters and mother and pledged allegiance to her father when the women pledged their allegiance.<sup>1</sup> She holds the great fortune of being amongst those who undertook both emigrations, to Abyssinia and then to Madīnah.

When she and her sister Umm Kulthūm reached a marriable age ‘Utbah and ‘Utaybah<sup>2</sup> the sons of ‘Abd al-‘Uzzā (Abū Lahab) sent proposals for them. Rasūlullāh ﷺ agreed to the union as they were his uncle’s sons, however, unfortunately both these marriages did not last. As soon as Rasūlullāh ﷺ announced his prophethood and began calling to the creed of Islam the Quraysh began their persecutions and openly waged war against the Muslims. They began to impede on the personal, family life of Rasūlullāh ﷺ as well with Abū Lahab taking an

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1 *Ṭabaqāt ibn Sa‘ad*, vol. 8 pg. 36

2 ‘Utaybah is the only son of Abū Lahab that did not accept Islam and died as a polytheist. ‘Utbah and his brother Mu‘attab both accepted Islam at the Conquest of Makkah. They did not emigrate to Madīnah, however, they both participated in the Ḥunayn expedition and stood firm by Rasūlullāh ﷺ on that day fighting with the Ahl al-Bayt and Companions. Mu‘attab lost his eye in the same battle.

oath of excommunication if his sons did not divorce the daughters of Muḥammad ﷺ. And so, they did before having consummated the marriage.<sup>1</sup>

How cruel an injustice was this divorce, which was metered out unrightfully. Sayyidah Ruqayyah however, bore it with patience and īmān, having firm faith in Allah ﷻ she returned to the home of her father. The concern and worry of calling towards Allah ﷻ engulfed her just as it did her father and so too did the persecutions of the disbelievers. Allah ﷻ recompensed her handsomely with a husband pious, noble and handsome. ‘Uthmān ibn ‘Affān رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ, a companion blessed with the glad tidings of Jannah.

When the persecutions of the polytheists grew severe, Rasūlullāh ﷺ commanded those who could to emigrate to the land of Abyssinia wherein ruled a just King who would not tolerate oppression. A group of Muslims taking the courage left for this far off land with ‘Uthmān ibn ‘Affān رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ and his wife Ruqayyah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهَا being the first to emigrate in the path of Allah ﷻ.<sup>2</sup> They established themselves there and lived in harmony and happiness welcoming their first child with joy, ‘Abd Allāh.<sup>3</sup>

After some time, false propaganda was circulated citing the end of the persecutions of the Quraysh and the Islam of many. The emigrants none the wiser, yearning to return to their home land without delay undertook the journey to Makkah only to arrive to the Quraysh having doubled in their efforts of persecuting the Muslims. Amongst those that returned were ‘Uthmān ibn ‘Affān رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ and Ruqayyah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهَا. A second blow to Ruqayyah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهَا was coming back to Makkah to realize her mother, the blessed Sayyidah Khadijah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهَا had left this world and returned to her Lord. Her response was a display of great patience. Not long after, they together with the other Muslims undertook the second emigration to Madīnah Munawwarah.

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1 *Siyar A'lām al-Nubalā'*, vol. 2 pg. 250; *al-Wāfi bi al-Wafayāt*, vol. 14 pg. 95.

2 ‘Uthmān ibn ‘Affān رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ and his wife Ruqayyah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهَا were amongst those who emigrated twice, to Abyssinia and then to Madīnah.

3 The kunya of ‘Uthmān ibn ‘Affān رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ, Abū ‘Abd Allāh is based on this child of theirs.



In the blessed city of Madīnah, Sayyidah Ruqayyah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهَا was honoured by being close to the Anṣār, whom Allah ﷻ has described as noble and praised for preferring others over themselves. Allah ﷻ celebrated them in the Qur’ān in the following words:

وَالَّذِينَ تَبَوَّءُوا الدَّارَ وَالْإِيمَانَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ يُحِبُّونَ مَنْ هَاجَرَ إِلَيْهِمْ وَلَا يَجِدُونَ فِي صُدُورِهِمْ  
حَاجَةً مِّمَّا أُوتُوا وَيُؤْثِرُونَ عَلَىٰ أَنْفُسِهِمْ وَلَوْ كَانَ بِهِمْ خَصَاصَةٌ وَمَنْ يُوقِ شَحْنَفَهُ فَوَلَّكَ اللَّهُ  
الْمُلْكَ وَالنَّصْرَ

*And [also for] those who were settled in al-Madinah and [adopted] the faith before them. They love those who emigrated to them and find not any want in their breasts of what the emigrants were given but give [them] preference over themselves, even though they are in privation. And whoever is protected from the stinginess of his soul - it is those who will be the successful.<sup>1</sup>*

Unknown to her another trial awaited her in Madīnah, the loss of her child. ‘Abd Allāh, six years old, was involved in an accident where a rooster had pierced his face which led to swelling and infection resulting in his death.<sup>2</sup> Sayyidah Ruqayyah and her husband ‘Uthmān رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ pained at the loss shed tears, however, they endured patiently. The loss of the little ‘Abd Allāh was felt by his parents and his grandfather, Muḥammad صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ. The loss of her child and her life of hardship and heartache though faced with absolute patience took its toll on Ruqayyah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهَا and she fell ill. She was then afflicted with measles<sup>3</sup> and was bed ridden for some time, during which her husband took good care of her seeing to her every need.

In the second year of the hijrah, the Muslims left for Badr to face the Quraysh in battle. The call to battle had ‘Uthmān رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ ready to fight and respond to the call of Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ but he was instructed by Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ to remain behind

1 Sūrah al-Ḥashr: 9.

2 Siyar A’lām al-Nubalā’, vol. 2 pg. 250; Ṭabaqāt ibn Sa’ad, vol. 8 pg. 36.

3 Al-Iṣābah, vol. 4 pg. 298.

to see to his ailing wife who had reached the last stages of her life. ‘Uthmān رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ without hesitation accepted this directive of the Messenger صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ. After her long battle with the disease she left this worldly life to meet her Rabb. She was the first of the daughters to meet her mother Khadijah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهَا in the next life.

It is strange to note the circumstances of her life, her mother passed, and she was absent in Abyssinia, she passes, and her father is absent fighting at Badr raising the flag of Islam. Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ did not attend her burial as he was preoccupied in Badr. She was buried in the Baqīʿ graveyard amidst the shedding of tears on her separation. The entire Madīnah came out for her funeral. The earth on her grave was barely levelled when Zayd ibn Ḥārithah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ comes into Madinah spreading the news of victory in Badr.<sup>1</sup> Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ then enters Madīnah a bitter sweet return, bids farewell to his recently deceased daughter and prays for her.

May the choicest mercies of Allah سُبحانه وتعالى be showered upon her. An excellent daughter and an enviable spouse. May Allah سُبحانه وتعالى be pleased with her.

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1 ‘Uthmān رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ was given a share of the spoils of war from Badr. He was counted as one of those who had participated.

## Umm Kulthūm bint al-Rasūl

The life of Umm Kulthūm bint Muḥammad ﷺ is not obscure nor is she part of the marginal notes in the books of history. She is the fourth daughter of Rasūlullāh ﷺ, the daughter of the master of mankind and the wife of one who had been given glad tidings of Jannah whilst he walked this earth. Her husband is ‘Uthmān ibn ‘Affān رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ who is known as *Dhū al-Nūrayn* (possessor of two lights) as he had the great honour of marrying two of the daughters of Rasūlullāh ﷺ.

Our journey through the years of her life in these pages would perhaps be a means of envy to the other chapters of the book, a life pure and noble, a story phenomenal in its simplicity.

She is the daughter of Khadījah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهَا and accepted Islam with her sisters and mother and pledged allegiance to her father when the women pledged their allegiance<sup>1</sup> at the emergence of the light of the da‘wah.

When she and her sister Ruqayyah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهَا reached a marriable age ‘Utbah and ‘Utaybah the sons of ‘Abd al-‘Uzzā (Abū Lahab) sent proposals for them. Rasūlullāh ﷺ agreed to the union as they were his uncle’s sons, however, unfortunately both these marriages did not last as has already been mentioned. As soon as Rasūlullāh ﷺ announced his prophethood and began calling to the creed of Islam the Quraysh began their persecutions and openly waged war against the Muslims. They began to impede on the personal, family life of Rasūlullāh ﷺ as well with Abū Lahab taking an oath of excommunication if his sons did not divorce the daughters of Muḥammad ﷺ. And so, they did before having consummated the marriage.<sup>2</sup>

Abū Lahab said:

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1 *Ṭabaqāt ibn Sa‘ad*, vol.8 pg.36.

2 *Siyar A‘lām al-Nubalā’*, vol. 2 pg. 250; *al-Wāfi bi al-Wafayāt*, vol. 14 pg. 95.

رأسي من رأسكما حرام إن لم تطلقا ابنتي محمد

I will have nothing to do with you if you two do not divorce the daughters of Muḥammad.<sup>1</sup>

Some historians have narrated an incident, the authenticity of which has been questioned, though what is known is that ‘Utaybah did not accept Islam and died as a disbeliever as opposed to his brothers who accepted the creed and were exemplary Muslims. The incident reads as follows:

‘Utaybah would harm Rasūlullāh ﷺ at any opportunity he got. One day he grabbed hold of the upper garment of Rasūlullāh ﷺ and heaved on it which caused it to tear. Rasūlullāh ﷺ in turn cursed him with the following:

اللهم سلط عليه كلبا من كلابك

O Allah! Set upon him a beast from your beasts.

When he was amongst a trading caravan in Zarqā’, Shām, a lion attacked him ripping him to shreds.<sup>2</sup>

Sayyidah Ruqayyah and her husband ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه emigrated to Abyssinia. As for Umm Kulthūm رضي الله عنها and her sister Fāṭimah رضي الله عنها, they stayed with their father and mother living a constrained life due to the harassment of the Quraysh day after day. She patiently endured the bitter pains of the early stages of Islam wherein the polytheists were at the epitome of meting out their persecution. The three long years of exile in the Abū Ṭālib valley of the Banū Hāshim and Banū al-Muṭṭalib was endured patiently by this great woman of Islam, Sayyidah Umm Kulthūm. Hungry and malnourished she bore the struggles of Islam with her family, seeing to her aged and ailing mother hoping for immense reward

1 *Siyar A’lām al-Nubalā’*, vol. 2 pg. 250; *al-Wāfi bi al-Wafayāt*, vol. 14 pg. 95.

2 *Al-Mustadrak lil Ḥākim*, vol. 2 pg. 539; *Tahdhīb al-Kamāl*, vol. 1 pg. 242.

from Allah *سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى*. Not long thereafter Sayyidah Khadījah *رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا*, a stalwart of the Islamic cause perhaps unmatched in her sacrifices, left this temporary abode. The two sisters Umm Kulthūm and Fāṭimah *رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمَا* here too were patient at the pains of separation, their father Rasūlullāh *صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ* himself grieving consoled his daughters on the loss of their mother. The running theme in the life of Sayyidah Umm Kulthūm as we see is patiently suffering many losses and trials.

When the Quraysh did not show any sign of easing in their ridicule, and rather upped their game in dreaming up novel ways of torturing the Muslims, the instruction of emigrating to Madīnah came from Allah *سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى*. Rasūlullāh *صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ* leaving his daughters in the care of his wife Sayyidah Sawdah bint Zam‘ah, undertakes the arduous journey<sup>1</sup>. Soon thereafter Zayd ibn Ḥārithah *رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ* accompanied Umm Kulthūm, Fāṭimah, and the family of Abū Bakr *رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ* on the same trip. They travelled yearning for Rasūlullāh *صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ* and arrived to an expectant father settling them in his home which he had prepared for his family after the construction of Masjid al-Nabawī was complete.

The demise of Ruqayyah *رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا* during the Battle of Badr had left ‘Uthmān *رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ* a widower as has been previously mentioned. Once the wounds of her separation began to heal, the marriage of Umm Kulthūm *رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا* to ‘Uthmān *رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ* was arranged in Rabī‘ al-Awwal, the third year of the hijrah. It was on this occasion that ‘Uthmān ibn ‘Affān *رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ* became known as Dhū al-Nūrayn, having had the great honour of marrying two of the daughters of Rasūlullāh *صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ*. An honour unmatched. They lived a blissful life seeing the flag of Islam being raised higher each day, with her witnessing the sacrifices of her husband in serving the cause of Islam. For six beautiful years they lived together however no child was born to them.<sup>2</sup>

She too was then afflicted by an illness which left her bed ridden for many days till her appointed time with death came in the month of Sha‘bān, the ninth year of

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1 *Siyar A‘lām al-Nubalā’*, vol. 2 pg. 252.

2 *Ṭabaqāt ibn Sa‘ad*, vol. 8 pg. 37.

hijrah.<sup>1</sup> Her death left a deep gash in the hearts of her husband and father having bid farewell to yet another wife and daughter respectively. Rasūlullāh ﷺ instructed Umm ‘Aṭīyyah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا to wash her thrice and gave his lower garment to be part of her shroud. After her burial Rasūlullāh ﷺ paused at her grave his eyes flowing with tears, heart aching at the separation of his beloved daughter Umm Kulthūm رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا. Anas ibn Mālik رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ draws the picture of her burial in the following words:

شهدنا بنتاً لرسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم، قال: ورسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم جالس على القبر، فرأيت عينيه تدمعان، قال: فقال: هل منكم رجل لم يقارف الليلة؟ فقال أبو طلحة: أنا. قال: فانزل. قال: فنزل في قبرها

We were present at the burial of the daughter of Rasūlullāh ﷺ. Rasūlullāh ﷺ sat at the graveside and I saw his tears streaming down his cheeks. Rasūlullāh ﷺ then announced, “A person should enter the grave who did not commit any minor or major sin<sup>2</sup> that (previous) night.” Abū Ṭalḥah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ replied, “I did not.” At the request of Rasūlullāh ﷺ he entered her grave.<sup>3</sup>

The cry of compassion and separation together with exercising patience on the decree of Allah ﷻ was the hallmark of Rasūlullāh ﷺ. There was no shrieking or wailing. These tears were the translation of the mercy that rested in the heart of Rasūlullāh ﷺ.

After the burial rites were completed Rasūlullāh ﷺ turned his attention to ‘Uthmān رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ who was grief stricken and distressed at the demise of his wife and the termination of the relation he enjoyed with Rasūlullāh ﷺ. Rasūlullāh ﷺ thus consoled him:

1 Ibid.

2 Some have taken the meaning of here to be, “that person should enter the grave who did not have sexual relations that (previous) night.”

3 *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, 1205.

لو كن عشرا لزوجتهن عثمان

If I had ten daughters, I would have married them one after the other to  
'Uthmān.<sup>1</sup>

May Allah ﷻ shower his choicest mercies on Umm Kulthūm, a spouse and stalwart par excellence. May Allah ﷻ gather us with her in Jannah and grant one and all the love of Muḥammad ﷺ, his family, and Companions.

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1 *Ṭabaqāt ibn Sa'ad*, vol. 8 pg. 38; *Siyar A'lām al-Nubalā'*, vol. 2 pg. 52; *Ṭabarānī fi al-Mu'jam al-Kabīr*, 18493.

## Ḥamzah ibn ‘Abd al-Muṭṭalib

A giant standing amongst the giants of Islam. A warrior of the Islamic cause. Famous as *Asad Allāh* (the lion of Allah). When one hears the phrase *Asad Allāh*, the mind races to the courageous Companion Ḥamzah ibn ‘Abd al-Muṭṭalib ibn Hishām ibn ‘Abd Manāf ibn Quṣayy ibn Kilāb رضي الله عنه. The dauntless leader, perhaps less famous by his teknonyms Abū ‘Umārah and Abū Ya‘lā, the paternal uncle and foster brother of Rasūlullāh صلى الله عليه وسلم. He was born into the Banū Hāshim clan of the Quraysh in Makkah, emigrating later in life to Madīnah.

No sooner had he accepted Islam that his life took a drastic turn wherein his concern was defending the Islamic cause from enemies foreign and domestic. He had immersed himself in the worry of spreading Islam and became a source of pride for the early weak Muslims. Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى honoured him with Islam just as he honoured Islam with him. He was a symbol of strength for the Muslims and was pivotal in laying the path for da‘wah in the beginning stages of the new faith.

The story of his acceptance of Islam is testament to the nobility of his fearless character. Ḥamzah, a man of deep rooted values, was reputed to be the strongest and most active of the Quraysh, their champion in war. He spent most of his time hunting in the hills. One day when he returned from the chase with his bow swinging from his shoulder, the slave-girl of ‘Abd Allāh ibn Jad‘ān told him how Abū Jahal had heaped abuse on his nephew and when not electing a response hurled a stone at his head causing the Messenger صلى الله عليه وسلم to bleed.

Ḥamzah found himself at the end of all patience. He went on the run to the masjid, where he saw Abū Jahal was reviewing the events of the day to his compeers. Ḥamzah رضي الله عنه struck him on his head with his heavy bow, causing it to bleed, saying:

اتشتم ابن اخي وانا على دينه

Will you insult him when I am upon his religion?



He shouted, flexing his muscle under the noses of the Quraysh. The clans of both men rose ready to defend their honour, however Abū Jahal realising the better path would be to accept his wrong doing instructed his clan men to step down.<sup>1</sup>

Ḥamzah رضي الله عنه became a Muslim and put his teeth into the faith taking a stance worthy to have books of history written in gold dedicated to him. What history has recorded of this warrior is a yardstick for the generations to come. By Allah! The Ṣaḥābah were a people like no other. If you were to ask me to swear in the sacred bounds of the ḥaram the superiority of the Ṣaḥābah over the entire ummah, in their faith, conviction, sacrifice, honour, and justice I would do so till there no longer remains adequate airflow to vibrate my vocal folds and create audible pulses, may Allah be pleased with them all.

True courage creates a fervour for establishing the truth as we see throughout the life of Ḥamzah رضي الله عنه. The first raiding party in Islam was led by him. He was, therefore, the first banner bearer in Islam. The battle of Badr too recorded him amongst its great warriors.

و هكذا السيف لا سيف ابن ذي	تلك المكارم لا قعبان من لبن هذا
و هكذا يعصف التوحيد بالوثن	و هكذا يفعل الابطال ان غضبوا

*Noble character is earned not inherited; similarly, valour is not talking of bygone days.*

*These are the tales of brave men when they're angered; these are tales of idol worship broken by monotheism*

Sa'd ibn Abī Waqqās رضي الله عنه pays testament to his bravery on the Day of Uḥūd with the following words:

كان حمزة يقاتل يوم احد بين يدي رسول الله صلي الله عليه و سلم بسيفين و يقول انا اسد الله

Ḥamzah fought on the Day of Uḥūd in front of Rasūlullāh صلى الله عليه وسلم wielding two swords, proclaiming, "I am the Lion of Allah."

1 Sīrah Ibn Hishām, vol. 1 pg. 189.

He attacked left and right, fighting in the path of Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى defending the Islamic proclamation. Unbeknown to him there lay in wait Waḥshī, a slave, a master of the spear, whose freedom hung in the balance. “Kill him and you are free,” promised his master Jubayr ibn Muṭ‘im. Waḥshī recounts his encounter with Ḥamzah:

ورأيت رجلا إذا حمل لا يرجع حتى يهزمنا، فقلت من هذا؟ قالوا حمزة. قلت: هذا حاجتي

I saw a man who would launch an attack and not return till his opponent lay in the dust. I enquired regarding him. The people informed me he is Ḥamzah. I knew then, he was my target.

The martyrdom of Ḥamzah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ at the hands of Waḥshī was with a quick launch of the spear which tore through the courageous warrior rendering his body soulless. This attack of Waḥshī was before his acceptance of Islam. The polytheists however were not content with simply killing him, they mutilated his corpse, gutting him, and cutting his ears and nose off! When the news reached Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ he was struck with grief and outrage vowing to take revenge if given the opportunity, upon which Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى revealed the following verse:

لَيْسَ لَكَ مِنَ الْأَمْرِ شَيْءٌ أَوْ يَتُوبَ عَلَيْهِمْ أَوْ يُعَذِّبُهُمْ فَإِنَّهُمْ ظَالِمُونَ

*Not for you, [O Muhammad, but for Allah], is the decision whether He should [cut them down] or forgive them or punish them, for indeed, they are wrongdoers.*<sup>1</sup>

On his way from the battlefield, the Prophet صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ heard the women of the Anṣār lamenting their martyrs, and tears falling from his eyes, said:

ولكن حمزة لا بواكي له ولكن حمزة لا بواكي له

But Ḥamzah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ has no one to lament him.<sup>2</sup>

1 Sūrah Āl ‘Imrān: 128.

2 *Al-Mustadrak lī al-Ḥākim*, 4883. Ḥākim has classified this narration as authentic on the principles of Imām Muslim, though he hasn’t mentioned it in his book.

The women of the Anṣār sharing the emotion of Rasūlullāh ﷺ took it upon themselves to cry and lament for Ḥamzah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ. When the Rasūlullāh ﷺ heard them doing this he forbade them saying, “I did not mean this. Go back, may Allah have mercy on you. There will be no crying anymore.” This was the end of the worldly chapter of this brave warrior’s life.

واما ممات يغيب العدا	فاما حياة تسر الصديق
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*Live pleasing friends; or die infuriating enemies*

Just as Rasūlullāh ﷺ was overtaken by emotion on his death, so too were the Companions. Their poetry took on a unique path riddled with grief. ‘Abd Allāh ibn Rawāḥah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ composed the following:

وما يغني البكاء ولا العويل	بكت عيني وحق لها بكائها
أحمزة ذاكم الرجل القتييل	على أسد الإله غداة قالوا
هناك وقد أصيب به الرسول	أصيب المسلمون به جميعا

*My eyes tear and rightfully so; however, neither crying nor lamenting will offer me solace,*

*Upon the loss of the Lion of Allah; Ḥamzah they said, has been killed,*

*All the Muslims grieved his loss; more so the Messenger of Allah.*

Rasūlullāh ﷺ then awarded him with a posthumous title, announcing to the world, Ḥamzah is *Sayyid al-Shuhadā’* (the chief of martyrs).<sup>1</sup> The love of Ḥamzah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ was so deeply embedded in the heart of Rasūlullāh ﷺ that when Waḥshī the killer of Ḥamzah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ went to Allah’s Prophet ﷺ in Madīnah to accept the faith of Islam:

He saw him and said, “Is it you, Waḥshī?”

1 *Al-Mustadrak lil Ḥākīm*, 4884. The narration has been recorded by Jābir رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ and Albānī has deemed it as authentic. See *al-Ṣaḥīḥah*, 348.

He answered, “Yes, O Messenger of Allah.”

He said, “If possible try not to come in front me.”

He accepted his declaration of faith and forgave him. The deep sorrow, however, had left a deep imprint on his heart which would not allow him to look at the one who had killed his dear uncle, Ḥamzah رضي الله عنه.<sup>1</sup>

Reflect, O reader of these passages. If someone had killed the one you held so dear and after some time came to accept your propagation, would you forget the tears of sorrow shed? Would you forget the pain of heart felt? Would you dare forgive? Subḥān Allāh, Rasūlullāh صلى الله عليه وسلم forgave Waḥshī رضي الله عنه and accepted his Islam. It was simply human sentiment that he preferred him to stay out of sight and not re-open a wound barely healed.

From amongst the wonders of this brave warrior of Islam and by inclusion all the Companions of Rasūlullāh صلى الله عليه وسلم is an incident mentioned by Shaykh Muḥammad Al-Ṣawwāf when a flood had uncovered some of the bodies of the martyrs of Uhud.

Shaykh Muḥammad Al-Ṣawwāf, one of the scholars who were chosen to rebury the martyrs of Uhud after the flood that uncovered the bodies, records that their bodies did not change, decompose, or rot even after 1400 years from their death. Shaykh Muḥammad al-Ṣawwāf said:

Among the bodies was that of Ḥamzah رضي الله عنه. He was large man and his nose and ears were cut. His abdomen was ripped upon which his land lay. When we lifted his hand, blood gushed forth, with it the scent of musk.<sup>2</sup>

We ask of Allah سُبْحَانَكَ وَبِحَمْدِكَ a blissful life, a martyr’s death, and the company of the Prophets. Āmīn.

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1 See the full incident as Waḥshī himself narrates it, *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, 3844.

2 In one of his lecture series Dr. Ṭāriq Suwaydān mentioned this incident, it however needs to be corroborated.

## Ṣafiyah bint ‘Abd al-Muṭṭalib

A resolute and fearless woman. The first woman to kill a polytheist fighting in the path of Allah ﷺ. She gave birth to and raised the first person to unsheathe his sword for the sake of Allah ﷺ, Zubayr ibn al-‘Awwām رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ. A blessed woman of strong character, Ṣafiyah bint ‘Abd al-Muṭṭalib al-Hāshimiyah al-Qurashiyah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا. The paternal aunt of Rasūlullāh ﷺ and the full sister of Ḥamzah ibn ‘Abd al-Muṭṭalib رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ. The only aunt of the Prophet ﷺ who embraced Islam and migrated to Madīnah.

Honoured by her lineage, family, and offspring. Her father, ‘Abd al-Muṭṭalib the chief of the Quraysh. Her mother, Hālah bint Wuhayb, the cousin of Āminah bint Wahab—the mother of Rasūlullāh ﷺ. Her first husband was Ḥārith ibn Ḥarb, the brother of Abū Sufyān, who had passed away. Her second husband was ‘Awwām ibn Khuwaylid, the brother of Khadījah bint Khuwaylid, the first wife of Rasūlullāh ﷺ. Her sons were Zubayr ibn al-‘Awwām—the acclaimed disciple of Rasūlullāh ﷺ and one of the receivers of glad tidings of paradise<sup>1</sup>—and Sā’ib ibn al-‘Awwām—who had participated in Badr, Khandaq amongst other battles and was martyred in Yamāmah.<sup>2</sup>

When Allah ﷻ sent Rasūlullāh ﷺ for the guidance of mankind till the end of time with the true faith, he commanded him to begin preaching to his relatives.

وَأَنْذِرْ عَشِيرَتَكَ الْأَقْرَبِينَ

*And warn, [O Muhammad], your closest kindred.<sup>3</sup>*

The Beloved ﷺ stood addressing at the top of his voice:

1 Siyar A’lām al-Nubalā’, vol. 1 pg. 41.

2 Al-Iṣābah, vol. 4 pg. 115.

3 Sūrah al-Shu’arā’: 214.

يا معشر قريش اشتروا أنفسكم لا أغني عنكم من الله شيئا يا بني عبد مناف لا أغني عنكم من الله شيئا يا عباس بن عبد المطلب لا أغني عنك من الله شيئا ويا صفيية عمه رسول الله لا أغني عنك من الله شيئا ويا فاطمة بنت محمد سليمان ما شئت من مالي لا أغني عنك من الله شيئا

O people of Quraysh! Save yourselves (from the Hellfire) as I cannot save you from Allah's Punishment; O Banū 'Abd Manāf! I cannot save you from Allah's Punishment, O Şafiyyah, the Aunt of Allah's Apostle! I cannot save you from Allah's Punishment; O Fāṭimah bint Muḥammad! Ask me anything from my wealth, but I cannot save you from Allah's Punishment.<sup>1</sup>

In this proclamation of propagation, Rasūlullāh ﷺ singled out his aunt Şafiyyah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا due to her high stage and close bond with him. It was not long that she subjected herself to the truth and came into the fold of Islam. She was from amongst those who accepted Islam in the early days, being the only aunt of Rasūlullāh ﷺ to accept the creed,<sup>2</sup> adding to her sublime lineage the honour of Islam. She, with the other female Companions took the pledge of allegiance at the hand of Rasūlullāh ﷺ—never once did his hand touch the hand of a female Companion taking the pledge—which had a profound effect on her life. Her faith in Allah ﷻ and His Messenger ﷺ spurred her on to achieve heights in goodness to her spouse, trustworthiness, and sincerity in action and speech.

When we talk of this great woman, our minds relive her resolute demeanor and strong personality. She was not one to drag her heels, always in the forefront affirming her faith.

She had a strong personality and was therefore inclined towards sternness and harshness. Şafiyyah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا devoted all her attention to her sons, especially the younger one Zubayr رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ who she would occupy in repairing bows and arrows from a young age. Making him face his fears and when sensing trepidation, she would sternly rebuke him, and discipline him to make him strong and firm.

1 Şaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī, 2602; Şaḥīḥ Muslim, 206. Narrated by Abū Hurayrah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ.

2 Siyar A'lām al-Nubalā', vol. 2 pg. 270.

When one of the members of her husband’s family passed by her while she was treating her son in this way, he undermined her intentions saying, “This is not how children are treated, you are hitting him with hatred not with motherly sentiment.” She retorted with a poem:

من قال قد أبغضته فقد كذب
وإنما أضربه لكي يلب
ويهزم الجيش ويأتي بالسلب

*Whoever claims I hate him has lied;*

*I hit him, so he may one day rally,*

*the forces and return victorious with the spoils of war.<sup>1</sup>*

Delving into the occasions of her assisting her faith and protecting her Nabī صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ, will leave one with much reading as the books of history are replete with such examples. We will suffice on one example which celebrates her bravery, fearlessness and determination in her faith.

The Battle of Uḥud was raging, with her amongst other women carrying water to the thirsty, repairing arrows, and surveying the battlefield. When the Muslim army suffered a temporary lapse in judgement and Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ had very few around him fighting, she feared the polytheists may have an opportunity to launch an attack on the Messenger of Allah. She leapt, a lioness grabbing a spear from one of the fallen and splitting row after row of the polytheists formation smiting their faces with her spear. She angrily remarked, “Are you leaving the side of Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ?” When the Messenger of Allah صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ saw her, he called her son Zubayr رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ to take hold of her lest she be harmed or see the body of her brother Ḥamzah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ who had been slain and mutilated. He called out to her to leave the battlefield, she disregarded his voice until he told her it was the instruction of Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ. “My mother, Allah’s Messenger is ordering you to go back!” said Zubayr رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ.

1 Al-Iṣābah fī Ma’rifah al-Ṣaḥābah, vol. 4 pg. 7/8. The chapter regarding whose name is Zubayr. Siyar A’lām al-Nubalā’, vol. 1 pg. 45.

It is here that Ṣafīyyah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهَا distinguished herself from other women and it is here that the personality of this strong, believing, and persevering woman is vividly manifested. She told her son Zubayr رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ:

ولم وقد بلغني أنه قد مثل بأخي وذلك في الله عز وجل قليل، ان ذلك في الله، لقد رضيت بقضاء الله  
والله لأصبرن ولأحتسبن إن شاء الله

Why should I go back since I have heard that my brother was mutilated in the cause of Allah? I am pleased with the decree of Allah. I will bear it with patience and I hope to get the reward from Allah, if he so wills.

She placed the spear down and stood at the body of her brother, nose and ears cut off with an abdomen gutted. No word of unhappiness left her lips. Complete submission to the will of Allah سُبْحَانَكَ وَبِحَمْدِكَ. A poetess she composed the following eulogy:<sup>1</sup>

إلى جنة يحيا بها وسرور لحمزة	دعاه إله الحق ذو العرش دعوة
لحمزة يوم الحشر خير مصير	فذلك ما كنا نرجي ونرتجي

*The owner of the Throne, the true Lord has called him; to paradise living there in bliss Ḥamzah,*

*Our desire and hopes are of Ḥamzah; on the day of judgement entering paradise.*

A lesson left for us by this great woman of the Islamic struggle. Patience and perseverance when met with hardship. No shrieking and lamenting as the people would in the age of ignorance. No self-harm and great display of grief. A display of pleasure at the decree of Allah سُبْحَانَكَ وَبِحَمْدِكَ and submitting to his wish. Truly Ṣafīyyah is a unique example for the Muslim woman. True to herself, resolute, brave, intelligent, and fearless. No amount of difficulties would shake her resolve.

1 *Sīrah al-Nabawīyyah* of Ibn Kathīr, vol. 3 pg. 118.



Her demise was in the 20th year of the hijrah during the era of ‘Umar رضي الله عنه at the age of seventy-three. Her funeral prayer was led by ‘Umar رضي الله عنه and she was buried in the Baqī graveyard.<sup>1</sup>

May Allah be pleased with her.

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1 *Siyar A'lām al-Nubalā'*, vol. 2 pg. 271.

## ‘Abbās ibn ‘Abd al-Muṭṭalib

A year of intense drought afflicts the cities and villages, affecting Madīnah and its inhabitants. Desperate, the people come out of the city with their leader Amīr al-Mu‘minīn ‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb رضي الله عنه to the empty dry plains to read the ritual rain seeking prayer, Ṣalāt al-Istisqā’. They beg and plead of Allah سُبْحَانَكَ وَتَعَالَى for beneficial rain. ‘Umar رضي الله عنه takes hold of the right hand of ‘Abbās رضي الله عنه raises it to the sky and prays thus:

اللهم إنا كنا نستسقي إليك بنبينا فأسقينا، وإنا نتوسل إليك بعم نبينا فأسقنا

O Allah, we would ask you for rain by virtue of our Prophet and you gave us rain. Now we ask you for rain by virtue of the paternal uncle of our Prophet, so grant us rain.<sup>1</sup>

This act is known as seeking goodness through the prayers of the pious, i.e. requesting a pious person to pray on one’s behalf. The Muslim congregation did not leave until rain poured announcing glad tidings, irrigation, and fertility. The Companions rushed to embrace ‘Abbās رضي الله عنه and express their affection for his blessed status saying, “Rejoice! You are now the provider of water of the two Harams.”<sup>2</sup> Who was this great personality? His teknonym Abū al-Faḍl, his name ‘Abbās son of ‘Abd al-Muṭṭalib. The uncle of Rasūlullāh صلى الله عليه وسلم and a well respected elder of the Quraysh both in the era of ignorance and Islam. He was extremely tall, handsome, awe inspiring, blessed with a resounding voice, and immense forbearance together with wielding a substantial amount of power.

He was slightly elder than Rasūlullāh صلى الله عليه وسلم, being born three years prior to the Year of the Elephant. It was once asked of him, “Who is bigger between you and Rasūlullāh صلى الله عليه وسلم?” he replied:

1 *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, 964/3507. Narrated by Anas رضي الله عنه.

2 *Al-Istī‘āb*, vol. 1 pg. 146; *al-Wāfi bi al-Wafayāt*, vol. 16 pg. 361.

هو اكبر وانا ولدت قبله

He is bigger than me [in status], and I was born before him.<sup>1</sup>

Their close relationship was strengthened by the natural disposition of ‘Abbās رضي الله عنه which Rasūlullāh صلى الله عليه وسلم grew to love and appreciate. In addition, ‘Abbās’s رضي الله عنه good nature and excellent manners complemented the Prophet’s standards of judgment, for he was excessively generous, as if he was the sponsor of good and noble deeds towards humanity. He treasured kinship bonds and cherished his family and relatives. He put himself, his influence, and his money at their disposal. Just as he held a high rank amongst the Quraysh he was held in high esteem by Rasūlullāh صلى الله عليه وسلم as well. Moreover, he was an extremely intelligent man. His intelligence was tinged with craftiness. This, along with his high station among the Quraysh, enabled him to avert mischief and abuse against the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم when he began to invite people openly to embrace Islam. Rasūlullāh صلى الله عليه وسلم praised him with the following words:

هذا العباس بن عبد المطلب أجود قريش كفا وأوصلها

‘Abbās ibn ‘Abd al-Muṭṭalib is the most generous and benevolent towards his relatives from amongst all the Quraysh.<sup>2</sup>

‘Abbās رضي الله عنه was to his people a gold mine of rich ideas and wisdom. He was a well wisher ever ready to free slaves and disliked the enslaving of humans. He would provide water for the pilgrims and maintain the Masjid al-Ḥarām together with ensuring peace and the absence of obscenities therein.<sup>3</sup>

1 *Al-Mustadrak lil Ḥākim*, 5398. Ḥākim has not commented on the narration. *Muṣannaf ibn Abī Shaybah*, 26256. Al-Haythamī commented, “Ṭabarānī has recorded it and the narrators are authentic.” See *Majma’ al-Zawāid*, 15482.

2 *Musnad Imām Aḥmad*, 1610; *Ṣaḥīḥ Ibn Ḥibbān*, 7025; *al-Mustadrak li al-Ḥākim*, 5419; *Musnad Abū Ya’la*, 820. The annotation has its chain of narration as good. *Musnad Bazzār*, 1077; *Sunan al-Nasa’ī al-Kubrā*, 8174. *Majma’ al-Zawāid* has the following, “In the chain there is Muḥammad ibn Ṭalḥah al-Taymī who has been considered as authentic by more than one and the rest of the chain in *Musnad Imām Aḥmad* and *Musnad Abū Ya’la* are all authentic. It is also in the *Silsilah al-Ṣaḥīḥah* of al-Albānī, 3326.

3 *Tafsīr al-Tha’labī*, vol.2 pg. 121; *Tārikh Dimashq*, vol. 24 pg. 118.

When 73 men and two women from a delegation of the Anṣār came to Makkah during the Hajj season to take the oath of allegiance to Rasūlullāh ﷺ in the Second Pledge of al-‘Aqabah and to make preparations with the Prophet ﷺ for the imminent emigration of the Muslims to Madīnah, the Prophet ﷺ informed his uncle ‘Abbās concerning all that went on between him and the delegation and about the pledge, for he trusted his uncle and treasured his opinion, though he was not a Muslim at that time.

When it was time for the secret meeting, Rasūlullāh ﷺ and his uncle ‘Abbās went to where the Anṣār were waiting for them. ‘Abbās wanted to test their loyalty and ability to help and protect the Prophet ﷺ and deduce the veracity of their pledge.

Ka‘b ibn Mālīk رضي الله عنه narrates the proceedings of this meeting.

We sat in the ravine waiting for the Prophet ﷺ until he arrived accompanied by his uncle. ‘Abbās ibn ‘Abd al-Muṭṭalib who said:

يا معشر الخزرج إن محمدا منا حيث علمتم، وقد منعناه من قومنا ممن هو على مثل رأينا فيه، فهو في عزة من قومه، ومنعة في بلده، وإنه قد أبا إلا الإنحياز إليكم والحقوكم بكم، فإن كنتم ترون أنكم وافون له بما دعوتموه إليه ومانعوه ممن خالفه، فأنتم وما تحملتم من ذلك، وإن كنتم ترون أنكم مسلموه وخاذلوه بعد الخروج إليكم فمن الآن فدعوه، فإنه في عزة ومنعة من قومه وبلده

O people of Khazraj, you are well aware of Muḥammad’s lineage. We have prevented our people from abusing him. He lives here protected and supported by his people and in his own city, yet he prefers to accompany you and emigrate to Madīnah. So, on the one hand, if you are certain that you will be capable of giving him sufficient help, protection, and safety, then fulfil your pledge to the fullest. On the other hand, if you intend to forsake and thwart him after he has emigrated to you, then you had better show him your true colors now because he is safer with his people and in his own city.”

Ka'b Ibn Mālik رضي الله عنه replied, “We have heard what you have to say, O Rasūlullāh! Take and do with us as you and your Lord please.”

The answer of the Anṣār displayed their resolve, true courage, and sincerity in taking up this mammoth task and being prepared for any outcome. Rasūlullāh صلى الله عليه وسلم then spoke, after which the pledge took place.<sup>1</sup>

‘Abbās ibn ‘Abd al-Muṭṭalib did not publicly announce his Islam till before the Conquest of Makkah. He took part in Badr against the Muslims [due to compulsion] and was taken as a prisoner after the Muslims defeated the Quraysh army. When it was decided that a ransom would be taken in exchange for the captives’ freedom ‘Abbās wanted to be set free without paying a ransom, saying, “O Messenger of Allah, I was a Muslim, but my people forced me to go forth in this battle.” But Rasūlullāh صلى الله عليه وسلم insisted saying,

الله أعلم بشأنك، إن بك ما تدعي حقا فالله يجزيك بذلك، وأما ظاهر أمرك فقد كان علينا فافد نفسك

Allah سبحانه وتعالى knows best what the truth of the matter is. If you are true in what you say, then Allah سبحانه وتعالى will recompense you accordingly. We, however judge on the apparent. Ransom yourself.<sup>2</sup>

Ibn ‘Abbās رضي الله عنه recounting the condition of the prisoners of Badr says:

The Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم loved his uncle ‘Abbās dearly, to the extent that he could not sleep when the Battle of Badr lay down its burden and his uncle was captured. When he was asked about the reason for his sleeplessness, despite his sweeping victory, he said,

سمعت أئبن عمي في وثاقه

I heard ‘Abbās moan in his fetters.

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1 *Sīrah ibn Hishām*, vol.2 pg. 302.

2 *Musnad Imām Aḥmad*, 3310. *Majma’ al-Zawāid* has the following, “It is recorded in *Musnad Imām Aḥmad* however one narrator is not mentioned. All the other narrators are strong.

As soon as a group of Muslims heard the Prophet's words, they rushed to where the captives were and untied 'Abbās out of reverence for Rasūlullāh

ﷺ.<sup>1</sup>

Subḥān Allāh! The voice of his uncle reaches his ears in fetters and he does not get a wink of sleep. Truly we are honored to have a Prophet so affectionate.

Here are a few examples of the status of 'Abbās رضي الله عنه in the eyes of those around him.

'Ā'ishah رضي الله عنها says:

I have not seen Rasūlullāh ﷺ revere anyone as much as he revered 'Abbās.<sup>2</sup>

Similarly the Ṣaḥābah too would revere him to the extent that he passes 'Umar and 'Uthmān رضي الله عنهما who are on their conveyance, no sooner do they see him that they disembark until he passes them, honouring the uncle of Rasūlullāh ﷺ in this manner.

When 'Umar رضي الله عنه took the reins of the khilāfah and cities fell to the Muslim armies like dominos, wealth began pouring into Madinah. 'Umar رضي الله عنه gave preference to those Muhājirīn and Anṣār who had participated in Badr by giving them five thousand whilst the other Companions were given four thousand. When it came to give 'Abbās رضي الله عنه however, 'Umar رضي الله عنه gave him twelve thousand!

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1 Sunan al-Bayhaqi al-Kubrā, 179323; Tārīkh Dimashq, vol. 26 pg. 290

2 Tārīkh Baghdad, vol. 9 pg. 212. Narrated by 'Ā'ishah رضي الله عنها. Al-Dhahabī mentions in *Siyar A'lām al-Nubalā'*, vol.2 pg. 92 the chain of narration is good. Al-Ḥākim brings the narration in his *Mustadrak*, 5410 with the following words, "Rasūlullāh ﷺ would revere 'Abbās رضي الله عنه like a child would his father. An honour Allah سبحانه وتعالى had bestowed specifically upon 'Abbās رضي الله عنه." The author then writes, "This narration is with an authentic chain of narration however, Imām Bukhārī and Muslim have not narrated it in their books." Al-Dhahabī concurs with him in the authentication. Al-Albānī however has deemed it weak see, *Da'īf al-Jāmi'*, 4538; *Silsilah al-Da'īfah*, 4264.

‘Alī رضي الله عنه would honour ‘Abbās رضي الله عنه, kissing his hands and feet saying, “O uncle be pleased with me.”<sup>1</sup>

Sa’īd ibn al-Musayyab says, “‘Abbās رضي الله عنه is the best of this ummah.”<sup>2</sup>

During the khilāfah of ‘Umar رضي الله عنه, he saw a water spout on the roof of ‘Abbās رضي الله عنه which flowed toward the walk way. ‘Umar رضي الله عنه went up and removed it. ‘Abbās رضي الله عنه came to him asking if he had removed it to which ‘Umar رضي الله عنه replied in the affirmative as it may be nuisance to people.

‘Abbās رضي الله عنه said to him, “It was Rasūlullāh صلى الله عليه وسلم who had placed it there.” ‘Umar رضي الله عنه began crying and swore by Allah to bend down while ‘Abbās رضي الله عنه stood on his back to put it in its place.<sup>3</sup>

Dear reader, envision the respect that was displayed to ‘Abbās رضي الله عنه by the Ṣaḥābah رضي الله عنهم. The mere relation to Rasūlullāh صلى الله عليه وسلم had them intensely revering him. Let us ask ourselves, what is our attitude towards our Muslim brothers and sisters? By extension, what is our attitude towards the Book of our Lord and the saying of our Prophet? Alas! There is no might nor power except in Allah.

‘Abbās رضي الله عنه, the uncle of Rasūlullāh صلى الله عليه وسلم would have been the only inheritor of his wealth besides his wives and daughter if there was inheritance after the demise of a prophet.

He emancipates seventy slaves at the time of his death and breathed his last in the 32nd year of the hijrah. ‘Uthmān ibn ‘Affān رضي الله عنه performed the funeral prayer and he was laid to rest in the Baqī’ graveyard.

May Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى be pleased with him.

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1 *Al-Adab al-Mufrad*, 976. Al-Albānī has commented on it saying it is weak and mawqūf.

2 *Al-Mustadrak lil Ḥākim*, 5434. Al-Dhahabī has authenticated it in *Tārīkh al-Islām*, vol. 3 pg. 378.

3 *Siyar A’lām al-Nubalā’*, vol. 2 pg. 96.

## ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib

Some stories just never get old and one never tires in reading them repeatedly. It transports you to another era. That feeling of warmth seems to linger much longer the more you read. The life story of Rasūlullāh ﷺ, the best of the children of Adam عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ has a similar effect. Rich memoirs radiating brilliantly through the passage of time, not dimming in brightness nor dulling in evoking powerful emotions. Perhaps the story of the migration from Makkah to Madīnah is unique in its magnificence and brilliance. It was a new chapter in the history of Islam, the rays of hope after many years began to shine just as the shimmer of divine help began to reveal itself. As strange as it may seem, leaving Makkah was the path that led back to it with the Ṣaḥābah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ as conquerors and victorious as Allah سُبحانه وتعالى indicates to it in the Qur’ān:

إِنَّ الَّذِي فَرَضَ عَلَيْكَ الْقُرْآنَ لَرَادُّكَ إِلَىٰ مَعَادٍ

*Indeed, [O Muhammad], He who imposed upon you the Qur’an will take you back to a place of return.*<sup>1</sup>

The polytheists sure to quell the rise of Islam were worried. Most of the Muslims had already left for Madīnah with their families and possessions and Makkah lay bare of believers besides a few, Rasūlullāh ﷺ, Abū Bakr, ‘Alī, and a few others, some who were incapable of freeing themselves from the bonds of the disbelievers. When most of the Muslims left Makkah and settled in Madīnah, it occurred to the idolaters that if Islam struck roots in the oasis in the north, and became viable, it would pose a threat to them and their way of life. They realised that this was the final chance they had to plot the assassination of Rasūlullāh ﷺ before Islam flourished.

As they wrapped up the loose ends of their discussion and decided to murder the Messenger of Allah in cold blood, Jibrīl عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ came with the news of their

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1 Sūrah al-Qaṣaṣ, 85



scheme to Rasūlullāh ﷺ. The Prophet ﷺ, however, was ready to meet an exigency like this. Apprised in time of the plan of the Quraysh to kill him, he called his devoted cousin, ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ, disclosed to him the plan of the Quraysh, and his own plan to outwit them. His plan was to put ‘Alī رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ in his own bed, and then to slip out of the house at an opportune moment.

Abū Bakr رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ received a visit from Rasūlullāh ﷺ in the middle of the day, a peculiar occurrence, as the Messenger of Allah ﷺ was not habitual of seeing his closest friend at this time of the day.

قال إن الله قد أذن لي في الخروج فقال أبو بكر : الصحبة يا رسول الله ، قال : نعم

He said to Abū Bakr, “Allah has now permitted me to emigrate.”

Abū Bakr رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ then sought permission to join him on this journey, and Rasūlullāh ﷺ acceded his request.

‘Ā’ishah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهَا narrating the incident depicts the emotions of her father in the following words:

فرايت ابا بكر يبكي وما كنت احسب أن أحدا يبكي من الفرح

I saw Abū Bakr crying, and until that day I never thought someone could shed tears out of happiness.

Rasūlullāh ﷺ then instructed ‘Alī رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ to sleep in his bed that night.<sup>1</sup>

The young companion ‘Alī رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ accepts this task without hesitation, a show of his complete love for his prophet.

Abū Bakr رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ seeking companionship on the journey and ‘Alī رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ laying his life on the line, the epitome of love for assisting the cause. Knowing full well that Rasūlullāh ﷺ is being forced out of his home his closest friend Abū Bakr رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ does not leave his side. Sure, that he is being hunted ‘Alī رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ takes

1 Al-Ṭabaqāt al-Kubrā, vol. 1 pg. 228; Fiḡh al-Sīrah, vol. 1 pg. 161

his place. They are not following the instructions of a wealthy man hoping for a healthy payment nor of a man leaving for leisure, they are following a man who is being driven out by his own people, who have placed a price on his head.

One may wonder then, what drove them to such lengths in sacrifice? A treasure that lay in their chest which they had worked on tirelessly to perfect; *īmān*. These greats had perfected their *īmān* which differentiated them from the common folk, this deep conviction submits a man to lay down his family, wealth, and life for the cause of Islam.

Without a shadow of doubt, I say if ‘Alī رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ was asked to select one night from his life as the greatest, he would choose the night of hijrah. A night of ransom and sacrifice, a night which would test the conviction of faith that threatened to burst through his bosom, a night of helping the Beloved صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ.

‘Alī رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ stayed calm and at peace with himself because he trusted Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى fully. When people have full trust in Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى, they never lose. ‘Alī رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ then stayed behind to give the belongings of people back to them. People had trusted the Prophet صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ with their valuable belongings and now they must be given back. This was his first duty, the second greater duty left to him was to spend the night in the bed of Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ.

The polytheists surrounded the house of Muḥammad صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ. They peeked inside and beheld a recumbent figure covered in a blanket and were satisfied that their “quarry” was safe. The opportune moment for Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ to escape came and he exited out of the precincts of his house, took a handful of dust and began dispersing it in their direction reciting:

وَجَعَلْنَا مِنْ بَيْنِ أَيْدِيهِمْ سَدًّا وَمِنْ خَلْفِهِمْ سَدًّا فَأَغْشَيْنَاهُمْ فَهُمْ لَا يُبْصِرُونَ

*And We have put before them a barrier and behind them a barrier and covered them, so they do not see.*<sup>1</sup>

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1 Sūrah Yasīn: 9.

As for ‘Alī رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ he lay covered from head to toe withering in pain from the attack of the idolaters who thought him to be the Prophet of Allah. Throwing stones at him, a weakening measure before the assassination. He remained steadfast not giving up his identity nor the ploy of Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ. A brave man, a dauntless companion. Just before daybreak, the pagan head-hunters stormed into the house with drawn swords to kill the Prophet صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ. But their surprise and dismay knew no bounds when they noticed that it was ‘Alī رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ and not Muḥammad صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ who was sleeping in the bed.

The command was for ‘Alī رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ to travel to Madīnah after fulfilling his duties in Makkah. His journey was filled with fears and uncertainties, so he sought to travel under the darkness of night and hide during the day. He entered Madīnah after a treacherous journey, his feet swollen and bleeding. Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ was informed of his arrival and his most blessed and handsome face lit up with joy! He called for his cousin ‘Alī رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ, however the Ṣaḥābah informed him that he could not walk anymore. The pains of this ghastly travel had caught up with him and he fell to the ground upon entering the sanctity of Madīnah.

Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ walked to him, finding him defeated and unable to walk, held him close and cried. Though no words were exchanged their embrace and tears shared a thousand words.

تبين من بكى ممن تباكى	إذا اشتبكت دموع في حدود
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*When tears and cheeks become one; the phony are separated from the true.*

Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ rubbed over his legs with his blessed saliva and prayed for him, the result was that ‘Alī رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ never complained of leg pain from that day forth.<sup>1</sup>

The incident of hijrah will be spoken of from pulpits and lecture podiums, it will be written by authors and translators alike. Children will be enthralled

<sup>1</sup> *Tārīkh Dimashq*, vol. 42 pg. 68; *Usd al-Ghābah*, vol. 1 pg. 792.

by the story just as adults will take many life lessons from it. In every era, by every demographic the sacrifice of ‘Alī رضي الله عنه will never be forgotten. His passion to let his life hang in the balance as a decoy for Rasūlullāh صلى الله عليه وسلم whilst the unsheathed swords advanced towards him will be recorded together with great warriors and heroic soldiers. The desire to give his life so that the sun of Islam may shine bright will be repeated till there remain no voices to speak nor any pens to write.

Dear reader, the life of ‘Alī رضي الله عنه, unleashes wave after wave of sacrifice and high aspirations going beyond the realms of possibilities. Glittering like stars above are tales of greatness which would be casted as mere works of fiction if reliable books of history did not corroborate them, earmarking them as authentic incidents. His teknonyms are Abū Turāb and Abū al-Ḥasan. The father of the Princes of paradise. The fourth Khalīfah and the cousin of Rasūlullāh صلى الله عليه وسلم. The beloved of the Messenger of Allah and his flag bearer. Loved amongst the Ṣaḥābah and close to every believer. ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib ibn ‘Abd al-Muṭṭalib رضي الله عنه.

He was a part of all the battles with Rasūlullāh صلى الله عليه وسلم fighting by his side besides the Battle of Tabūk. Complying with the directives of Rasūlullāh صلى الله عليه وسلم he stayed back in Madīnah during the Tabūk expedition. Some uncouth hypocrites approached him and aroused his anger by taking a hit at him saying, “Rasūlullāh صلى الله عليه وسلم has left you behind with the women and children!” Agitated he came with their statement to the Messenger of Allah, who replied to him quelling his agitation:

ألا ترضى أن تكون مني بمنزلة هارون من موسى إلا أنه ليس نبي بعدي

Are you not pleased that you are to me as Hārūn was to Mūsā? But, there will be no prophet after me.<sup>1</sup>

‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib رضي الله عنه was killed whilst he performed his prayer in the masjid. ‘Abd al-Raḥmān ibn Muljim stabbed him at close quarters on Friday which

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1 Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī, 4154; Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim, 2404. Narrated by Sa‘ad ibn Abī Waqqās رضي الله عنه.

resulted in his demise the Sunday night that followed. This just ruler passed away in the 40th year of the hijrah, however his life story remains very much alive. His piety, abstinence, just nature, and passion to sacrifice remains a guiding light for those wanting to revive the bravery of the warriors in the Islamic cause. It remains a guide for those wishing to imitate the life of Rasūlullāh ﷺ and his Companions رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ. Their lives are filled with lessons, not fictional tales but pure and true. They lived as legends and died the same.

Perhaps you dear reader, may develop high aspirations and become a flag bearer of the Islamic cause.

## ‘Abd Allāh ibn ‘Abbās

This chapter is dedicated to ‘productive dialogue’, a phenomenon which mostly ceases to exist in public domains just as it has faded from private spheres. Allah ﷻ says in the Holy Qur’ān:

ادْعُ إِلَى سَبِيلِ رَبِّكَ بِالْحُكْمَةِ وَالْمَوْعِظَةِ الْحَسَنَةِ ۗ وَجَادِلْهُمْ بِالَّتِي هِيَ أَحْسَنُ

*Invite to the way of your Lord with wisdom and good instruction and argue with them in a way that is best.*<sup>1</sup>

Allah ﷻ says in this verse “In a way that is best” and did not say in a better way, an instruction to debate and have dialogue using the best words, phrases, and proofs. A productive dialogue starts with a man and his wife, their children at home, co-workers, employers and employees, and will result in societies and governments adopting the same, coming together on this principle.

Dear reader, let us look at how productive and refined dialogues take place. A lesson from the Ahl al-Bayt.

‘Alī رضي الله عنه was faced with grave opposition in his era, the opposition of the Khawārij. They waged war against ‘Alī رضي الله عنه and saw his life, honour, and wealth permissible for them to snatch. Continuously people would come to ‘Alī رضي الله عنه and say, “O Leader of the Believers, these people are rebelling against you.” He would reply, “Leave them, verily I will not fight them until they fight me and that is what they will do.”<sup>2</sup>

All their wrongs did not stop him from sending his cousin, ‘Abd Allāh ibn ‘Abbās to have a discussion with them. Why not select him when he was *Hibr a-Ummah* (the authority of the Ummah). He is the cousin of Rasūlullāh صلى الله عليه وسلم and the son

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1 Sūrah al-Naḥl, 125.

2 *Al-Ma‘rifah wa al-Tārīkh*, The incidents of Ibn ‘Abbās and his father.

of the second women to accept Islam after Khadijah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهَا, Umm al-Faḍl Lubābah bint al-Ḥārith al-Hilālīyyah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهَا.

‘Abd Allāh ibn ‘Abbās رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ was born three years prior to the emigration and was nurtured under the shadow of the Prophet صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ. He would continuously hold the presence of Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ and narrate much from him. He was with ‘Alī رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ in the battles of Jamal and Ṣiffīn. He lost his eye sight towards the end of his life and settled in Ṭāif where he passed away.

‘Amr ibn Dīnār says:

ما رأيت مجلسا كان أجمع لكل خير من مجلس ابن عباس، الحلال والحرام والعربية والأنساب والشعر

I have not seen a gathering filled with more goodness then the gatherings of Ibn ‘Abbās. It was filled with knowledge of injunctions, language, genealogy and poetry.

‘Aṭā رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ says:

كان ناس يأتون ابن عباس في الشعر ولأنساب وناس يأتونه لأيام العرب ووقائعهم، وناس يأتونه للفقهِ والعلم فما منهم صنف إلا يُقبل عليهم بما يشاءون

People would come to Ibn ‘Abbās seeking knowledge of poetry, genealogy, history and wars of the Arabs, and Islamic law. They would all quench their thirst before leaving him.

Ibn ‘Abbās رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ would divide his teaching week in the following manner, a day each for Islamic law, interpretations, incidents of battle, poetry, and history. Whenever ‘Umar رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ would face difficulty in resolving a matter he would call for Ibn ‘Abbās رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ and base his judgment on his opinion. He was given the title ‘interpreter of the Qur’ān’. His intelligence and knowledge were both outstanding just as his understanding was unmatched. The blessings of the prayer of Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ was in his favour:

اللهم فقهه في الدين وعلمه التأويل

O Allah, grant him the understanding of Islam and teach him the interpretation of it.<sup>1</sup>

He truly was a master in the fields of knowledge, interpreting the Qur’ān, and expounding on it. He was the envy of every gathering and the disperser of divine wisdom.<sup>2</sup>

The day presented itself to go and speak to the Khawārij, ‘Abd Allāh Ibn ‘Abbās رضي الله عنه had a discussion with them, the likes of which was unheard of. He listened attentively, giving them ample opportunity to put forth their doubts and he answered them impartially laying out the proofs before them. He relates:

I said to them, “Come forward, what is the grudge you have against the Companion of Allah’s Messenger and the son of his uncle (‘Alī)?”

They answered, “Three points.”

I asked, “And what are they?”

They said, “One of the points is that he had men judge in a matter of Allah while Allah says:

إِنَّ الْحُكْمَ إِلَّا لِلَّهِ

*The decision is only for Allah.*<sup>3</sup>

“What have men got to do with the judgement?”

I said, “This is one point.”

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1 *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, 143, *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*

2 For further reading regarding the narrations of the virtues of ‘Abd Allāh Ibn ‘Abbās رضي الله عنه refer to *al-istī‘āb*, vol. 1 pg. 284.

3 *Sūrah al-An‘ām*: 57



They said, “As for the second point, he fought, however he did not take captives, nor did he take any booty of war. [Referring to the battles of Jamal and Şiffin]. If they were disbelievers, then the booty would be permissible for him and if they were believers then it was not permissible to fight them in the first place.”

I said, “This is the second point, and what is the third point?”

They said, “He removed the title of ‘Leader of the Believers’ (Amīr al-Mu’minīn) and if he is not the ‘Leader of the Believers’ then he is the ‘Leader of the Disbelievers’ (Amīr al-Kāfirīn).”

I asked, “Do you have any points other than these?”

They replied, “These are sufficient for us.”

I said to them, “Do you agree that if I read to you from the Book of Allah ﷻ and from the Sunnah of his Prophet ﷺ that which refutes what you say, will you then leave your views?”

They said, “Yes.”

I said, “As for your statement that ‘Alī رضي الله عنه had men judge in a matter that was for Allah; then I will read to you from the book of Allah, where Allah سبحانه وتعالى has delegated His judgment to men:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَقْتُلُوا الصَّيْدَ وَأَنْتُمْ حُرْمٌ ۚ وَمَنْ قَتَلَهُ مِنْكُمْ مُتَعَمَّدًا فَجَزَاءٌ مِّثْلُ مَا قَتَلَ  
مِنَ النَّعَمِ يَحْكُمُ بِهِ ذَوَا عَدْلٍ مِّنكُمْ

*O you who have believed, do not kill game while you are in the state of ihram. And whoever of you kills it intentionally - the penalty is an equivalent from sacrificial animals to what he killed, as judged by two just men among you.*<sup>1</sup>

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1 Sūrah al-Mā'idah: 95.

“And regarding a woman and her husband (Allah says):

وَإِنْ خِفْتُمْ شِقَاقَ بَيْنِهِمَا فَابْعَثُوا حَكَمًا مِّنْ أَهْلِهِ وَحَكَمًا مِّنْ أَهْلِهَا

*And if you fear dissension between the two, send an arbitrator from his people and an arbitrator from her people.*<sup>1</sup>

I ask you by Allah, is it better that men judge in something regarding the reconciliation of disputes and in preventing bloodshed or regarding the hunting of a rabbit worth a fourth of a dirham and the dissension of spouses?”

They said, “Of course, in something regarding the reconciliation of disputes and in preventing bloodshed.”

I said, “Have you retracted this view of yours?”

They replied, “Yes.”

I said, “As for your statement, ‘He fought but did not take captives and did not take war booty,’ then would you take your mother (in Islam), ‘Ā’ishah رضي الله عنها, as a captive, making her permissible while she is your mother? If you say, ‘We make permissible from her that which we make permissible from other than her,’ then you have committed disbelief. And if you say, “She is not our mother,” then you have also committed disbelief:

النَّبِيُّ أَوْلَىٰ بِالْمُؤْمِنِينَ مِنْ أَنفُسِهِمْ وَأَزْوَاجُهُ أُمَّهَاتُهُمْ

*The Prophet is more worthy of the believers than themselves, and his wives are [in the position of] their mothers.*<sup>2</sup>

“And so, you are between the two ill judgments. So, which of them do you want to take? Have we finished with this point, and do you retract?”

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1 Sūrah al-Nisā: 35.

2 Sūrah al-Aḥzāb: 6

They replied, “Yes.”

“As for ‘Alī رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ removing the title of ‘Leader of Believers’, then I will give you something that will please you; verily, the Prophet of Allah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ contracted an agreement with the disbelievers of Quraysh on the Day of Ḥudaybiyyah, and the Prophet said to ‘Alī:

اكتب هذا ما قضى عليه محمد رسول الله

Write (O ‘Alī). “This is what Muḥammad, the Messenger of Allah, agrees with.”

They, the polytheists, said, ‘If we knew you to be the Messenger of Allah, we would not have fought you and stopped you from going to the Ka’bah. Write Muḥammad ibn ‘Abd Allāh.’

The Messenger of Allah said:

والله اني لرسول الله حقا وان كذبتموني اكتب يا علي محمد بن عبد الله

By Allah, indeed I am the messenger of Allah سُبْحَانَ رَبِّيَ أَعْلَى even if you belie me. Erase it ‘Alī, and write, “This is what Muḥammad ibn ‘Abd Allāh agrees upon.”

I swear by Allah that the Messenger of Allah is better than ‘Alī and even he erased his own name and erasing his name does not erase his prophet-hood. Have we finished with this point and have you retracted?”

They said, “Yes.”

The result of this dialogue between ‘Abd Allāh ibn ‘Abbās was that one third (two thousand) of the Khawārij retracted from their erroneous beliefs while the rest of them rebelled and fought, based upon their misguidance.<sup>1</sup>

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1 *Muṣannaf ‘Abd al-Razzāq*, 10/157/18678; *Al-Bayhaqī fi al-Sunan al-Kubrā*, vol. 8 pg. 179; *Jāmi’ Bayān al-‘ilm wa Faḍlihī*, vol. 2 pg. 103 (Munīriyyah print); *Al-Mustadrak lil Ḥākim*, 2656, al-Ḥākim has authenticated it on the conditions of Imām Muslim. Al-Dhahabī concurs with his conclusion.

This incident leaves us with many lessons however an impression of seeking unity seems to be a highlight. Both ‘Abd Allāh ibn ‘Abbās and ‘Alī عليه السلام were wary of bringing the difference of opinion onto the battlefield. They sought an alternative, uniting the ummah. They would not launch an offence until the Khawārij themselves unsheathed their swords.

## Ja'far ibn Abī Ṭālib

Reading and writing about the Ahl al-Bayt holds a special place in the heart of every Muslim, as they are the blood relations of Rasūlullāh ﷺ and boast of noble virtues unmatched. Today we converse of a unique individual and an august Ṣaḥābī who had imbued in himself true faith and high aspirations. He migrated for the pleasure of Allah ﷻ just as he sacrificed for his Lord. The following couplets seek to translate the emotions of īmān pumping in his heart.

طيبة وبارد شربها علي	يا حبذا الجنة واقترابها
ان لاقيتها ضرابها	والروم روم قد دنا عذابها

*How wonderful is paradise and its proximity; Pure and cool its drinks are*

*As for the Romans their fall is at hand; when I meet them with my blows*

He is Ja'far ibn Abī Ṭālib رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ. His teknonym Abū 'Abd Allāh. He is known by many by his salient qualities, a confident orator, a humanitarian, mouth piece of the Muhājirīn, star of the mujāhidīn, migrator of the two migrations, and one who prayed to both qiblahs. Rasūlullāh ﷺ was extremely happy when he arrived in Madīnah and grieved greatly upon his demise. He was the envoy of the Muslims in the lands of Abyssinia and enjoyed the great blessing of being part of a family wherein nobility flows continuously. The narration of Barā ibn 'Āzib رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ pays tribute to this stalwart of the Islamic cause. He relates, Rasūlullāh ﷺ said to Ja'far ibn Abī Ṭālib رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ:

اشبهت خلقي وخلقي

You resemble me in my appearance and my mannerisms.<sup>1</sup>

He was raised by his uncle 'Abbās رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ and was the elder of his siblings 'Alī and 'Aqīl. When Allah ﷻ sent his Messenger ﷺ with guidance for mankind,

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<sup>1</sup> Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī, 2552/4005.

Ja'far and his wife, Asmā bint 'Umays رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا, accepted Islam at the hands of Abū Bakr رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ. Ja'far رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ together with his wife joined the blessed movement in its early days when the Muslims were far and few. As the Muslims grew in number and strength, the Quraysh of Makkah felt threatened and increased in their already painful torture of the Muslims. Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ then gave permission to the Ṣaḥābah to migrate to Abyssinia wherein ruled a just king who would not oppress anyone, regardless of their social or religious background.

The first group to migrate consisted of eleven men and four women, however no sooner had they reached Abyssinia that news of the Quraysh suspending their torture reached them. Pining for their birth place they returned only to find the news to be false. The polytheists had amplified their sadistic torments of the innocent Muslims.

They decided to migrate for the second time with their leader Ja'far رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ. Just as he was their leader he was their spokesperson and by extension the mouthpiece of Islam. This group settled near the King Najāshi, enjoying serenity and worshiping in peace without the sense of hate and impending doom looming over their heads. When the opportunity presented itself for Ja'far رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ to enter the counsel of the King, he greeted him without bowing as was customary in the land. When the courtiers inquired as to why he did not bow he replied, "We do not bow before anyone except Allah!" When asked to expound further he explained in simple terms, "Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى sent a Prophet to us who has forbidden us from bowing before anyone besides Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى and has commanded us to pray ṣalāh and pay zakāh."

Subḥān Allāh! He stood before the King and his courtiers not watering down his faith nor fearing the ill effects of the truth. He held a firm stance, protecting his creed. This is true greatness that lies in the heart of a sincere believer. This group of weak Muslims left their homes and families protecting their faith and settled in a far-off land held by a just King where they then lived in relative ease. They, however, were not content with living a life where those around them lived

against the decree of Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى, and so they began their efforts of calling towards the oneness of Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى.

If nothing else, this remains an honour of this group that the call to Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى reached the royal court which resulted in the Qur’ān being recited, Islam being revered, and King Najāshi himself accepting the creed of Islam. The efforts of Ja’far رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ bore fruits ripe, which would in years to come nourish the souls of the African continent.

When the incident of Ḥudaybiyyah came to pass Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ wrote to King Najāshī, seeking Ja’far رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ and his companions. The King boarded them on a ship and allowed them to leave gracefully. They reached Madīnah in the 7th year of the Hijrah as the conquest of Khaybar was being celebrated. Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ could not hide his happiness when Ja’far رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ arrived and said a few words which would echo throughout the ages as a testament of his love for Ja’far. When his eyes fell on him he held him, kissed his forehead and said:

ما ادري انا بقدم جعفر اسرام يفتح خيبر

I am not sure if conquering Khaybar pleases me more or the arrival of Ja’far.<sup>1</sup>

Dear reader, the return of Ja’far رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ to Madīnah was not to recuperate after a long separation, nor was it to enjoy comfort from the years of relentless calling to Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى, it was to thrive in another field. The field of fighting in the path of Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى. A year had barely passed since his return that he had been made one of the three leaders of the Muslim army heading to face the Romans in battle at a place called Mu’tah in the eighth year of the Hijrah. Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ instructed:

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1 Ḥāfiẓ al-Haythamī writes in his book *Majma‘ al-Zawāid*, 15488, “Al-Ṭabarānī has included this narration in all three of his books however in the chain of narrators in *al-Mu‘jam al-Kabīr* there is Anas ibn Salm whom I do not know. The rest of the narrators are strong.” See the compilation of sources for this narration in *Naṣb al-Rāyah*, vol. 3 pg. 323; *Difā‘ ‘an al-Ḥadīth al-Nabawī* of al-Albānī, vol. 1 pg. 85.

عليكم يزيد فإن أصيب فجعفر فإن أصيب جعفر فعبد الله بن رواحة

Your leader is Zayd, if he falls then Ja'far, and if he falls then 'Abd Allāh ibn Rawāḥah.<sup>1</sup>

The armies, not equal in number nor in equipment, was led by a Muslim army of three thousand which faced the odds of a Roman army boasting two hundred thousand. They fought at Mu'tah with the flag in the hand of Zayd ibn Ḥarithah رضي الله عنه who fought gallantly till his body was pierced with a spear and he lay soulless.

Ja'far ibn Abī Ṭālib رضي الله عنه then took the flag who fought without pause till he was fatigued from battle, not willing to give in he jumped off his horse disabled it and plunged into the thick of the battle fighting till his right arm was severed. He took the flag in his left hand till that arm was cut. He held high the flag with his bleeding stump to his chest until he too was killed.

'Abd Allāh ibn Rawāḥah رضي الله عنه took hold of the flag charging with his horse beleaguering himself with the following couplets:

طاعة أو لتكرهه	أقسمت يا نفس لتتزلنه
أراك تكرهين الجنة	فطالما قد كنت مطمئنه

*I swear you will go head first in to the battle; willingly or unwillingly*

*You have been at ease for much; is it that you do not wish for paradise.<sup>2</sup>*

He fought courageously till he too met his end. Khālid ibn Walīd رضي الله عنه lifted the flag, a military tactician and battlefield commander par excellence, and fought till they defeated the Roman army at Mu'tah.

1 *Musnad Imām Aḥmad*, 22604/22619. Al-Arna'ūṭ says, "Saḥīḥ due to corroboratory factors." It is recorded in *Ṣaḥīḥ Ibn Ḥibbān*, 7084; *Siyar A'lām al-Nubalā'*, vol.1 pg. 208.

2 *Ḥilyat al-Awliyā'*, vol. 1 pg. 120.



Rasūlullāh ﷺ sitting in Madīnah related the tragic events that transpired to the Ṣaḥābah before news of it reached Madīnah:

أخذ الراية زيد فأصيب ثم أخذ جعفر فأصيب ثم أخذ ابن رواحة فأصيب وعيناه تذرفان حتى أخذ الراية سيف من سيوف الله حتى فتح الله عليهم

“Zayd took the flag and was martyred, then Ja‘far took it and was martyred, and then Ibn Rawāḥah took it and was martyred.” At the time, tears were streaming down the cheeks of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. He added, then the flag was taken by a sword amongst the swords of Allah, and Allah made them (the Muslims) victorious.<sup>1</sup>

It was on that day that Khālīd ibn Walīd رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ was given the title ‘Sword of Allah’.

These are the exploits of Ja‘far رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ. The lands of Abyssinia came to know him as a patient man, a teacher, and an orator calling to the oneness of Allah سُبْحَانَ وَتَعَالَى. Similarly, the lands of Mu‘tah came to know of this man as a warrior, brave and steadfast fighting after being wounded repeatedly, waiting for either victory or martyrdom. A great martyr. Rasūlullāh ﷺ gave him a posthumous title, unique and befitting, *Ja‘far al-Ṭayyār* (Ja‘far the One of Two Wings). The Messenger of Allah ﷺ explained that Allah سُبْحَانَ وَتَعَالَى replaced his arms with wings by which he flies wherever he wishes in Jannah. When Ibn ‘Umar رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُمَا would greet his son he would say, “Peace be upon you, son of the one with two wings.”<sup>2</sup>

This is Ja‘far ibn Abī Ṭālib رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ, the winged emigrant, who resembled Rasūlullāh ﷺ most in form and character. May Allah be pleased with Ja‘far, a true mujāhid, great martyr, and generous companion. This chapter is a mere glimpse into the life of this stalwart.

May Allah be pleased with him.

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1 Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī, 3547.

2 Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī, 3506.

## Umm Hānī' bint Abī Ṭālib

We now delve into the life of a noble woman of Hāshimī, Qurashī decent. So famous by her teknonym, Umm Hānī' that there exists a difference of opinion regarding her birth name. Some say Fāṭimah, others say Hind whilst most opt for Fākhitah. She is the sister of 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib and Ja'far al-Ṭayyār رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمَا and was born to Fāṭimah bint al-Asad رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا. She was born in Makkah fifty years before the hijrah and is therefore a few years younger than Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ. She was a woman of exemplary character and eloquent speech. She grew up in the house of Abū Ṭālib with Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ who had been taken in by his uncle after the demise of his grandfather. When she reached a marriageable age, Hubayrah ibn Wahb al-Makhzūmī, a nobleman of the Quraysh proposed for her hand in marriage which her father Abū Ṭālib acceded to.

When Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ was sent with his message of Islam her husband did not accept Islam and remained on his polytheistic faith due to which Umm Hānī' did not accept the creed at the time. She however would honour and revere Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ much and he would visit her at her home often, especially after the death of his uncle Abū Ṭālib and his wife Khadījah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا. Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَعَالَمُ had plans to grant her an honour unmatched by beginning the journey of Mī'rāj at her home. This journey from Makkah to Bayt al-Maqdis and from there to the heavens began for Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ whilst he was in the home of Umm Hānī'. She says:

ما أسري برسول الله ﷺ إلا من بيتي نام عندي تلك الليلة بعد ما صلى العشاء الآخرة

Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ was taken on the journey to Bayt al-Maqdis and beyond from my house. He slept at my home that night after praying 'Isha'.<sup>1</sup>

Mī'rāj will forever be remembered with Umm Hānī' as a part of the incident. When Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ woke the following morning with the intent of telling the

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1 *Sīrah Ibn Hishām*, vol. 2 pg. 272. This narration seems to be lacking as ṣalāh wasn't obligatory at the time.

Quraysh his journey into the heavens she grabbed hold of his garment, pleading with him not to, as she knew that they will most definitely reject and ridicule him. However, Rasūlullāh ﷺ a pillar of strength and forbearance went out and did exactly as he had intended.<sup>1</sup>

Another night of great incident was spent at her home. Rasūlullāh ﷺ went to Ṭāif calling its people and nobles to the faith in Islam, only to be rejected, belied, driven out and set upon by the urchins of the town who stoned him till his blessed feet bled and clogged his shoes. He returned from there injured and hurt, grieving over their aversion to the religion of Allah ﷻ and went to the home of Umm Hānī' where he spent the night.

Her time to accept the creed came on the day Makkah was conquered by the Muslim army. Her husband hearing of the approaching army took to flee from the city and settled in Najrān not accepting Islam. She stayed back and came into the fold of Islam with her sons. As the Muslim army marched on Makkah, in the splendour and glory Allah ﷻ had bestowed upon them, Rasūlullāh ﷺ forgave droves of people who had defied and tortured him and his Companions saying to them:

اذهبوا فانتم الطلقاء

Go, for you are free.

He, however, ordered some of the greatest oppressors to be killed on the same day even if they were found to be under the cloth of the Ka'bah. On that fateful day, Umm Hānī' رضي الله عنها came to Rasūlullāh ﷺ whilst he was bathing, when he saw her approaching he was overjoyed and welcomed her, thereafter performing eight raka'āt of prayer. He then turned his attention to her. She said to him that she had given two of her polytheist family members a pledge of safety. Rasūlullāh ﷺ said:

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1 Ibid.

قد اجرنا من اجرت يا ام هانئ

We have given safety to whoever you give safety Umm Hānī'.<sup>1</sup>

In another narration the following words were used:

امنا من امننت

We give refuge to whoever you give refuge.<sup>2</sup>

Her brother, 'Alī رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ intended to kill these two, however, she blocked off his access and called upon Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ who gave them refuge on her call. This is a right of a Muslim women, she can give refuge to whomsoever she wishes. Ibn al-Mundhir says, "There is consensus that the refuge of a women is accepted. Only Ibn Majishūn has gone against the mainstream and said it will not be permissible."<sup>3</sup>

As is with Islamic law, when a spouse becomes a Muslim and the other remains on idol worship their marriage is terminated. So, too was the case of Umm Hānī' رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهَا, she accepted Islam, however her husband refused to accept, instead fleeing to Najrān as mentioned. Their marriage was therefore terminated. Seeing the circumstances surrounding her apparent lonesome life now, Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ intended to propose to her and see to her needs, she however excused herself saying, "I am advanced in age now and have a family to see to."

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1 *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, 350; *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, 336.

2 *Abū Dāwūd*, 2763. The author has not commented on it. *Jāmi' al-Tirmidhī*, 1597. The author has brought this narration in an abridged form and has attested to the authenticity of it. *Musnad Imām Aḥmad*, 26936. Shu'ayb al-Arnawūṭ has commented that the chain of narration is authentic according to the conditions of Imām Muslim and in another place, 26951 he has commented that it is authentic according to the conditions of both Imām Muslim and Imām Bukhārī رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ. Al-Albānī has deemed it authentic besides the words, "We give refuge." See *al-Silsilah al Ṣaḥīḥah*, 2049.

3 *Kitāb al-Ijma'*, pg. 62.

Rasūlullāh ﷺ accepted her excuse and commented:

خير نساء ركب الإبل صالح نساء قريش أحناه على ولد في صغره وأرعاه على زوج في ذات يده

The best women among the camel riders, are the pious women of the Quraysh. They are the kindest women to their children in their childhood and look after the wealth of their spouses.<sup>1</sup>

This narration alludes to the superiority of the Qurayshī women over other Arab women<sup>2</sup> due to two reasons:

1. Their love and compassion towards their children is unmatched. They would even forego a good proposal which would give them honour to stay with their orphaned children and see to their needs.
2. The consideration they have towards their spouses and looking after his property, not squandering it.

My question to you respected sister and beloved mother, do you not wish to be the best of women? Which woman would not want this honour? Follow the footsteps of the women of the Quraysh and Umm Hānī' رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا in their love for their children and consideration of their spouses. This is the teachings of our religion. It demands compassion emanate from a mother for her children and for her to sacrifice for her children in raising them to be flag bearers of the ummah. The poet has encapsulated this in the following words:

أكبادنا تمشي على الأرض	وإنما أولادنا بيننا
لامتنعت عيني عن الغمض	لو هبت الريح على بعضهم

*Our children are pieces of our hearts; walking this earth*

*If the wind blows slightly; my eyes refuse to sleep worrying*

1 Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī, 3251; Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim, 2527. The narration of Abū Hurayrah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ.

2 Ibn Ḥajar has written in *Fatḥ al-Bārī*, women that ride camels here refer to the Arabs as they are habitual of this. And they are as a general law better than others therefore their women will enjoy the same privilege.

This shower of love is true for a Muslim woman as opposed to the classic western woman who has been sucked into the material life, spending her days at work leaving the child to be raised by a surrogate bereft of spirituality.

As I read the biography of Umm Hānī' رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهَا, my hair stands on end, she refused a proposal from the best of creation and passed on an opportunity of earning the title *Umm al-Mu'minīn* (Mother of the Believers) to devote herself fully to her children. She busied herself with worshipping her Lord and rearing her children in a pious Islamic environment. Her son, Ja'dah ibn Hubayrah, rose to be the governor of Khurāsān in the era of 'Alī رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ. She is a narrator of ḥadīth and relates forty-six narrations from Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ. She left this worldly abode in the 40th year after the hijrah.

May Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى be pleased with her.

## Ḥasan ibn ‘Alī

Today we converse of a man akin to a branch laden with fruit, humble and worthy. The beloved grandson of Rasūlullāh ﷺ, Ḥasan ibn ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib ibn ‘Abd al-Muṭṭalib ibn Hāshim ibn ‘Abd Manāf al-Hāshimī al-Qurashī. He was born in the month of Ramaḍān in the 3rd year of the hijrah. The martyr and fifth of the Khulafā’, beloved of the Prophet ﷺ and prince of the youth in Jannah. Through him and his brother does the family tee of Rasūlullāh ﷺ take shape and he was one of the four through whom Rasūlullāh ﷺ beseeched Allah ﷻ against the Christians of Najrān.

An incident in the book *Wafayāt al-A‘yān* gives us a snapshot of this companion’s forbearance, clemency and charity. His life is fragrant with profound wisdom, valour and foresight. In his every decision, the advancement of principle was paramount.

‘That is Ḥasan, son of ‘Alī ...’ they told me. My heart filled with hatred. I envied ‘Alī for having a son like that. I headed toward him and began cursing him.

These were the words of a traveller to the City of the Prophet ﷺ—Madīnah—upon seeing the saintly, handsome, and well-dressed Ḥasan رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ. Propaganda and blatant lies had led him to view ‘Alī رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ and his family in a terribly negative light.

The traveller continued:

When I finished, he asked me, “It seems you are a stranger here?”

I replied, “Yes.”

Then he said, “Come on over to our place! If you need a house, we will host you, if you need money, we will give it to you, if you have another need, we will assist you.”

After hearing this, there was no one on the face of the earth more beloved to me than him. Every time I think back to what he did and what I did, I am grateful to him and feel embarrassed about how I acted.<sup>1</sup>

Ḥasan رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ was nurtured in the presence and under the guidance of Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ. The Messenger of Allah صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ impressed upon him the character and justice that comes with prophethood, just as he imbued in him a pleasant nature and kindness. Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ is reported to have said:

من أحب الحسن والحسين فقد أحبني ومن أبغضهما فقد أبغضني

Whoever loves Ḥasan and Ḥusayn has loved me and whoever harbours ill feeling towards them has harboured ill feeling towards me.<sup>2</sup>

Abū Hurayrah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ would display deep affection for Ḥasan رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ, kissing his abdomen where he had seen Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ doing the same.<sup>3</sup>

ينجبهما في النيران سواها	في روض فاطمة نما غصنان لم
الوثام والاتحاد ابناها	فامير قافلة الجهاد وقطب دائرة
أمسى تفرقها يحل عراها	حسن الذي صان الجماعة بعدما
إمام ألفتها وحسن علاها	ترك الامامة ثم أصبح في الديار

*The life of Fāṭimah produced two supports; noblemen, she birthed these brilliant children.*

*The leader of the armies, and revolved around them; unity and harmony.*

*Ḥasan, a saviour of the groups; after their foundations were stripped.*

*He gave up leadership and became; the leader of reconciliation.*

1 Wafayāt al-A'yān of Ibn Khallikān, vol. 2 pg. 68.

2 Ibn Mājah, 143. Narrated by Abū Hurayrah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ. Zawā'id establishes its authenticity and strength of narrators. Albānī has commented on its authenticity as well in *Ṣaḥīḥ Ibn Mājah* and *Aḥkām al-Janā'iz*, 101.

3 *Musnad Imām Aḥmad*, 10331/7455; *Al-Mustadrak lil Ḥākim*, 4785. He has authenticated it and al-Dhahabī concurs with him. Al-Albānī has deemed it correct as well in *al-Thamar al-Mustaṭāb*, vol. 1 pg. 282.



The life of Ḥasan رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ teaches us the importance of foresight in a leader together with seeking help from Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى. Ḥasan رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ had a peculiar gift of overhauling and restoring peace amicably with due process and clarity, reaching the desired outcome together with knowing how to deal with challenges that present themselves during this delicate stage.

Abū Bakrah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ says, “I heard Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ, whilst he was sitting on the pulpit together with Ḥasan رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ. He would look at Ḥasan رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ and then at the people and say:

ان ابني هذا سيد ولعل الله أن يصلح به بين فئتين من المسلمين

This son of mine is a Sayyid and perhaps Allah will reconcile two groups of Muslims through him.<sup>1</sup>

This narration speaks of great virtue in favour of Ḥasan رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ, Sayyid, leader of a people. A title given to him by Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ. His life is an embodiment of a true leader, not one resorting to spilling blood nor forcefully subjugating his people. Leadership does not come with killing and maiming. True leadership is by taking upon oneself care of matters integral to the growth of society and cleansing oneself of self-serving tendencies. It promotes unity and reformation, striving to erase enmity and rancour. These principles encapsulate the life of Ḥasan رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ.

The lifestyle of Ḥasan رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ is a radiating page amongst the greats of history who is worthy of being followed and whose footsteps ought to be traced. His life is an encyclopaedia of faith and benevolence. Furthermore, it depicts a true understanding of this great religion seeking to impart the jurisprudic angles of differences in opinions together with displaying its far reaching social effects and the answer to creating a society peaceful and harmonious.

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1 *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, 3536.

Rasūlullāh ﷺ said, “This son of mine is a Sayyid and perhaps Allah will reconcile two great groups of Muslims through him.”<sup>1</sup> The Messenger of Allah ﷺ depicted these two groups as ‘great’ as they would be led by two great companions, Ḥasan and Mu‘āwiyah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُمَا. A miracle on the part of Rasūlullāh ﷺ who gave accurate news of events that would happen many years after his demise. Hereunder is the incident of the two great groups.

Ḥasan رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ took the reins of the khilāfah after the martyrdom of his father, ‘Alī رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ, and inherited a burdensome legacy of rule. The cities and its people were in turmoil, winds of uncertainty blowing, whistling in every corner of the Muslim empire. The people of Iraq held their swords yet to be cleaned of the blood fighting the Syrians. Iraq was with Ḥasan رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ and Syria with Mu‘āwiyah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ.

Ḥasan رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ immobilised his forces leaving Kūfah heading towards Madā’in, a town not far from Baghdad. Though he too wished for reconciliation, his experience and wisdom had taught him the nature of the Iraqī people. It would pan out better if Mu‘āwiyah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ began the talks of peace. On the other side when Mu‘āwiyah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ came to know of the army in Madā’in he too marched from Syria to Iraq.

Ḥasan رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ faced Mu‘āwiyah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ with military squadrons like mountains. ‘Amr رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ said, “By Allah! I see military squadrons that will not turn back until they kill their opponents.”

Then Mu‘āwiyah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ said, “O ‘Amr! If these people are killed then who will assist me with governing the people, who will assist me with their women, who will assist me with their vulnerable?”

Then he sent to him two men from the Quraysh, from Banū ‘Abd al-Shams (tribe); ‘Abd al-Rahman al-Samurah and ‘Abd Allāh ibn ‘Amir ibn Kurayz. He said (to them), “Go to this man and present (the option of a peace treaty to him), and plea

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1 *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, 3536.

with him, and request it from him!” They went to him and got his audience and pleaded with him and requested from him.

Ḥasan ibn ‘Alī رضي الله عنه said, “We are the Banu ‘Abd al-Muṭṭalib, we have acquired some of this wealth and this Ummah has squandered a lot of it in its blood.”

They said, “He offers you ‘this and that,’ and requests from you ‘this and that’”

He said, “Who will guarantee for me this (the fulfilment of this agreement)?”

They said, “We guarantee you that.”

He did not ask them anything except that they said, “We guarantee you that.”

He then entered into the peace treaty with him.<sup>1</sup>

The months and years of peace that followed bore testimony to his astute leadership skills, giving preference to peace over bloodshed, unity over power, and a productive society over a destructive one. His army was well equipped and ready to plunge into the thick of battle, yet he opted to sign a peace treaty, not due to weakness, poor numbers, or personal gain. He stood firm enacting peace to unify the ummah and prevent the spillage of their blood. Ḥasan ibn ‘Alī رضي الله عنه says:

كانت جماجم العرب بيدي يسالمون من سالمته ويحاربون من حاربت، فتركها ابتغاء وجه الله تعالى

The Arabs were at my bidding, reconciling with whom I do and waging war against who I do. I left the role of leadership and entered a peace treaty for the pleasure of Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى.<sup>2</sup>

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1 *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, 2557.

2 *Al-Mustadrak lī al-Ḥākim*, 4795 and has authenticated it with al-Dhahabī holding the same opinion. *Ḥilyat al-Awliyā’*, vol. 2 pg. 37; *Tahdhīb al-Tahdhīb*, vol. 2 pg. 260.

Subhān Allāh! A leader of greatness. The leader of unity and love. The books of history will forever remember him as someone who played an integral role in uniting the ummah in what has come to be known as *'Ām al-Jamā'ah* (the year of reconciliation). The Muslims were overjoyed by this unification after having split into groups, bringing back the Muslim armies as one, conquering lands and fighting the enemies of Islam.

The blessings of Allah ﷻ can never be forgotten, Who through His sheer mercy enabled the Muslims to gather again as one. He inspired Ḥasan ibn 'Alī رضي الله عنه who became the mastermind behind the proceedings in the goal of attaining peace.

Dear reader, a desire for unity and peace are signs of true leadership, where do we stand in relation to it?

## Ḥusayn ibn ‘Alī

This chapter speaks about another great companion and martyr. He was born in the month of Sha‘bān in the fourth year of hijrah. The beloved grandson of Rasūlullāh ﷺ, Abū ‘Abd Allāh, Ḥusayn ibn ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib ibn ‘Abd al-Muṭṭalib ibn Hāshim ibn ‘Abd Manāf al-Hāshimī al-Qurashī.

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ says:

ان الحسن والحسين هما ريحانتاي من الدنيا

Verily, Ḥasan and Ḥusayn are my two flowers in this world.<sup>1</sup>

حسين مني وأنا منه أحب الله من أحب حسيناً حسين سبط من الأسياط

Ḥusayn is part of me and I am part of him. May Allah love those who love Ḥusayn. Ḥusayn is one of my grandsons.<sup>2</sup>

The above narrations seek to expound on the virtue of Ḥusayn ﷺ.

The poet says:

ويعن هما لمحمد سبطان	اكرم بفاطمة البتول ويعلها
لله در الأصل والغصنان	غصنان أصلهما بروضة أحمد

*Oh, so honoured is Fāṭimah and her husband; who gave Muḥammad his two grandsons,*

*Branches that stem from the garden of Aḥmad; how excellent is the tree and the branches.*

1 *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, 3534; *Jāmi‘ al-Tirmidhī*, 3770. The wording is of the latter on the authority of Ibn ‘Umar رضي الله عنهما.

2 *Jāmi‘ al-Tirmidhī*, 3775; *Sunan Ibn Mājah*, 144. The wording is of the latter. Others have narrated it on the authority of Ya‘la ibn Murrah رضي الله عنه. Al-Albānī has certified it as authentic, see *Silsilah al-Ṣaḥīḥah*, 1228. Another narration has the following words, “Ḥusayn is part of me and I am part of him. May Allah love those who love Ḥusayn. Ḥasan and Ḥusayn are my grandsons.” Al-Albānī has certified it as authentic, see, *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Jāmi‘*, 5457.

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ left this worldly abode whilst Ḥusayn ؑ was merely six years of age yet leaving a lasting impression on this young child. His life is enviable even by the standards of the Greats. This chapter is dedicated to his bravery and immense courage in the face of unfavourable odds, together with the active role played by him in fighting in the path of Allah ﷻ. A significant portion of his life portrays his fearless advance in assisting the Islamic faith and raising the ultimate word of Allah ﷻ. This passion of his stems from the desire of his grandfather, Muḥammad ﷺ whose wish was to live and die for Allah ﷻ.

والذي نفس محمد بيده لوددت أني أغزو في سبيل الله فأقتل ثم أغزو فأقتل ثم أغزو فأقتل

By him in whose hand Muḥammad's soul is, I love to fight in the way of Allah and get killed, to fight again and get killed and to fight again and get killed.<sup>1</sup>

Ḥusayn ؑ though preoccupied with worshiping his Creator and disseminating knowledge did not allow himself to be unmindful of his duties in fighting the enemies of Islam and breaching their strongholds to spread the religion of his Lord. Just as fulfilling the other obligations is necessary so too is fighting in the path of Allah ﷻ an obligation. One of honour for a Muslim. Ḥusayn ؑ left an example for us in this field as well, in persevering and fighting in Allah's path. He fulfilled his obligations in a fashion many warriors seek to aspire to. He fought in the lands of Africa, Khurāsān, and Ṭabrstān during the reign of 'Uthmān ؑ and in the war against Constantinople during the khilāfah of Mu'āwiyah ؑ. A history of a man brave and courageous.

### Ḥusayn ؑ in the army marching on Africa

The book *Riyāḍ al-Nufūs*, holds the following account. The governor of Egypt, 'Abd Allāh ibn Sa'd ibn Abī al-Sarḥ writes to the then khalīfah, 'Uthmān ؑ, seeking

1 *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, 1876.

consent to invade Africa. Considering this ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه forwards the request to Miswar ibn Makhrumah رضي الله عنه requesting his thoughts on sending an army to Africa. Miswar رضي الله عنه is for the idea and says so to the khalīfah. The khalīfah decides to then consult a panel of senior Companions رضي الله عنهم and base his decision on the stance they take.

He called on ‘Alī, Ṭalḥah, Zubayr, ‘Abbās, and some of the other senior Companions رضي الله عنهم. He gathered them in the Masjid and sought their counsel. They all agreed to what Miswar ibn Makhrumah رضي الله عنه had said besides Sa‘īd ibn Zayd رضي الله عنه who sighted the unwillingness of ‘Umar رضي الله عنه in his era as his reason for vetoing the march on Africa. ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه, however, quelled his doubts and took the decisive step to send out Muslim armies into Africa.

He then addressed the masses, exhorting them to join the army headed to Africa. The cream of the youth of the Ahl al-Bayt and some of the senior Ṣaḥābah joined the army such as ‘Abd Allāh ibn Zubayr, Abū Dhar al-Ghifārī,<sup>1</sup> ‘Abd Allāh ibn ‘Umar,<sup>2</sup> ‘Abd Allāh ibn ‘Abbās, ‘Abd Allāh ibn Ja‘far, Ḥasan, and Ḥusayn رضي الله عنهم.<sup>3</sup> Besides these greats many others prepared to join the army as well.

This army left the land of Madīnah, the earth thundering with the spirit of the warriors under the command of Ḥārith ibn al-Ḥakam reaching Fuṣṭāṭ, Egypt. Once in Egypt as per the instruction of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه they payed homage to ‘Abd Allāh ibn Sa‘d ibn Abī al-Sarḥ appointing him as their commander in chief. The Muslim army numbering twenty thousand headed east towards *Barqah* (Cyrenaica) without encountering any resistance as the people of that area were with the Muslims under the rule of ‘Amr ibn al-‘Āṣ رضي الله عنه. Reinforcements under the banner of ‘Uqbah ibn Nāfi‘ al-Fahrī joined the army there.

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1 *Riyāḍ al-Nufūs*, vol. 1 pg. 8/9; *Al-Jihād wa al-Qitāl li Haikal* vol. 1 pg. 556.

2 *Al-Bidāyah wa Al-Nihāyah*, vol. 8 pg. 59.

3 *Libya Min al-Faṭḥ al-Arabī Ḥatta Intiqāl al-Khilāfah al-Fāṭimiyah*, Dr Ṣaliḥ Muṣṭafā pg. 41; *Al-Sharf wa al-Tasāmī bi Ḥarakah al-Faṭḥ al-Islāmī*, Ṣallābī pg. 19.

The army marched on to Tunis till the legions reached the city of *Ṭarābulus* (Tripoli), expanding along the way as good number of Berbers who had accepted Islam joined them. They played an important role in the conquest of *Ṭarābulus* for the second time in the 26th year of hijrah.

The Muslims came to Africa, emancipating them from the occupation and enslavement of the loathsome Romans who had laid waste to the people by imposing ludicrous taxes and bad business models, together with degrading and oppressing them.

The commander in chief, ‘Abd Allāh ibn Sa’d ibn Abī al-Sarḥ, turned his attention to *Subayṭilah* (Sbeitla) which was under the command of a famous Byzantine general named Jarjīr. Therein lay him and his army numbering a hundred and twenty thousand! ‘Abd Allāh ibn Sa’d ibn Abī al-Sarḥ sent an emissary to him giving him one of three options; accept Islam, pay jizyah to the Muslim empire whilst remaining on your religion, or thirdly prepare for battle. Jarjīr opted to fight the Muslims and so the severe battles began, beginning at dawn each morning until after noon. When the adhān of zuhr was given each army would retreat to their camp.

‘Abd Allāh ibn Zubayr requested ‘Abd Allāh ibn Sa’d ibn Abī al-Sarḥ to announce a reward of one hundred thousand gold coins, the hand of Byzantine Commander’s daughter, and governorship over his lands for the person who brought the head of Jarjīr, which instilled dread into his heart.

‘Abd Allāh ibn Zubayr then said to ‘Abd Allāh ibn Sa’d ibn Abī al-Sarḥ, the end of this war isn’t in sight with the enemy receiving continuous reinforcements together with having home ground advantage. Our soldiers will fatigue from the continuous fighting and we are far off from Muslim lands. I propose we fight tomorrow as normal leaving behind a legion of brave warriors to rest. At noon when both armies have tired and returned to their encampments we send in the well-rested warriors to strike terror whilst they least expect it. Perhaps Allah ﷻ will grant us the upper hand.



The following day the plan was enacted after the generals of the army agreed to it. A group of fierce and fearless warriors were selected for the task at hand. They blended amidst the Roman army at their camp who remained unaware of them until they launched their attack swift and precise. The Roman army, unable to coordinate a counter attack suffered many losses including Jarjir their commander who was slain at the sword of 'Abd Allāh ibn Zubayr.

Defeated they retreated to their fortress which the Muslim army besieged and conquered. The massive amounts of wealth retrieved from their city was unlike anything the armies had seen. The share of a mounted soldier was three thousand gold coins and the foot soldiers received one thousand gold coins each.<sup>1</sup>

Many Muslims took part in these battles in Africa and a large number were martyred. After the victory over the oppressive Roman occupation, Ḥasan and Ḥusayn رضي الله عنهما together with a third of the army returned to the seat of khilāfah, hearts brimming with happiness and contentment on expanding the Muslim borders and spreading the faith of the Lord of the universe.

### Conquest of Ṭabrastān

'Uthmān ibn 'Affān رضي الله عنه sent an army to Ṭabrastān<sup>2</sup> during his reign of the khilāfah under the command of Sa'īd ibn al-'Āṣ رضي الله عنه.<sup>3</sup> The army boasted of many great personalities from the Muhājirīn and Anṣār such as Ḥasan, Ḥusayn, 'Abd Allāh ibn 'Abbās, 'Abd Allāh ibn Zubayr, 'Abd Allāh ibn 'Umar, 'Abd Allāh ibn 'Amr ibn al-'Āṣ, and Ḥudhayfah ibn al-Yamān رضي الله عنه. They overcame the odds there and conquered the area surrounding it in the 30th year of the hijrah.

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1 For further reading regarding the battle of Subayṭilah refer to, *Al-Kāmil fi al-Tārīkh*, vol. 2 pg. 483; *Al-Bidāyah wa Al-Nihāyah*, vol. 8 pg. 59.

2 A fully-fledged city with plenty of water, fruits, and tress. Entry to it is through Rayy, Tehran. See *Nuzhah al-Mushtāq fi Ikhtirāq al-Āfāq*, pg. 678.

3 Before his departure the great Companion, 'Abd Allāh ibn 'Āmir left Basrah to conquer Khurāsān.

The army left Kūfah halting at Qūmis, the people of which held a peace treaty with the Muslims,<sup>1</sup> thereafter heading to Jarjān with whom they enacted a treaty of safety in lieu of two hundred thousand. The army then marched on to Ṭamīṣah,<sup>2</sup> a coastal city under the rule of Ṭabrastān. The Muslim army, unwelcome here faced tremendous odds and fought severe battles having to even perform the prayer for fear.<sup>3</sup> After much difficulty the help of Allah ﷻ was at hand and the Muslim army forced them to retreat into their strongholds. They laid siege to them, cornering them and reading their every move till they managed to penetrate the stronghold and conquered the city, killing the tenacious disbelievers. A victory of epic proportion.<sup>4</sup>

After conquering Ṭabrastān and its surrounds the Muslim army under their leader, Saʿīd ibn al-ʿĀṣ ﷻ returned to Kūfah.

Many of the historical narrations provide evidence that Ḥasan and Ḥusayn ﷻ played an important role as warriors and advisers in the conquests that took place during the era of ʿUthmān ibn ʿAffān ﷻ. Courage ran through the blood of these two brothers just as it did their father ʿAlī ibn Abī Ṭālib ﷻ. Their passion to sacrifice in the path of advancing the flag of Islam and raising the word of Allah ﷻ was a translation of their fervour to attain martyrdom for a unified cause. The first demand of a true leader.

## Waging war on Constantinople

Let us not forget the 50th year of hijrah, wherein an advance on Europe was made by the Muslim armies. Ḥusayn ﷻ marched, a warrior in the army fighting with

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1 This was a previous treaty enacted by Ḥudhayfah after Nahawand.

2 Ṭamīṣah is a city on the shores of the Caspian Sea, an endorheic basin located between Europe and Asia. Iran and Russia both border it.

3 It is known that the Prayer of Fear is only read in the severest of battles. The leader of the army Saʿīd ibn al-ʿĀṣ ﷻ asked Ḥudhayfah ibn al-Yamān ﷻ regarding the specifics of this prayer and asked him how Rasūlullāh ﷺ had performed it. After informing him, Saʿīd ibn al-ʿĀṣ ﷻ led the prayer whilst fighting. See *Tārīkh al-Umam wa al-Mulūk* vol. 5 pg. 57.

4 See, *Tārīkh al-Umam wa al-Mulūk* vol. 5 pg. 57; *Al-Futūḥāt al-Islāmiyyah* vol. 1 pg. 175.

body and soul under the command of Mu‘āwiyah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ. He payed his due to the army and returned to Madīnah.

### The Karbalā’ Incident

One could go on speaking and not tire of his bravery and courage at Karbalā’. Standing with seventy-two men, daring and fearless against an army of oppressors, betrayers, and misguided souls numbering five thousand. His resolve did not weaken, nor did he languish in the face of this army stemming from Kūfah. He fought as a warrior would till he was killed oppressively on the land of Karbalā’. He reached his Lord a martyr. May Allah be pleased with him.

‘Ā’ishah al-Ṣiddīqah and Umm Salamah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمَا relate that Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said to one of them:

لقد دخل علي البيت ملك لم يدخل علي قبلها فقال لي : إن ابنك هذا حسين مقتول و إن شئت أريتك من تربة الأرض التي يقتل بها قال : فأخرج تربة حمراء

An angel entered the house who had never entered before, and he said to me, “This son of yours, Ḥusayn, will be killed, and if you wish I can show you the soil from the earth where he will be killed.” Then he took out some red soil.<sup>1</sup>

The incident occurred as prophesised by Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ. Ḥusayn رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ was martyred in Iraq in the 61st year of the hijrah at the hands of those who deceived him, not shying away from Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى and nor from his Messenger صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ. And those who have wronged are going to know to what [kind of] return they will be returned. The murderers of Ḥusayn رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ assaulted and betrayed him oppressively after having surrounded him. When Ḥusayn رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ realised the people of Kūfah have gone back on their word to help and stand by his side, he requested them to allow him to either return to Madīnah, join a contingent of mujāhidīn,

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1 *Musnad Imām Aḥmad*, 15113. Al-Haythamī has recorded its narrators as strong in *Majma’*.

or head towards Yazīd in Syria. They refused to allow him any of the options and were hell bent on killing him. They fought, and he was murdered together with a significant amount the Ahl al-Bayt.

After he was martyred his killer severed his blessed head from his body. When his head reached the oppressor ‘Ubayd Allāh ibn Ziyād, he started playing with a stick at the nose and mouth of Ḥusayn رضي الله عنه and saying something about his handsome features. Anas ibn Mālīk رضي الله عنه who was present and was of advanced age began to cry uncontrollably at this sight. ‘Ubayd Allāh ibn Ziyād inquired as to why he was crying so profusely upon which Anas ibn Mālīk رضي الله عنه replied, “By Allah! I will retaliate, lift your hand, I had seen the Messenger of Allah صلى الله عليه وسلم kiss the place your hand is on.”<sup>1</sup> Another said,<sup>2</sup> “Lift your hand, I had seen Rasūlullāh صلى الله عليه وسلم lips kissing the same place.”

Zayd ibn Arqam رضي الله عنه says:

I was at ‘Ubayd Allāh ibn Ziyād when the head of Ḥusayn رضي الله عنه was brought and he began playing with a stick at the nose and mouth of Ḥusayn’s رضي الله عنه head and saying something about his handsome features, I had never seen teeth so perfect as Ḥusayn رضي الله عنه as though they were pearls. I could not control myself and began crying loudly which forced him to pay attention to me. I said to him, I saw Rasūlullāh صلى الله عليه وسلم kissing the same and saying, “O Allah I love him, so you too love him.”<sup>3</sup>

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1 Al-Ṭabarānī has included this narration in *al-Kabīr* with the above-mentioned words, 2878; as well as *Musnad Abū Ya’la*, 3981; and Ibn ‘Adī in *al-Kāmil*, vol. 5 pg. 198. *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, 3538 has the hadith with the following words, the head of Ḥusayn was brought to ‘Ubayd Allāh ibn Ziyād and was put in a tray. Then Ibn Ziyād started playing with a stick at the nose and mouth of Ḥusayn and saying something about his handsome features. Anas then said (to him). Ḥusayn resembled the Prophet more than the others did Anas added. His hair was dyed with *wasma* (i.e. a kind of plant used as a dye).

2 Abū Barzah al-Aslamī. See *Tārīkh Ṭabarī* vol. 3 pg. 298. Others such as Ibn ‘Asākīr have narrated it from him with differing words.

3 *Siyar A’lām al-Nubalā’*, vol. 3 pg. 315; *Mukhtaṣar Tārīkh Dimashq*, vol. 1 pg. 946.

ارفع يمينك والقبضك مجرما	و كفاك اجرا ما و كف تاثما
اني دخلت علي الحسين بلبلة	فرايت سيدكم يقبل ذا الفما

*Raise your hand and stick oppressor; you have oppressed enough and sinned,*

*I saw Ḥusayn one night; and your Master kissing his mouth.*

These are greats, who are martyred with swords in honour. As for the oppressors they die lonely in their beds, disgraced and cowards. He was martyred on Friday the 10th of Muḥarram in the 61st year at Karbala, Iraq. He was 58 years at the time of his death.

Though the assassination of Ḥusayn رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ was a great evil and sin, in relation to him it was goodness and honour. A murder in someone else's fate, martyrdom in his lot. Ibn Taymiyyah writes:

Ḥusayn and his brother are the princes of the youth in paradise and grew up when Islam was flourishing. They did not experience the early persecutions, jihād, and hijrah which the other Ahl al-Bayt experienced. Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى honoured them with martyrdom as a means of completing their honour and raising their status.<sup>1</sup>

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1 *Majmū' Fatāwā ibn Taymiyyah*, vol. 4 pgs. 511/512.

## Umm Kulthūm bint ‘Alī

Continuing with our theme of great personalities of the Ahl al-Bayt, I present to you a noble woman whose husband, father, and grandfather took part in the battle of Badr! Her father is ‘Alī رضي الله عنه, her husband ‘Umar رضي الله عنه, and her grandfather Rasūlullāh صلى الله عليه وسلم. She is Umm Kulthūm bint ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib ibn ‘Abd al-Muṭṭalib ibn Hāshim. The sister of Ḥasan and Ḥusayn رضي الله عنهما, and the daughter of Fāṭimah al-Zahrā bint Muḥammad رضي الله عنها. She was born during the era of prophethood around the 6th year of the hijrah. Abū ‘Amr ibn ‘Abd al-Barr says, “She was born prior to the demise of Rasūlullāh صلى الله عليه وسلم, she saw him however she did not narrate from him due to her young age.”

‘Umar رضي الله عنه asked ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib رضي الله عنه for the hand of Umm Kulthūm in marriage, frequently visiting ‘Alī’s house on this matter.

He told ‘Alī, “O Abū al- Ḥasan, what has made me to come to you time and again is a saying which I heard from the Prophet of Allah صلى الله عليه وسلم that:

ينقطع يوم القيامة كل سبب ونسب إلا سببي ونسبي

All ties and relations will be severed on the day of Qiyāmah besides my ties and relations.

I wish to place myself in the Prophet’s lineage through this marriage.”

‘Alī said, “She is young, and I have kept her for Ja‘far’s son.”

‘Umar said, “Marry her to me! I shall observe her dignity more than anyone else.” And in one narration ‘Umar said the following, “There is no man who seeks to achieve through her good companionship that which I seek to achieve.”

‘Alī said, “I will send her to you, if you like her, I shall marry her to you.”

‘Alī رضي الله عنه then sent the girl with a piece of cloth and told her to say [to ‘Umar] ‘This is the scarf that I was talking about’. She conveyed these

words to ‘Umar, who said, “Tell your father that I am pleased, I am pleased, I am pleased, may Allah be pleased with you.”

When she returned to her father, he asked her what the Amīr al-Mu‘minīn had said? She replied that he expressed his pleasure, upon which ‘Alī رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ married her to ‘Umar رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ.

Thereupon, ‘Umar رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ went over to the Muhājirīn near the pulpit of the Prophet صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ, where the early Muhājirīn used to gather. Addressing them, he said, “Will you not congratulate me.”

They said, “What for, O Amīr al-Mu‘minīn?”

He said, “I have married Umm Kulthūm, the daughter of ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib. I heard the Prophet of Allah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ say:

ينقطع يوم القيامة كل سبب ونسب إلا سببي ونسبي

All ties and relations will be severed on the day of Qiyāmah besides my ties and relations. (In another narration, relationship of in-laws are mentioned too).<sup>1</sup>

I was related to the Prophet صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ, but I wish to place myself in the Prophet’s lineage through this marriage.”<sup>2</sup>

Truly this incident displays the great lineage of this noble woman and reminds us of a narration wherein Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ indicates the honour of his lineage and family over all others.<sup>3</sup> This ḥadīth holds the Ahl al-Bayt in a special light and speaks volumes of the greatness of this woman, Umm Kulthūm bint ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا.

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1 Ḥāfiẓ al-Haythamī has commentated in *Majma‘*, al-Ṭabarānī has narrated an abridged form of this ḥadīth in *Awsaṭ* and *Kabīr* and the narrators are of the Ṣaḥīḥ besides Ḥasan ibn Sahl who is trustworthy. Al-Albānī has commented on its veracity in *al-Silsilah al-Ṣaḥīḥah*, 2036 with all its chains of narrations.

2 *Usd al-Ghābah* vol. 5 pg. 615.

3 Referencing of this narration will follow.

The blessed union was finalised. ‘Umar رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ married Umm Kulthūm with a dowry of forty thousand dirhams, paying his respects to her and her parents. A token of appreciation for her great lineage. Ḥāfiẓ ibn Kathīr writes:

‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb married Umm Kulthūm bint ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib [daughter of Fāṭimah] during his reign as the khalīfah. He honoured her greatly giving a dowry of forty thousand dirhams as a token of appreciation for her great lineage.<sup>1</sup>

وانظر الي الفاروق يطرق بابها	شوقا الي النسب الذي لا يغلب
فرحت به الكلثوم زوجها طاهرا	والطيبات لهن بر طيب

*‘Umar knocking on the door of her graciousness; yearning for the lineage that is above all others,*

*Umm Kulthūm joyous on this occasion a pure wife; pure women beget pure men.*

Ibn Sa’d has mentioned a peculiar yet encouraging incident that took place between these two spouses. ‘Umar رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ entered the house one day and found his beloved wife Umm Kulthūm crying. When inquiring from her the reason of her sobbing she said, “Ka’b al-Aḥbār is saying that you are a door of Jahannām!”

Now, we know that Ka’b al-Aḥbār was a Jewish scholar and held knowledge regarding the previous holy books. He accepted Islam after the demise of Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ and he was an excellent Muslim. He came to the city of Madīnah from Yemen during the era of ‘Umar رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ and would sit with the Ṣaḥābah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُمْ and inform them of the Israeli scriptures.

He once addressed them mentioning some of the qualities of the Ṣaḥābah mentioned in those books. Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى says in the Qur’ān:

مُحَمَّدٌ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ وَالَّذِينَ مَعَهُ أَشِدَّاءُ عَلَى الْكُفَّارِ رُحَمَاءُ بَيْنَهُمْ تَرَاهُمْ رُكَّعًا سُجَّدًا يَبْتَغُونَ فَضْلًا  
مِّنَ اللَّهِ وَرِضْوَانًا سِيمَاهُمْ فِي وُجُوهِهِمْ مِّنْ أَثَرِ السُّجُودِ ذَلِكَ مَثَلُهُمْ فِي التَّوْرَةِ وَمَثَلُهُمْ فِي

<sup>1</sup> Al-Bidāyah wa al-Nihāyah, vol. 5 pg. 330.



الْإِنْجِيلِ كَزَرْعٍ أَخْرَجَ شَطَأَهُ فَآزَرَهُ فَاسْتَغْلَظَ فَاسْتَوَىٰ عَلَىٰ سُوقِهِ يُعْجِبُ الزُّرَّاعَ لِيغِيظَ بِهِمُ الْكُفَّارَ  
وَعَدَّ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ مِنْهُمْ مَغْفِرَةً وَأَجْرًا عَظِيمًا

*Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah; and those with him are forceful against the disbelievers, merciful among themselves. You see them bowing and prostrating [in prayer], seeking bounty from Allah and [His] pleasure. Their mark is on their faces from the trace of prostration. That is their description in the Torah. And their description in the Gospel is as a plant which produces its offshoots and strengthens them, so they grow firm and stand upon their stalks, delighting the sowers - so that Allah may enrage by them the disbelievers. Allah has promised those who believe and do righteous deeds among them forgiveness and a great reward.<sup>1</sup>*

In the previous scriptures there was descriptions of the khalīfah of the Muslims, ‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ.

Back to our story, the news reached the ears of Umm Kulthūm رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا that her husband ‘Umar رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ is standing at the doorway of Jahannam. She was taken aback and distressed by this revelation of Ka‘b al-Aḥbār due to the intense love she held for her husband. When ‘Umar رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ heard this from his wife he was amused and said. “As Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَىٰ wishes, however I have high hope in my Lord that he has created me a fortunate soul.” He then sent for Ka‘ab al-Aḥbār. When he arrived ‘Umar رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ asked him regarding the comments he had heard.

Ka‘b al-Aḥbār replied, “O Amīr al-Mu‘minīn you will definitely enter Jannah!”

‘Umar رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ said, “What is this folly, you reserve a place for me in Jannah at times and at others in Jahannam”

Ka‘b al-Aḥbār countered, “O Amīr al-Mu‘minīn, I swear by the being in whose control lay my life, we find you in the Book of Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَىٰ standing at the doorway of Jahannam preventing people from falling in, at your demise people will begin to fall therein head first till the day of Qiyāmah.”<sup>2</sup>

1 Sūrah al-Faṭḥ: 29.

2 *Ṭabaqāt al-Kubrā*, vol. 3 pg. 332.

When Umm Kulthūm heard the full explanation of his statement she was pleased beyond measure and returned to her normal jovial state. She realised the intent of Ka'b al-Aḥbār was to indicate that **‘Umar** رضي الله عنه **was a screen from people entering in the pit of hell.**

This beautiful couple had two children, Zayd and Ruqayyah. Zayd was from amongst the prominent personalities of the Quraysh, as al-Dhahabī has mentioned in his *Siyar*. He, on one occasion went to Mu‘āwiyah رضي الله عنه as a delegation, who honoured him and stipulated for him hundred thousand dirhams per annum. Zayd was proud of his high lineage and would say, “I am the son of two khalīfahs.”<sup>1</sup> His father being ‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb رضي الله عنه and his maternal grandfather ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib رضي الله عنه. He had been blessed by two great lineages, one stemming from ‘Umar the other from ‘Alī رضي الله عنه. His pride was not misplaced nor was it phony.

Unfortunately, Zayd ibn ‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb did not enjoy the nuances of old age as he passed away in the prime of his life. A conflict between the Banū ‘Adī clan led them to take up arms at Baqī in the dark of the night. Zayd ibn ‘Umar headed towards them to enact peace and prevent them from fighting. Whilst there he became a statistic of collateral damage. He was wounded in his head and fell of his conveyance. Once people realised what had occurred they began shouting, Zayd! Zayd! They dispersed, and he was taken home bloodied from the wound. This ultimately led to his death around the 50th year of the hijrah.

Some have noted that he and his mother both fell ill and passed away on the same day, at the same moment. They were put together in the bier and he was placed closer to the Imām when the funeral prayer was being performed. ‘Abd Allāh ibn ‘Umar رضي الله عنه performed the funeral prayer as Ḥusayn رضي الله عنه said to him, “Go forward and pray upon your brother and mother.”<sup>2</sup> Zayd being his paternal

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1 *Tārīkh Dimashq*, vol. 19 pg. 485.

2 *Tārīkh Dimashq*, vol. 19 pg. 489; *Al-Wāfi bi al-Wafayāt*, vol. 15 pg. 24. This narration however is muddled by the narration of Sa‘īd ibn Manṣūr who narrates from Sha‘bī that the Amīr of Madinah led their funeral prayers. Al-Bayhaqī has it that the Amīr at the time was Sa‘īd ibn al-Ās. The author of *al-Ilal wa Ma‘rifah al-Rijāl* has raised the same concerns. Refer to it for further reading.

brother and Umm Kulthūm his father's wife who held the status of a mother in relation to him.

‘Abd Allāh ibn ‘Āmir ibn Rabī‘ah eulogizes Zayd in the following couplets:<sup>1</sup>

تكشفوا عن رجل سريع	ان عدياً ليلة البقيع
ادركه شؤم بني مطيع	مقاتل في الحسب الرفيع

*The ‘Adī in the night of Baqī; from a fallen man*

*Killed, of high counting; tragic clan conflict his end*

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1 *Al-Istī‘āb*, vol. 3 pg. 931; *Tārīkh Dimashq*, vol. 19 pg. 485.

## Zaynab bint ‘Alī

We live the following pages with a Hāshimī woman complete in nobleness, worship and intelligence. She is Zaynab bint ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا, the granddaughter of Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ and the inheritor of Hāshimī intellect. Noble is her father, and grandfather.

Her **maternal grandfather** is the master of humanity, best of creation, leader of the pious, and seal of the prophets, Muḥammad صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ. Her **maternal grandmother** is the woman anointed with perseverance and sacrifice, the first believer and supporter of the Islamic creed, Umm al-Mu’minīn, and the most beloved of the Messengers wives, Khadījah al-Kubrā رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا.

Her **mother** is the embodiment of purity and patience, queen of the worlds women, offspring of the trustworthy Prophet صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ, and his most loved daughter, Fāṭimah al-Zahrā رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا. Her **father** is Amīr al-Mu’minīn, cousin of the Prophet صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ, father to his grandchildren, first of the children to believe, blessed with the glad tidings of Jannah, Sayyidunā ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ.

Her **paternal grandmother** is Fāṭimah bint Asad al-Hāshimiyah, one of the first to migrate, and the first to birth a pure Hāshimī child. Her **brothers** are the darling grandsons of Allah’s Messenger صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ, princes of the youth in Jannah, Ḥasan ibn ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib and Ḥusayn ibn ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib, the martyr.

The city of Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ, Madīnah welcomed this child in the 5th year of the hijrah and the Messenger صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ named her Zaynab. She grew up under his care and in his house, passing her days in the house of prophethood, enjoying the love and compassion therein. From her mother, Fāṭimah al-Zahrā رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا modesty was transferred to this child who imbued in herself the qualities of bashfulness and attained high nobility from her father ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ.

Events of sorrow fell on her like a broken string of pearls whilst yet a child. Her grandfather, Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ left this worldly abode, an event of unexplainable

grief for this ummah. A few months later this young girl lost her mother Fāṭimah al-Zahrā رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا. She then turned to her father who she found to be an eloquent speaker, scholar par excellence, and one of the more knowledgeable Companions. She quenched her insatiable thirst of knowledge from him, becoming a unique historical figure in the sciences.

Sayyidunā ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ had kept his daughters for the sons of his brother Ja‘far ibn Abī Ṭālib رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ. Zaynab رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا was married to ‘Abd Allāh ibn Ja‘far رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ. Both her husband and father-in-law were stalwarts of the Islamic struggle. ‘Abd Allāh was known for his immense generosity and was the last of the Banū Hāshim to see and spend time with the Messenger of Allah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ. He was blessed with having the physical attributes as well as the characteristics of Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ:

واما عبد الله فيشبهه خلقي و خلقتي

As for Abdullah, he resembles my physical attributes and characteristics.<sup>1</sup>

The couple lived together in harmony and raised five children, ‘Alī, ‘Awn al-Akbar, ‘Abbās, Muḥammad, and Umm Kulthūm.

Zaynab was well known for her well-constructed views, sharp intellect, and articulateness uncommon amongst women of the time. She was steadfast and an eloquent speaker. She was with her brother Ḥusayn رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ when he headed towards Karbalā’, taking along with her some of her children. At Karbalā’, she neared the tent of her brother Ḥusayn رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ and heard him reciting the following couplets:

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1 *Musnad Imām Aḥmad*, 1750. Shaykh al-Arna‘ūṭ has classified it as Ṣaḥīḥ according to the conditions of Imām Muslim. *Nasa’ī fi al-Kubrā*, 8160; Abū Bakr al-Shaybānī in *al-Āḥād wa al-Mathānī*, 434 (abridged). Ḥāfiẓ al-Haythamī has concluded in *Majma’*, 10218 “Aḥmad and al-Ṭabarānī have narrated it and the chain of narrators are strong.

يا دهر اف لك من خليل	كم لك بالاشراق والاصيل
من صاحب او طالب قتيل	والدهر لا يقنع بالبديل
وانما الامر الى الجليل	وكل حي سالك السبيل

*What an unfortunate friend you are, time; how many days and nights have you witnessed?*

*How many a soul have you seen slain; time not replacing a lost one?*

*The command is with the Great; and every living thing is following its predestined path.*

Ḥusayn رضي الله عنه repeated these heart wrenching couplets a few times upon which Zaynab رضي الله عنها could not contain herself and said to him, “Only you remain, Khalīfah of the bygone days. If only death had snatched my life before this day. My mother Fāṭimah, my father ‘Alī, and my brother Ḥasan have all drunk from the cup of death.”

Ḥusayn رضي الله عنه replied to her, “Dear sister, do not let Shayṭān overpower your forbearance.”

She said to him, “May my parents be sacrificed for you, I hold my life as a ransom for yours.”

Ḥusayn رضي الله عنه repeated his call of distress, tears falling from his eyes he said, “If only I wasn’t wedged between a rock and a hard place.”

She fell unconscious knowing well that the time of separation between her and her brother had drawn close, she would not see him after this fateful day. Ḥusayn رضي الله عنه sprinkled water on her face rousing her and said to her, “Fear Allah سبحانه وتعالى and take solace in him, understand that those on the earth are to die sooner or later, those in the skies will not remain forever. Everything will come to an end besides the countenance of Allah سبحانه وتعالى. My father, mother, and brother were all better than me. Our role model as individuals and as an ummah is Rasūlullāh

صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ. When I die, do not rip your collar or slap your face, nor wail over my passing.”<sup>1</sup> He thus consoled and advised Zaynab رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا.

Ḥusayn رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ was martyred leaving behind a wound that would not heal nor lessen in pain yet Zaynab رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا adhered to his advices and patiently endured the death of yet another one of her family. When she was brought along with the rest of her family to Syria and stood in the court of Yazīd, her stance was courageous, and her words eloquent and rhythmic. Her sister Fāṭimah bint ‘Alī describes her on that day saying, “My sister Zaynab was elder and more intelligent than me.”<sup>2</sup> The sources of literature bear testimony to her intelligence and eloquence based on the dialogue between her and Yazīd. The result of her articulateness was that Yazīd was left gobsmacked and embarrassed. He honoured their stay and sent them back to Madīnah in a most noble manner. He ordered someone be sent with them to see to their needs along the journey and protect them with their life if need be.

After leaving the court of Yazīd, he had them stay at his home where the women of his family welcomed them with tears of sorrow on the martyrdom of Ḥusayn رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ and those that were with him especially Zaynab bint ‘Alī رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا as she had lost her son ‘Awn al-Akbar at Karbalā’. The family of Mu‘āwiyah ibn Abī Sufyān consoled the Banū ‘Abd al-Muṭṭalib on their loss and grief.

Yazīd ibn Mu‘āwiyah then sent them on their way with a Syrian envoy. The envoy would travel with them by night staying close behind on guard. As dawn would break they would take shelter and rest whilst the entourage of Syrian envoys would surround them, a safety net of sorts. They continued shading, being compassionate, and seeing to their needs throughout the journey till they entered the city of Madīnah.<sup>3</sup>

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1 *Al-Kāmil*, vol. 4 pgs. 58/59 with some changes; *Tārīkh al-Ṭabarī*, vol.3 pg. 316. This final advice of Ḥusayn to his sister Zaynab appears in Shī‘ah sources as well. *Mustadrak al-Wasā’il*, vol. 2 pg. 451 has recorded the following from Ḥusayn رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ, “O my sister, I take an oath on you, be sure to uphold it. Do not rip your collar or slap your face, nor wail over my passing.”

2 *Tārīkh Dimashq*, vol. 69 pg. 177.

3 *Tārīkh al-Ṭabarī*, vol.3 pgs. 339/340 with some changes.

The great trials they had faced merely days before did not rid them of their deep seeded generosity and kind heartedness which remains a lesson for the world to remember them by. Fāṭimah bint ‘Alī said to her sister Zaynab, “This Syrian envoy has been good to us, should we then not return the favour of goodness?” They had nothing but their personal jewellery which they gathered and presented before them, apologising for not having anything else to give. The sisters presented the jewellery before them as a token of appreciation for the good during the journey. However, the reply was one of sincerity, “Had I done this for worldly gains I would have been pleased with your offerings and perhaps even less than this. I have done this act solely for the pleasure of Allah ﷻ and due to your close relationship with Rasūlullāh ﷺ.”<sup>1</sup>

Zaynab bint ‘Alī رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهَا was known as *Umm al-Maṣā’ib* (mother of calamities), rightfully so too. Her life was filled with hardships and difficulties. She witnessed the demise of her grandfather Rasūlullāh ﷺ, her mother al-Zahrā, her father Amīr al-Mu’minīn, her brothers Ḥasan and Ḥusayn رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُمَا who were poisoned and martyred respectively, two of her sons, and many close family in a short period of time.

She did not live for long after the demise of her brother and her sons. A year had not passed since their demise that she accepted the call of her Creator and left this temporary abode in the 62nd year of the hijrah.

Some sources place her in Syria or Egypt at the time of her death however this has not been corroborated by any other authentic historian nor has anyone made a similar indication.<sup>2</sup> She was most probably in Madīnah at her demise. And Allah ﷻ knows best.

May Allah ﷻ shower her with his choicest mercies and enter her into the gardens of bliss with the patient ones.

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1 *Tārīkh al-Ṭabarī*, vol.3 pg. 340; *Al-Kāmil*, vol. 4 pgs. 88 with some changes.

2 *Al- A’lām*, vol. 3 pg. 67.



## Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥanafīyyah

A noble Sayyid, intelligent leader, given the gift of the gab, likened to a piercing star, a powerful successor and one of the great valiant martyrs Abū al-Qāsim Muḥammad ibn ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib al-Hāshimī al-Qurashī, an august personality of the Ahl al-Bayt. His mother is Khawlah bint Ja‘far al-Ḥanafīyyah to whose lineage he is ascribed to, a measure taken to differentiate him from his half-brothers Ḥasan and Ḥusayn رضي الله عنهما. He was born during the era of ‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb رضي الله عنه in the 21st year of the hijrah. He is counted amongst those men who together with instilling piety in their hearts held a great amount of knowledge.

Together with this he was a battle commander in many of the battles during the reign of his father ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib, most notably the battles of Jamal and Ṣiffīn. He was the commander and flag bearer and was tested sorely therein. Though of tender age his father lent heavily on him in these battles which showcased his acute and refined personality.<sup>1</sup>

Ibn Khalikān has dated his birth to 2 years prior to the demise of ‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb رضي الله عنه in his book *Wafayāt al-A’yān*. Ibn Sa‘d narrates from Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥanafīyyah that ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib رضي الله عنه said to Rasūlullāh صلى الله عليه وسلم, “If I have a child born to me after you, would you deem it suitable that I name him after your name and give him a teknonym after yours?” Rasūlullāh صلى الله عليه وسلم said, “Yes.” This was therefore a concession for him from Rasūlullāh صلى الله عليه وسلم.<sup>2</sup>

The Banū Ḥanīfah tribe turned apostate during the khilāfah of Abū Bakr رضي الله عنه. Khawlah bint Ja‘far al-Ḥanafīyyah was amongst the prisoners who had come into the lot of ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib رضي الله عنه. From this union Muḥammad was born.<sup>3</sup>

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1 *Ṭabaqāt ibn Sa‘d*, vol. 5 pg. 92 onwards; *Al-Nujūm al-‘Awālī li al-‘Aṣāmī*, vol. 1 pg. 490.

2 *Abū Dāwūd*, 4967; *Jāmi‘ al-Tirmidhī*, 2843; *Musnad Imām Aḥmad*, 730; *Al-Adab al-Mufrad*, 843. Al-Albānī has deemed it authentic in *Ṣaḥīḥ Abū Dāwūd*, 4967.

3 *Al-Bidāyah wa al-Nihāyah*, vol. 7 pg. 368; *Majmū‘ al-Fatāwā* of Ibn Taymiyyah, vol. 28 pg. 554.

Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥanafīyyah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ held a close connection to ‘Uthmān رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ during his trying days and defended him against effects of the rebellion, taking cues from his father. He narrates from his father, “If ‘Uthmān commanded me to march to Ṣirār, I would hear and obey.”<sup>1</sup> Ṣirār is a place en route to Iraq from Madīnah. He further says, “I heard my father praying to Allah سُبحانه وتعالى with his hands lifted high ‘O Allah! Curse the killers of ‘Uthmān whether they are on the land or at sea, whether they are on flat plains or mountain regions.’ He repeated this thrice.”

‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ would exhort his son Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥanafīyyah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ to fight in the battles moulding him into a fierce warrior who would stand without wavering in the thick of battle. It was once said to him, “Why is it that your father flings you into the battlefield and does not do the same with your brothers, Ḥasan and Ḥusayn?”

He replied:

لأنهما كانا عينيه، وكنت أنا يده، فكان يتقي عينيه بيده

They were his eyes and I his hand. He would protect his eyes with his hand.<sup>2</sup>

What a befitting answer!

Ibn al-Mubarrad has recorded the following in *Al-Kāmil*:

The Roman Emperor sent two herculean athletes to Mu‘āwīyah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ to measure their strength with the Muslim athletes. One of them was tall and corpulent and the other was powerful with a strong grip. Mu‘āwīyah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ asked Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥanafīyyah to meet the challenge.

Muḥammad ibn Ḥanafīyah said, “Either you should sit down and let me hold your hand so that I may pull you off from your seat, or I may sit down, and you may lift me from my place.”

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1 *Tārīkh al-Madīnah*, Ibn Shabba al-Numayrī vol. 4 pg. 1201.

2 *Al-Mustaṭraf fi Kullī Fan al-Mustaṭraf*, Chapter mentioning the name of the brave.

The Roman said, “You may sit down. Muḥammad sat down and let the Roman hold his hand. Despite his best efforts, however, the Roman could not move Muḥammad from his place, and acknowledged his weakness. Then Muḥammad stood up and the Roman sat down and let Muḥammad hold his hand. Muḥammad immediately lifted him from his place with one jerk, held him in the air, and then threw him on the ground.”<sup>1</sup>

He was an excellent brother to Ḥasan and Ḥusayn رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُمَا just as they were to him. ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ advised them to treat him well as they had come to know how well he treated Muḥammad. When Ḥasan رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ passed away; Ḥusayn, Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥanafīyyah, and ‘Abd Allāh ibn ‘Abbās رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُمْ entered his grave to lay him down. After the burial Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥanafīyyah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ stood by his grave and with tears flowing from his eyes said:

رحمك الله يا أبا محمد فلئن عزت حياتك لقد هدت وفاتك ولنعم الروح روح تضمنه بدنك ولنعم الجسد  
جسد تضمنه كفنك ولنعم الكفن كفن تضمنه لحدك وكيف لا تكون كذلك وأنت سليل الهدى وخامس  
أصحاب الكساء وخلف أهل التقوى وجدك النبي المصطفى وأبوك علي المرتضى وأمك فاطمة الزهراء  
وعمك جعفر الطيار في جنة المأوى وغذتك أكف الحق وربيت في حجر الإسلام ورضعت ثدى الإيمان  
فطبت حيا وميتا فلئن كانت الأنفس غير طيبة لفراقك إنها غير شاكّة أن قد خير لك وإنك وأخاك لسيدا  
شباب أهل الجنة فعليك أبا محمد منا السلام

May Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَبِحَمْدِهِ have mercy on you, Abū Muḥammad. Your life was noble and your death daunting. Your soul is pure in a body the same, held by a shroud and in a grave that are both enviable as they hold you. They pride in you as you are the descendant of guidance and the fifth wrapped in his robe. You drank from the goblet of piety. Your grandfather is the Prophet رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ, your father ‘Alī al-Murtaḍā, your mother Fāṭimah al-Zahrā, and your uncle Ja‘far al-Ṭayyār; in the gardens of paradise. The palms of truth fed you and the Islamic faith nurtured you in its lap. Īmān was imbued into you. You are excellent in death as you were in life. Though the self, grasps at straws in the wake of your death, it does not complain knowing that what lay beyond is better for you. You and your brother are the princes of the youth in Jannah. We bid you farewell Abū Muḥammad.<sup>2</sup>

1 *Al-Kāmil*

2 *Tārīkh Dimashq*, vol. 13 pg. 296; *Tahdhīb al-Kamāl* vol. 6 pg. 255; *Tahdhīb al-Tahdhīb*, vol. 6 pg. 255; *Jamharah Khuṭub al-‘Arab of Aḥmad Zakī Ṣafwat* vol. 2 pg. 31.

When Ḥusayn رضي الله عنه intended leaving for Kūfah, Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥanafīyyah رضي الله عنه advised him against going and said:

I swear by Allah you are the most honoured of the people that roam this earth my brother and I advise you as a well-wisher. Do not go to these cities, rather live in the villages and desserts. Call on the people that claim to support you and when they pledge allegiance at your hand, enter the city. If you wish to live in a city, then head to Makkah and if you do not find therein what pleases you then head to the mountain ranges. Ḥusayn رضي الله عنه replied, “May Allah reward you immensely, you have advised and shown compassion.”<sup>1</sup>

As far as the unrest of Mukhtār goes, the happenings were marred by his hypocritical nature. Ḥāfiẓ ibn Ḥajar writes:

Ibn Zubayr sent Mukhtār to Kūfah to solidify his pledge of allegiance, however he portrayed Ibn Zubayr to be on the trail of the killers of Ḥusayn رضي الله عنه. To emphasize his stance Mukhtār claimed that Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥanafīyyah was the Mahdī that will emerge at the end of times and he had in fact commanded the pledge of loyalty. Mukhtār fabricated lies and attributed it to Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥanafīyyah. Many people followed Mukhtār and he was strengthened. They found and murdered the killers of Ḥusayn رضي الله عنه which reinforced his apparent stance in loving the Ahl al-Bayt.<sup>2</sup>

Al-Shahrastānī has mentioned that Mukhtār was gunning for the leadership of Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥanafīyyah رضي الله عنه after ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib رضي الله عنه. When Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥanafīyyah رضي الله عنه came to know of this he at once distanced himself from the claim. ‘Abd al-Qādir al-Baghdādī states:

The news reached Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥanafīyyah رضي الله عنه who feared a tribulation in Islam due to Mukhtār. He intended to go to Iraq to break

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1 *Al-Bidāyah wa Al-Nihāyah*, vol. 8 pg. 148.

2 *Al-Iṣābah*, vol. 6 pg. 351.

them off from the falsities of Mukhtār and turn them towards himself. When Mukhtār heard of this he feared his own position and concocted a story for the people saying, “I have pledged to Mahdī, however there is a test to whoever claims to be Mahdī. He will be swung at with a sword and if it does not cut him then he is true in his claim.” When this reached Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥanafīyyah رحمته الله he remained in Makkah fearing for his life if he travelled to Kūfah.<sup>1</sup>

From this group a new deviant sect was born, the Kaysāniyyah. They were unanimous of the leadership of Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥanafīyyah during his life time, however after his death they split into different factions. Some believed that he had truly passed away and transferred the leadership to another, whilst others said him to be alive and at the Raḍwā mountain with two streams of water and honey. They believed that provisions come to him daily with angels who speak to him whilst he has on his right a lion and on his left a leopard! They protect him from his enemies till the time of his emergence. He is the one that will kill Dajjāl, guide the masses, and bring peace to the earth. He is not dead, and he will not die till the earth witnesses nothing but peace and justice.

Al-Ḥumayrī, who was from the faction that awaited his return says the following:

فحتى متى تخفى وأنت قريب	يا شعب رضوى قاطن بك لا يرى
وكنيه نفسى عليك تذوب	يا ابن الوصي ويا سمي محمد
منا النفوس بأنه سيؤوب	فلو غاب عنا عمر نوح لا يقنت

*O inhabitant of Raḍwā who cannot be seen; till when will you hide whereas you are so close.*

*O son of ‘Alī and carrier of Muḥammad’s name and teknonym, my heart melts for you.*

*If you were to disappear the life span of Nūḥ; I would still be convinced of your return.*

1 Al-Farq Bayn al-Firaq, of ‘Abd al-Qāhir al-Baghdadī, vol. 1 pgs. 33/34.

Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥanafiyyah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ left this worldly abode at the beginning of Muḥarram, the year eighty-one. Al-Wāqidi says. “I asked ‘Abd Allāh ibn al-Ḥanafiyyah, where is your father buried? He replied in the Baqī̄ graveyard in the 81st year of the hijrah in the month of Muḥarram, at the age of sixty-five.”<sup>1</sup>

These are some scattered pearls and droplets of perfume from the life of this great man Muḥammad ibn ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ.

May Allah سُبْحَانَكَ اللَّهُمَّ وَتَعََالَى enshroud him with his choicest mercies and raise his stages in Jannah.

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1 *Siyar A'lām al-Nubalā'*, vol. 4 pg. 182.

## Al-Ḥasan al-Muthannā and his son, ‘Abd Allāh Al-Maḥḍ

Some greats have less words dedicated to them than others in the books of history, however this does not take away from them their countless feats. It simply serves as a reminder that time will not remember for us, it is our duty to pen down our history and not show aversion to it.

This chapter is dedicated to a man whose accolades as a humanitarian and bearer of sublime character has been celebrated as one who had internalised the pristine teachings of Islam. He was practicing scholar and graceful worshiper. He is the noble Sayyid, Ḥasan al-Muthannā ibn Ḥasan ibn ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ, a most sought-after personality in his era and considered to be a leader from the leaders of the Ahl al-Bayt.

Al-Aṣma‘ī says:

I entered to make ṭawāf (practice of Muslims circumambulating the Ka’bah), where I saw a young man of striking appearance and strong build who was covered in a shawl which had two ends. He was holding on to the cover of the Ka’bah and saying:

شكوت إليك الضر فارحم شكايتي	ألا أيها المأمول في كل ساعة
وهب لي ذنوبي كلها واقض حاجتي	ألا يا رجائي أنت كاشف كربتي
ألزاد أبكي أم لبعد مسافتي	فزادي قليل ما أراه مبلغتي
فما لي الوري خلق جني كجنايتي	أتيت بأعمال قباح رديّة
فأين رجائي ثم أين مخافتي	أتحرقتني بالنار يا غاية المنى

*O being in who all hopes lie; I complain to you, so see my complaints.*

*My hopes lie in you, remover of my difficulty; forgive my sins and fulfil my needs.*

*My provisions are few which will not take me to my destination; is it over my provisions I cry or over the distance of my travels.*

*I come to you with actions that are far and a few; I am a sinner like no other in the creation.*

*Will you burn me in the fire, O guardian of ultimate hopes; where is then my hopes and my fear.*

I went up to him and removed the shawl from his face, to my utter amazement standing before me was Ḥasan ibn Ḥasan ibn ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ.

I said to him, “The likes of you, O noble sage, utters such words? You are the family of the Prophet صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ!”

Ḥasan ibn Ḥasan رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ said, “Allah سبحانه وتعالى has created Jannah for those who obey him, irrespective of their social demographics or family standing and he has created Jahannam for those who disobey him even if it is a Qurashī. O al-Aṣḡamā’ī! Have you not heard the verse of the Qur’ān:

فَإِذَا نُفِخَ فِي الصُّورِ فَلَا أَنْسَابَ بَيْنَهُمْ يَوْمَئِذٍ وَلَا يَتَسَاءَلُونَ فَمَنْ ثَقُلَتْ مَوَازِينُهُ فَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ وَمَنْ خَفَّتْ مَوَازِينُهُ فَأُولَئِكَ الَّذِينَ خَسِرُوا أَنْفُسَهُمْ فِي جَهَنَّمَ خَالِدُونَ

*So, when the Horn is blown, no relationship will there be among them that Day, nor will they ask about one another. And those whose scales are heavy [with good deeds] - it is they who are the successful. But those whose scales are light - those are the ones who have lost their souls, [being] in Hell, abiding eternally.”<sup>1</sup>*

Subḥān Allāh! What deep reflection and practical explanation of the following narration of his grandfather صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ:

يا معشر قريش اشتروا أنفسكم لا أغني عنكم من الله شيئا يا بني عبد مناف لا أغني عنكم من الله شيئا يا عباس بن عبد المطلب لا أغني عنك من الله شيئا ويا صفية عمه رسول الله لا أغني عنك من الله شيئا ويا فاطمة بنت محمد سليمانني ما شئت من مالي لا أغني عنك من الله شيئا

O people of Quraysh! Save yourselves (from the Hellfire) as I cannot save you from Allah’s Punishment; O Banū ‘Abd Manāf! I cannot save you from Allah’s Punishment, O Ṣafiyyah, the Aunt of Allah’s Apostle! I cannot save

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1 Sūrah al-Mu’minūn: 101-103. Tārīkh al-Dimashq 41/359.



you from Allah’s Punishment; O Fāṭimah bint Muḥammad! Ask me anything from my wealth, but I cannot save you from Allah’s Punishment.<sup>1</sup>

A valuable lesson from this life of this stalwart; not simply taking support from one’s lineage, rather acting upon the teachings of Islam to its fullest. Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ says:

من بطأ به عمله لم يسرع به نسبه

Whoever’s actions are lacking, his lineage will not help.<sup>2</sup>

The connection between the creation and creator is one of taqwā and pious deeds. Ḥasan al-Muthannā رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ understood this and portrayed his understanding in his practical lifestyle. He says:

أحبونا فإن عصينا الله فأبغضونا

Love us, if however, we disobey Allah سُبْحَانَكَ رَبَّنَا then hate us.<sup>3</sup>

A man once came and expressed his love for the Ahl al-Bayt as an extremist would, upon which Ḥasan al-Muthannā رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ became angry and said to him, “Woe unto you, love us, if however, we disobey Allah سُبْحَانَكَ رَبَّنَا then hate us.”

The man then said, “You are the family of Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ and his Ahl al-Bayt.”

Ḥasan al-Muthannā رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ replied, “If anyone were to benefit on the sole basis of family it would be his parents. By Allah! I fear the sinner from amongst us will be punished double just as the pious will be rewarded two times over. Fear Allah and speak only that which is factual about us. It will please you and us.”<sup>4</sup>

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1 *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, 2602; *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, 206. Narrated by Abū Hurayrah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ.

2 *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, 2699. From the narration of Abū Hurayrah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ.

3 *Tārīkh al-Islām*, vol. 1 pg. 744; *Ṭabaqāt ibn Sa’d*, vol. 5 pg. 319; *Tārīkh Dimashq*, vol. 13 pg. 70.

4 *Ṭabaqāt ibn Sa’d*, vol. 5 pgs. 319/320.

This exchange is profound in delivering the noble character of the Ahl al-Bayt. The bond that connected them to Rasūlullāh ﷺ was pure, not tainted by worldly aspirations as is the case with other groups and faiths.

A mere bond raises them to infallibility and gives them a God complex as is the case with the Brahmin priests and other such faith groups. They treat those beneath them as their slaves and have them at their call and beck.

The Ahl al-Bayt on the other hand were embodiments of nobility in speech and action. They were resolute in not hankering after the paltry gains of this world based on their lineage. They built their world around the ideology of renunciation from the wealth of people and self-respect.<sup>1</sup>

Ḥasan al-Muthannā رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ proposed to Ḥusayn رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ for one of his daughters. His uncle, Ḥusayn رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ told him to choose whomsoever he wishes from his daughters, however, Ḥasan ibn al-Ḥasan bashfully remained silent. Ḥusayn رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ then chose his daughter, Fāṭimah bint al-Ḥusayn, saying to him that she resembles his mother Fāṭimah bint Muḥammad رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا the most.<sup>2</sup> Ḥasan al-Muthannā رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ thus married her the same year in which Ḥusayn رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ was martyred, the 61st year after the hijrah.

Ḥasan al-Muthannā رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ participated in the Battle of Karbalā' with his uncle Ḥusayn رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ amongst other members of the Ahl al-Bayt. He, however, was saved due to his young age or some say due to an illness.

Ibn 'Asākir has mentioned the following incident, which is one amongst the difficulties he faced in his life.

'Abd al-Malik ibn Marwān wrote to the then governor of Madīnah, Hishām ibn Ismā'īl, "Reports have reached me that Ḥasan al-Muthannā رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ is

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1 *Al-Murtaḍā li al-Nadwī*, 228. With some changes.

2 *'Umdat al-Ṭālib*, 165; *Anṣāb al-Ṭālibiyīn*, 62; Ṣāḥib al-Aghānī with his chain of narration, vol. 16 pg. 150.

trying to consolidate himself as a leader by having the people of Iraq pledge allegiance to him. When you receive my letter call for him and bring him in.”

When his cousin, ‘Alī ibn al-Ḥusayn came to know of this exchange he said to him, “O cousin read the words of deliverance:

لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ الْحَلِيمُ الْكَرِيمُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ الْعَلِيُّ الْعَظِيمُ سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ رَبِّ السَّمَاوَاتِ السَّبْعِ وَرَبِّ الْأَرْضِ  
وَرَبِّ الْعَرْشِ الْعَظِيمِ الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ

When he was brought in front of Hishām ibn Ismā‘īl he recited this prayer upon which he said, “I see a man who has been slandered. Let him go and let the Amīr al-Mu‘minīn know of his innocence.”<sup>1</sup>

Thus Allah ﷻ saved this saved this pious man by him sincerely turning to his creator. His demise was in the 97th year of the hijrah.

The son of Ḥasan al-Muthannā رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ, ‘Abd Allāh was counted amongst the great worshipers and saints. He was noble, exuded awe, and was expressive. He was known as ‘Abd Allāh al-Maḥḍ (Maḥḍ meaning unique) as he was the first to child to be born from the union of the children of Ḥasan and Ḥusayn رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ. He is a leader of the Banū Hāshim and has narrations in the authentic books of ḥadīth. Muṣ‘ab ibn ‘Abd Allāh says:

ما رأيت أحدا من علمائنا يكرمون أحدا ما يكرمون عبد الله بن حسن بن حسن

I have not seen our scholars respect anyone as much as they revered ‘Abd Allāh ibn al-Ḥasan ibn al-Ḥasan رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ.

This noble saint possessed great forbearance as well. Yaḥyā ibn Ma‘īn رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ says:

A man swore at ‘Abd Allāh ibn al-Ḥasan رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ which he dismissed saying, “He is not likeminded that I retaliate nor beneath me that I be stingy.”<sup>2</sup>

1 *Tārīkh Dimashq*, vol. 13 pg. 67; *Shu‘ab al-Imān*, 624.

2 *Tārīkh Dimashq*, vol. 27 pg. 378.

He once advised his son with the following:

با بني استعن على السلامة بطول الصمت في المواطن التي تدعوك نفسك إلى الكلام فيها فإن الصمت  
حسن على كل حاله وللمرء ساعات يضر فيها الخطأ ولا ينفع فيها الصواب

O my son, seek peace through long periods of silence in instances where you want to speak. Silence is golden, and man goes through many a time where a mistake will haunt him whilst saying something good will not benefit him either. Therefore, it is best to adopt silence.<sup>1</sup>

This chapter is a letter to those men and women who have high aspirations to inculcate such character and understand the responsibility they have to their children. Advise them in this way, instil within them these great advices which we dream of. The life story of these august personalities are not fairy tales. These are lives that left an invaluable imprint in the pages of history.

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1 Ibid.

## Nafisah bint al-Ḥasan

A pious woman of high standing, a branch off the tree of prophethood, and a daughter of the Ḥasaniyyah family. Nafisah bint al-Amīr Ḥasan ibn Zayd ibn Ḥasan ibn ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib al-Qurashiyyah al-Hāshimiyyah ﷺ.

Her **father** is Sayyid Amīr Ḥasan ibn Zayd ibn Ḥasan ibn ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib ﷺ. He was a scholar of repute and the governor of Madīnah for five years in the era of Maṣṣūr. He was then accused and slandered which Maṣṣūr believed and had him taken out of office. He further took possession of his wealth and belongings and imprisoned him in Baghdad. Ḥasan ibn Zayd remained in prison till the death of Maṣṣūr whereupon the Abbasid Khalīfah Maḥdī ascended the seat of rule. Maḥdī exonerated him, honoured him by returning his wealth and belongings, and keeping him by his side even performing the pilgrimage with him. His demise was in the 168th year of the hijrah at the age of 85. ‘Alī ibn al-Maḥdī performed his funeral prayer.<sup>1</sup>

Her **grandfather** is Zayd ibn Ḥasan ibn ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib ﷺ. He narrated ḥadīth from his father, Jābir, and Ibn ‘Abbās ﷺ. His son narrates from him. He would come every week for the Friday prayer from a distance of eight miles. When he would mount his conveyance, people would be awestruck at his gargantuan size and say, “His grandfather was Rasūlullāh ﷺ.”

Her **husband** is Ishāq ibn Ja‘far al-Ṣādiq ibn Muḥammad al-Bāqir ibn ‘Alī ibn Zayn al-‘Ābidīn ibn Ḥusayn ibn ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib ﷺ. He was a pious and noble man inclined to goodness. This couple were blessed with two children namely, Qāsim and Umm Kulthūm. They however had no offspring.<sup>2</sup>

Nafisah was born in Makkah on Wednesday, the 11th of Rabī‘ al-Awwal in the 145th year of the Hijrah. Her father Ḥasan ibn Zayd was smitten with her and

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1 *Al-Ibar fi Khabar min Ghabar li al-Dhababī*, vol. 1 pg. 66; *Wāfi bi al-Wafayāt*, vol. 27 pg. 101.

2 *Al-Mawā‘iz wa al-I’tibār*, vol. 3 pg. 208.

overjoyed at her birth. They however did not remain in Makkah for long as they left for Madīnah when her father was made the governor.

This caravan of the descendants of the Prophet ﷺ left Makkah and travelled to the city of Madīnah where people eagerly awaited their arrival. They entered Madīnah on a Friday and were thronged by the children of the Muhājirīn and Anṣār, who were delighted at their arrival and appointment in office. Nafīсах's upbringing took place in the Masjid of Rasūlullāh ﷺ, surrounded by giants of knowledge, worship, and saints. Her childhood was spent with the grandchildren of Rasūlullāh ﷺ and she took to their path, memorising the Qur'ān and studying to understand its meanings. Similarly, she memorised many of the aḥādīth of the Messenger ﷺ.

When she entered her youth, her cousin Ishāq ibn Ja'far al-Ṣādiq proposed for her hand. She gracefully accepted, and the union was sanctified by the nikāḥ ritual in the beginning of Rajab the year 161 A.H.

When her father left the post of governor, her husband replaced him. She is therefore known as the daughter and wife of governors from the Ahl al-Bayt.

Sayyidah Nafīсах lived in Madīnah teaching people and disseminating her profound knowledge. Her home was opened to the students of knowledge where they would quench their thirst and narrate the aḥādīth of Rasūlullāh ﷺ. She would pass judgments in the matters of faith and day to day life. She came to be known as the wise and knowledgeable Nafīсах.

In the year 194 A.H, Sayyidah Nafīсах travelled to Egypt with her father and husband. They settled in Fuṣṭāṭ in the home of Ibn al-Jaṣṣās, a well-respected nobleman of Egypt. They then moved to the home of Umm Hānī' in the Qarafah area. She was welcomed with open arms and the townspeople were pleased at the arrival of the grandchildren of Rasūlullāh ﷺ. Ibn Kathīr writes:

Nafīсах, together with her husband al-Mu'tamin Ishāq ibn Ja'far came to the Egyptian cities and settled there. She was a woman of considerable

wealth and did much humanitarian work amongst the lepers, terminally ill, and sick. Furthermore, her humanitarian efforts encapsulated the general populous as well. She was a devout worshipper and a woman of immense goodness.<sup>1</sup>

She held a high status amongst the Egyptian people who would go to her seeking knowledge and recognition of Allah ﷻ. Great scholars would frequent her house seeking from her deep knowledge. The great Imām al-Shafi‘i رحمه الله would frequent her on matters of knowledge. She was kind and caring towards him. At times he would lead the prayer for her during the month of Ramaḍān and advised her to perform his funeral prayer.

Ṣafḍī writes, “It has been narrated that when Imām al-Shafi‘i رحمه الله came to Egypt he would go to her and narrate aḥādīth from her. When the Imām al-Shafi‘i رحمه الله passed away his bier was taken to her upon which she prayed.”<sup>2</sup> Ibn Kathīr mentions the following, “When he (Imām al-Shafi‘i) passed away his bier was taken to her house upon which she performed the funeral prayer.”<sup>3</sup>

Ibn al-‘Imād Hanbalī narrates from Ibn al-Ahdal, “Her lineage, Imām al-Shafi‘i narrating to and from her, and his bier being taken to her home displays her stature, acceptance, and august personality.”<sup>4</sup>

She was famed for her devout worship and abstinence from worldly affairs to the extent that she became a role model for the perfect Muslim woman. She had attained a lofty stage piety, having done the pilgrimage thirty times. She would cry profusely, standing in worship at nights and fasting during the days. It was said to her, “Do you not have mercy on yourself?” She replied, “How can I do so, whilst in front of me lies a path only the successful have crossed safely.”<sup>5</sup>

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1 *Al-Bidāyah wa al-Nihāyah*, vol. 10 pg. 286.

2 *Wāfi bi al-Wafayāt*, vol. 27 pg. 101

3 *Al-Bidāyah wa al-Nihāyah*, vol. 10 pg. 286.

4 *Shadharāt al-Dhahab*, vol. 2 pg. 21.

5 *Al-Mawā‘iz wa al-I’tibār*, vol. 3 pg. 208.

From amongst her prayers to Allah ﷻ the following stands out:

اللهم اني اعوذ بك من كلام السوء و فعل السوء و مراد السوء و جار السوء اللهم لا تكلني الي نفسي فاعجز ولا الي احد من خلقك فاضيع اللهم الهمني رشدي و احسن رفدي و اصلح عشرتي و اغفر زلتي و قتي شر و سواس الشيطان و اجرني منه يا رحمان حتي لا يكون علي سلطان و صلي الله علي سيدنا محمد صاحب الشريعة والبرهان آمين

O Allah, I seek protection in you from evil speech, evil actions, evil intentions, and evil neighbours. O Allah do not leave me to my own devices that I be helpless nor to any of your creation that I perish. O Allah inspire me with that which is good for me, make pleasant my support, and correct my family. Forgive my mistakes, save me from the evil whispers of the devil, and save me from him so that he holds no power over me, O Most Merciful. Peace and salutations be upon our master, Muḥammad possessor of the faith and proofs.

After seven years in Egypt she took ill, however she bore her illness patiently and would say:

الصَّبْرُ يَلْزِمُ الْمُؤْمِنَ بِقَدْرِ مَا فِي قَلْبِهِ مِنْ إِيمَانٍ، وَحَسَبَ الصَّابِرِ أَنْ اللَّهَ مَعَهُ، وَعَلَى الْمُؤْمِنِ أَنْ يَسْتَبْشِرَ بِالْمَشَاقِقِ الَّتِي تَعْتَرِضُهُ، فَإِنَّهَا سَبِيلُهُ لِرَفْعِ دَرَجَتِهِ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِ، وَقَدْ جَعَلَ اللَّهُ الْأَجْرَ عَلَى قَدْرِ الْمَشَقَّةِ، وَاللَّهُ يَضَاعِفُ لِمَنْ يَشَاءُ، وَاللَّهُ وَاسِعٌ عَلِيمٌ

Patience is in accordance to the amount of faith in one's heart. It is sufficient for a patient one to know that Allah ﷻ is with them. A believer should be happy with difficulties that came his way as it is a means of raising one's status in the sight of Allah ﷻ. Reward is given in relation to the suffering and Allah ﷻ increases many-fold for whomsoever he wishes. And Allah is all-Encompassing and all-Knowing.

Sayyidah Nafisah realised that her time to leave this world had come close so she called for her husband, Iṣḥāq ibn Ja'far al-Ṣādiq, who was far off at the time. She was fasting the day she passed away. When her illness had intensified, and her end was near, those around her insisted that she break her fast and have mercy



on herself. She, however refused to do so saying, “I have prayed to Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى for thirty years to meet him whilst I am fasting, do you want me to break my fast now?” She then began reciting from Sūrah al-An‘ām till she reached the verse:

لَهُمْ دَارُ السَّلَامِ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ وَهُوَ وَلِيُّهُمْ بِمَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ

*For them will be the Home of Peace with their Lord. And He will be their protecting friend because of what they used to do.*<sup>1</sup>

Her soul left her body to continue its journey to Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى in the month of Ramaḍān, 220 A.H.

The people of Egypt wept at her demise and were grieved to no end. When her husband came he wished to transfer her body to Madīnah, however the people of Egypt requested him to bury her near them. She was thus buried in Egypt in the house she lived.<sup>2</sup> Al-Dhahabī says, “Not much has reached us regarding her life.”<sup>3</sup>

There was great influence in introducing innovations of evil and polytheist behaviour at her grave and burial site during the rule of the Fatimids in Egypt. A monument was built upon her grave and decorated, fake tales of bygone days were fabricated which led the masses to immortalize her shrine, praying to it in times of difficulty and at times prostrating to it!

The scholars of that era left no stone unturned in educating the masses on the evils of their actions in relation to her newly erected shrine and warning them of the consequences if they did not refrain from such innovations.

Imām Dhahabī رحمته الله writes:

The ignorant Egyptians have faith in her shrine which is impermissible, as this leads them to polytheism. They prostrate to her grave and

1 Sūrah al-An‘ām: 128.

2 *Al-Bidāyah wa al-Nihāyah*, vol. 10 pg. 286.

3 *Siyar A‘lām al-Nubalā’*, vol. 10 pg. 106.

seek forgiveness from her, a result of the Ubaydiyyah's (Fatimid's) interpolation.<sup>1</sup>

Ḥāfiẓ ibn Kathīr رحمه الله says:

Up to this day many people have incorrect beliefs regarding her and the likes of her, particularly the general masses of Egypt. Rash and repugnant utterances which lead to disbelief and polytheism are a common occurrence which are totally impermissible. At times they wrongly attribute such statements to Zayn al-'Ābidīn رحمه الله. The belief regarding her should be the same as that which is held regarding other pious women. Know well, extremism in the acts around the graves of the pious lead to idol worship. Rasūlullāh صلى الله عليه وسلم has commanded that graves be levelled. Exceeding the bounds and believing that those in the grave cause benefit or harm without the will of Allah سبحانه وتعالى is polytheism. May Allah سبحانه وتعالى have mercy on her and honour her.<sup>2</sup>

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1 *Siyar A'lām al-Nubalā'*, vol. 10 pg. 106.

2 *Al-Bidāyah wa al-Nihāyah*, vol. 10 pg. 286.

## Muḥammad al-Mahdī

The noblest of eras in the history of this world is the era of the prophethood. It is where the skies meet the earth [the coming down of revelation] and human nature attains perfection. As time passes after the demise of the prophet, nations fall into disarray with revelation coming to an end. This ummah faced the same challenge after the passing of Rasūlullāh ﷺ. Regression continued with no hope of rejuvenation in sight. This phenomenon has been recorded in the aḥādīth:

لا يأتي عليكم زمان إلا الذي بعده شر منه حتى تلتقوا ربكم

Each era that will come upon you will be worst then the previous one till you meet your Lord.<sup>1</sup>

The mercy of Allah ﷻ upon his creation necessitates times and eras wherein mankind will return to guidance and be reminded of the very first era of this ummah. The emergence of the Mahdī will be recounted as part of those fortunate eras. He will rise to guide and cure the spiritual maladies embedded in the hearts of people after evil will have spread its wings and oppression become the order of the day. Abū Saʿīd al-Khudrī رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ reports from Rasūlullāh ﷺ:

يخرج في آخر أمتي المهدي، يسقيه الله الغيث، وتخرج الأرض نباتها، ويُعطي المال صحاحاً، وتكثر الماشية، وتعظم الأمة، يعيش سبعمائة أو ثمانياً

At the end of the time of my ummah, the Mahdi will appear. Allah will grant him rain, the earth will bring forth its fruits, he will distribute wealth generously, cattle will increase, and the ummah will become great. He will rule for seven or eight [years].<sup>2</sup>

1 *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, 6657. The narration of Anas رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ.

2 *Al-Mustadrak lil Ḥākim*, 8673. Al-Ḥākim has commented on the authenticity of it, however al-Bukhārī and Muslim have not narrated it. Al-Dhahabī concurs with him and Al-Albānī has attested to its veracity. *Silsilat al-Ṣaḥīḥah*, 711.

This ḥadīth is of the unseen and a prophecy of the occurrences at the end of times which ought to increase the faith of Muslims and spur them on to prepare for these turbulent conditions. The first great sign of Qiyāmah will be the opening for the other great signs which then appear in quick succession, like the beads off a broken string. Amongst the signs of the Hour, is the emergence of a pious man. The narrations with regards to his appearance are many and have reached the highest level of authenticity in conveying its meaning. The question remains though, who is this pious man and what do we know about him? The following pages will endeavour to remove the cobwebs of confusion and establish the facts of this august personality.

## Name and lineage

His name is Muḥammad ibn ‘Abd Allāh and known widely as ‘Mahdī’. He is from the Ahl al-Bayt and specifically from the progeny of Ḥasan ibn ‘Alī رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ, son of Fāṭimah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا. He therefore has a bond to the Ḥasanī, ‘Alawī, and Hāshimī families.

‘Abd Allāh ibn Mas‘ūd and ‘Alī رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ report the following narrations from Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ:

لا تذهب الدنيا الدنيا حتى يملك العرب رجل من أهل بيتي يواطء اسمه اسمي

The world will not come to pass until a man from among my family, whose name will be my name, rules over the Arabs.<sup>1</sup>

لو لم يبق من الدنيا إلا يوم لطول الله ذلك اليوم حتى يبعث رجلا مني أو من أهل بيتي يواطء اسمه اسمي  
واسم أبيه اسم أبي، يملأ الأرض قسطا وعدلا كما ملئت ظلما وجورا

Even if only a day remains for Qiyāmah to come, yet Allah will surely send a man from my family who will fill this world with justice and fairness, just as it initially was filled with oppression.<sup>2</sup>

1 *Jāmi‘ al-Tirmidhī*, 2230. The author has authenticated this narration. Al-Albānī has done the same in *Mishkāt al-Maṣābīh*, 5452; *Faḍāil al-Shām*, 16.

2 *Abū Dāwūd*, 4282; *Silsilat al-Ṣaḥīḥah*, 1529. Al-Albānī has authenticated it therein. Ibn Taymiyyah has done the same in *Minhāj al-Sunnah*, vol. 4 pg. 211, “The narrations regarding the emergence of Mahdī are authentic. Abū Dāwūd, Tirmidhī, Aḥmad, and others have narrated it on the authority of Ibn Mas‘ūd and others.” Similarly, this has been mentioned in *al-Muntaqā min Minhāj al-Ītidāl* by al-Dhahabī, pg. 534.

المهدي منا أهل البيت يصلحه الله في ليلة

The promised Mahdi will be among my family. Allah will make the provisions for his emergence within a single night.<sup>1</sup>

## Physical Features

Rasūlullāh ﷺ has clearly outlined his defining characteristics so that when he does emerge there is no hesitation in assisting his cause, especially since it will be a time of immense tribulation. Rasūlullāh ﷺ mentioned they will share a name and father's name. Furthermore, he will be from amongst the Ahl al-Bayt. As for his physical features, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ says:

المهدي مني أجلي الجبهة أفنى الأنف

Al Mahdi will be from my progeny. His forehead will be broad, and his nose will be high.<sup>2</sup> [Broad due to his hair falling to the back and his nose pronounced with a slight arch.]

## The Era of his Advent

As mentioned, he will rise into a world steeped into oppression and coercion. Evil and shamelessness will be the order of the day, and justice will be non-existent. Allah ﷻ will guide the ummah at his hands and strengthen the faith through his efforts.

## His Time on Earth

Rasūlullāh ﷺ has informed us of the events to come in several aḥādīth. He has indicated towards the duration of Mahdī's stay on the earth in the following narration:

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1 *Musnad Imām Aḥmad*, 645; *Ibn Mājah*, 4085. On the authority of 'Alī رضي الله عنه. *Silsilat al-Ṣaḥīḥah*, 2371. Al-Albānī has authenticated it therein.

2 *Abū Dāwūd*, 4285 on the authority of Abū Sa'īd al-Khudrī رضي الله عنه. Albānī has authenticated it in *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Jāmi'*, 11682.

يخرج في آخر أمي المهدي يسقيه الله الغيث، وتخرج الأرض نباتها ويُعطي المال صحاحاً وتكثر الماشية وتعظم الأمة، يعيش سبعمائة أو ثمانمائة

At the end of the time of my ummah, the Mahdi will appear. Allah will grant him rain, the earth will bring forth its fruits, he will give a lot of money, cattle will increase and the ummah will become great. He will rule for seven or eight [years].<sup>1</sup>

He will remain on this earth for seven or eight years. In this duration the lands will be filled with justice and fairness, just as it initially was filled with oppression. After his death, trials and evil will once again rear its head. The appearance of this Imām will be a mercy for the people living towards the end of times. We seek the protection of Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى from all trials, apparent and hidden.

## Place of Emergence

The narrations indicate that he will rise from the east and will not be alone. The people of the east will assist him in carrying the responsibility of this faith, fighting by his side in raising the word of Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى after having pledged allegiance to him at the Ka'bah.

يؤيد بناس من اهل المشرق ينصرونه ويقيمون سلطانه ويشيدون اركانه وتكون ارياتهم سود ايضا وهو زي عليه الوقار لان راية الرسول الكريم كانت سوداء يقال لها العقاب

He will be assisted by people from the east, who will help establish his reign and strengthen his support. Their flag will be black in colour and awe-inspiring as this was the flag of Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ which was called 'Iqāb.<sup>2</sup>

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1 *Al-Mustadrak lil Ḥākim*, 8673. Al-Ḥākim has commented on the authenticity of it, however al-Bukhārī and Muslim have not narrated it. Al-Dhahabī concurs with him and al-Albānī has attested to its veracity. *Silsilat al-Ṣaḥīḥah*, 711.

2 Ibn Kathīr: *Al-Nihāyah fi al-Fitan*.

The Muslims will then pledge their allegiance to him and he will wage wars with them in which they will be victorious. His reign will be established, and he will rule with Islamic law resulting in justice throughout. The Muslim ummah will enjoy economic prosperity unlike anything they had witnessed before. They will search for people to accept their wealth however everyone will be self-sufficient and not in need. The earth will sprout its blessings and the skies will rain down abundantly. Wealth will be distributed without account. Ibn Kathīr says, “In his time fruits, crops, and wealth will be abundant. His rule will be supreme and the faith strong. Enemies will be overpowered, and general goodness will spread.”<sup>1</sup>

This is the Mahdī, who will emerge in turbulent times when evil and immorality will have become the norm. The narrations that have been presented before you regarding the Mahdī—dear reader—are authentic and have reached such a large number that their meanings are concrete, leaving no doubt in the veracity of his coming. What should be borne in mind however is, the coming of Mahdī and relying on him does not absolve us of doing good actions and spreading our faith. Laying in wait for him with our hands tied is impractical and pointless. Rasūlullāh ﷺ did not inform us about him so that we may leave out all good actions. It was rather a measure to strengthen the hearts of the pious when the running gets tough so that they do not get despondent with the overpowering atmosphere of disbelief.

‘Abd al-‘Azīz ibn Bāz says:

The matter of al-Mahdi is well-known. The traditions concerning it are many; rather they are successive. Several scholars have attested to this. The narrations are successive in the meaning it conveys. They indicate that the matter of this promised person is proven, and that his appearance is true. He is Muḥammad ibn ‘Abd Allāh al-‘Alawī al-Ḥasanī, from the progeny of Ḥasan ibn ‘Alī عليه السلام. This Imām will emerge at the end of times and establish truth and justice together with preventing injustice and

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1 Ibid.

oppression. Allah ﷺ will spread much goodness through him, guiding and advising people.<sup>1</sup>

Muḥammad Naṣir al-Dīn al-Albānī writes:

Rasūlullāh ﷺ gave the Muslims glad tidings regarding a man from his Ahl al-Bayt and proclaimed his qualities. Most importantly, he will rule by Islamic law and spread justice. He will be a reviver of this faith which Allah ﷻ sends at the turn of every century as is established from the narrations. Just as the promise of a reviver does not absolve us of striving to seek knowledge and applying ourselves whole heartedly to practice, similarly the prophecy of the emergence of Mahdī does not absolve of the same, rather the opposite rings true.

The twenty-three years of effort that Rasūlullāh ﷺ strived for was not based on relying solely on Mahdī in the final era. The effort was to construct an Islamic empire. What would Mahdī do if he emerged today and found the ummah in many factions and groups. The establishing of an Islamic Empire will only come about after an effort is made to unite the ummah under a single banner. This undoubtedly will take a long time, only Allah ﷻ knows the extent of it. Both, faith and logic dictate that sincere Muslims stand up for this mammoth task so that when he does emerge the only duty at hand would be to help him to victory.<sup>2</sup>

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1 See his footnotes on *'Aqīdah Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Athar fi al-Mahdī al-Muntaẓar* of 'Abd al-Muḥsin al-'Ubād.

2 *Silsilat al-Ṣaḥīḥah*, 1529.



## Fāṭimah bint al-Ḥusayn

This chapter is dedicated to a personality history has generally neglected to recount in detail and I wished to refresh the minds by promoting the life story of this noble lady of the Ahl al-Bayt, Fāṭimah bint al-Ḥusayn ibn ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا.

A great *Tābi‘īyyah* (generation of Muslims who followed the Ṣaḥābah), teacher, and narrator of Aḥādīth. She excelled in the sciences just as she had in art of nurturing with patience and hope of reward from Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى. The daughter of a Mujāhid and martyr regarding whom Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said:

حسين مني وأنا منه أحب الله من أحب حسيناً حسين سبط من الأسباط

Ḥusayn is part of me and I am part of him. May Allah love those who love Ḥusayn. Ḥusayn is one of my grandsons.<sup>1</sup>

Her teknonym is Umm ‘Abd Allāh, granddaughter of Sayyidah Fāṭimah al-Zahrā رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا, and daughter of the beloved of Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ, Ḥusayn رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ. She was a splitting image of her grandmother and father both in beauty and purity. Just as she inherited their physical features and characteristics, she inherited their deep understanding and knowledge of Islam. Adding to this her honourable lineage, one must admit she was quite unique.

Her **mother** was from the Banū Taym, Umm Ishāq bint Ṭalḥah ibn ‘Ubayd Allāh رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ—one of the ten who had been given glad tidings of paradise in this world.

Her **brothers** are the famed Zayn al ‘Ābidīn ‘Alī ibn Ḥusayn, ‘Alī al-Akbar the martyr of Karbalā, and ‘Alī al-Asghar.

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1 *Jāmi‘ al-Tirmidhī*, 3775; *Sunan Ibn Mājah*, 144. The wording is of the latter on. Others have narrated it on the authority of Ya‘la ibn Murrah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ. Al-Albānī has certified it as authentic, see *Silsilah al-Ṣaḥīḥah*, 1228. Another narration has the following words, “Ḥusayn is part of me and I am part of him. May Allah love those who love Ḥusayn. Ḥasan and Ḥusayn are my grandsons.” Al-Albānī has certified it as authentic, see, *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Jāmi‘*, 5457.

Her **uncle** is Sayyidina Ḥasan ibn ‘Alī رضي الله عنه, the prince of the youth in Jannah.

Her **aunts** are the likes of Zaynab, the intelligent, of the Banū Hāshim and Umm Kulthūm.

Her **husband** is Ḥasan al-Muthannā ibn al-Imām al-Ḥasan.

Her **children** are ‘Abd Allāh al-Maḥḍ, Ibrāhīm al-Ghamr, Ḥasan al-Muthallath, Zaynab, and Umm Kulthūm.

After the passing of her husband Ḥasan al-Muthannā, ‘Abd Allāh ibn ‘Amr ibn ‘Uthmān ibn ‘Affān رضي الله عنه married her. After his death she remained a widow till she passed away رضي الله عنها.

When Ḥasan al-Muthannā رحم الله proposed to Ḥusayn رضي الله عنه for one of his daughters. His uncle, Ḥusayn رضي الله عنه told him to choose whomsoever he wishes from his daughters, however Ḥasan ibn al-Ḥasan bashfully remained silent. Ḥusayn رضي الله عنه then chose his daughter, Fāṭimah bint al-Ḥusayn saying to him that she resembles his mother, Fāṭimah bint Muḥammad رضي الله عنها, the most.<sup>1</sup> This statement of her father goes to show the immense respect he had for his daughter. The similitude was not just a physical one, though she was extremely beautiful, being described as a damsel of paradise. Her likeness to Sayyidah Fāṭimah al-Zahrā رضي الله عنها was deeper than just sharing her beauty. She was an embodiment of her sublime character and mannerisms, therefore known as a pearl amongst those named after Fāṭimah al-Zahrā رضي الله عنها. This marriage took place the same year in which Ḥusayn رضي الله عنه was martyred, the 61st year after the hijrah.

She travelled with her father to Karbalā’ and witnessed the days of oppression and murder which significantly darkened the pages of history. Fāṭimah stood on the evening of that fateful day, surveying the spectacle of horror. Her father,

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1 *‘Umdat al-Ṭālib*, 165; *Anṣāb al-Ṭālibiyyin*, 62; Ṣāhib al-Aghānī with his chain of narration, vol. 16 pg.

brothers, uncles, cousins, and the most noble of her father's close supporters lay dead. Her response though, was one of patience and hope of reward.

The sun of the 11th of Muḥarram rose to the troops of 'Ubayd Allāh ibn Ziyād tasked with transporting the Ahl al-Bayt to Kūfah. They were taken along the path of the battle where bodies lay with open wounds that caused their death. Fāṭimah bid farewell to her blessed bodies of her father and family members with tearful eyes and a frenzied heart. This caravan of grief approached Kūfah. The people of Kūfah stood observing not moved by the acts of tyranny meted out to the Ahl al-Bayt at their hands. Fāṭimah bint al-Ḥusayn stood here and gave a resounding speech which shook the façade of the Kufan betrayers. She said:

O people of Kūfah! O people of treachery, betrayal, and conceit! We are a household who have been tried by Allah through you, as Allah has tried you through us. Yet He allowed us to success in our trial. May Allah's curse beset the oppressors! Woe to you! Do you know which of your hands has stabbed us? Do you know how many souls have set out to kill us? Do you know how many feet marched toward us intent on fighting us? By Allah, your hearts have been hardened, your core has rotted, and your hearts, ears, and eyes have been sealed. Shayṭān has whispered to you and dictated your actions, placing a veil over your eyes so that you may not be guided.

May doom beset you, O people of Kūfah!<sup>1</sup>

Fāṭimah, her sister—Sukaynah, her aunt—Umm Kulthūm bint 'Alī, and Zaynab were brought to Yazīd. Fāṭimah addressed him thus, "O Yazīd! The daughters of Rasūlullāh ﷺ as your prisoners? You are bold beyond measure." He replied, "Rather, you are all free." He then gave them residence at his own place where the women of his household consoled them on their losses. He then ensured their safe passage back to Madīnah.

Yazīd ibn Mu'āwiyah sent them on their way with a Syrian envoy. The envoy would travel with them by night staying close behind on guard. As dawn would

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1 *Al-Lahūf*, pgs. 65/67.

break they would take shelter and rest whilst the entourage of Syrian envoys would surround them, a safety net of sorts. They continued shading, being compassionate, and seeing to their needs throughout the journey till they entered the city of Madīnah.

The great trials they had faced merely days before did not rid them of their deep seeded generosity and kind heartedness which remains a lesson for the world to remember them by. Fāṭimah bint Ḥusayn said to her sister Sukaynah, “This Syrian envoy has been good to us, should we then not return the favour of goodness?” They had nothing but their personal jewellery which they gathered and presented before them, apologising for not having anything else to give. The sisters presented the jewellery before them as a token of appreciation for the good during the journey. However, the reply was one of sincerity, “Had I done this for worldly gains I would have been pleased with your offerings and perhaps even less than this. I have done this act solely for the pleasure of Allah ﷻ and due to your close relationship with Rasūlullāh ﷺ.”<sup>1</sup>

And so, Fāṭimah bint Ḥusayn returned to Madīnah, returning to her devout worship and narrating of aḥādīth. She narrates from her grandmother, Fāṭimah al-Zahrā ﷺ, and from her father, Ḥusayn ﷺ.

Her demise was in the year 117 A.H, reaching the age of seventy.

Peace be upon this daughter of the Ahl al-Bayt, the granddaughter of ‘Alī ﷺ and the daughter of the great martyr Ḥusayn ﷺ.

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1 *Al-Durr al-Manthūr fī Ṭabaqāt Rabbāt al-Khudūr*, pg. 361.

## Sukaynah bint al-Ḥusayn

The noblest of her time in mind, character, and beauty. A soul pure like her lineage. Sukaynah bint al-Ḥusayn. Imām al-Nawawī says, “Sukaynah bint al-Ḥusayn is recounted amongst the noblest of women. Generosity and honour inherited from her forefathers.”<sup>1</sup>

She was born in the 47th year after the hijrah and was named Āminah, after her grandmother Āminah bint al-Wahab. This young girl was nourished in the shade of the house of prophethood, whilst still a child her mother gave her the name Sukaynah which took to her so well that she was then known only by it.<sup>2</sup>

In the latter portion of her life she had become occupied in teaching the Muslims, a way of returning the favour of acquiring the knowledge of the sages. She had a keen interest in poetry and was a master in the sciences of jurisprudence and language.

Her **mother** was Rabāb bint Imru’ al-Qays al-Kalbiyah. Ḥusayn رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ had married her due to her many good qualities. A son, ‘Abd Allāh, was born to her after which Ḥusayn رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ adopted the teknonym Abū ‘Abd Allāh. They were blessed with a second child through this union whom we speak about now, Sukaynah. Ḥusayn رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ showed great love and affection to Sukaynah and her mother Rabāb. He would go out of his way in ensuring their comfort. He was once ridiculed at the extreme care he showed to them upon which he said:<sup>3</sup>

تكون بها سكينه والرياب	لعمرك انني لاحب داراً
وليس للانمي فيها عتاب	احبهما وابذل جل مالي
حياتي أو يغيبني التراب	ولست لهم وان عتبوا مطيعاً

1 *Tahdhīb al-Asmā wa al-Lughāt*, vol. 1 pg. 167.

2 *Wafayāt al- A’yān*, vol. 2 pg. 394.

3 *Al-Bidāyah wa al-Nihāyah*, vol. 8 pgs. 209/210

*I swear I love the home; that Sukaynah and Rabāb live in.*

*My love and wealth are spent on them; there's no place in our happiness for misplaced criticism,*

*Nor am I one to accept such; this is how I shall live and die.*

As Sukaynah grew up she became a noble woman of society contributing in meaningful ways to the growth of a pure and literate culture. She had become a narrator of aḥādīth after memorising many narrations. Her lineage paved the way for her acquisition of knowledge just as it inculcated in her sublime character.

Sukaynah travelled with her father to Iraq and witnessed the incident of Karbalā'. As the army of five thousand descended upon them and their fate was all but sealed, Ḥusayn رضي الله عنه gathered his daughters and instructed them not to involve themselves in the practices of the ignorant times upon his likely martyrdom. Sukaynah sobbed at the advice of her resolute father as she knew their time together was not for much longer. Ḥusayn رضي الله عنه turned his attention towards her and said:

منك البكاء إذا الحمام دهاني	سيطول بعدي يا سكينه فاعلمي
لا تما دام مني الروح في جثمانى	لا تحرفي قلبي بدمعك حسرة
تأتيه يا خيرة النسوان	إذا قتلت فأنت أولى بالذي

*You shall live long after me Sukaynah; your tears will announce my burial.*

*Do not break my heart by your tears now; as long as my soul remains in my body.*

*If I am killed than you are the most likely; to follow me, O best of women.*

When the battle raged with just seventy on the side of Ḥusayn رضي الله عنه facing the odds of five thousand under the instruction of 'Ubayd Allāh ibn Ziyād, it wasn't long that they were surrounded and picked off one at a time till Ḥusayn رضي الله عنه himself was martyred. Sukaynah looked on at this gruesome massacre with patience and bid farewell to her father with the following:

ان الحسين غداة الطف يرشقه	ريب المنون فما أن يخطيء الحلقه
يا عين فاحتفلي طول الحياة دماً	لا تبك ولداً ولا أهلاً ولا رفقه
لكن على ابن رسول الله فانسكيي	قيحا ودمعا وأثريهما العلقه

*Ḥusayn the following morning lay graceful; fate's uncertainty would not miss him.*

*O eye, flow with tears of blood forever; not crying over a child, family or friend.*

*Rather over the beloved of Rasūlullāh, pour forth; your tears and blood from the pores of your body.*

Sukaynah was a pious woman, adorned with modesty and knowledge together with intelligence and deep understanding. Al-Dhahabī says, “She was astute and dignified.”<sup>1</sup> She had attained glory from all angles, in character and physical attributes, in noble descent and lineage, and in knowledge and faith. Her cousin, ‘Abd Allāh ibn Ḥasan al-Akbar married her and was martyred with her father at Karbalā’ before having consummated the marriage. Muṣ‘ab ibn Zubayr then proposed to her<sup>2</sup> who Ibn Kathīr describes as the most handsome of men with a heart courageous like none other, together with being enviably generous.<sup>3</sup>

Muṣ‘ab ibn Zubayr held a special place in the heart of Sukaynah and when he fell into war with ‘Abd Al-Malik ibn Marwān and she sensed his end was near she cried at his loss before his death. The historians have noted that Sukaynah was with Muṣ‘ab ibn Zubayr in the battle that claimed his life. When he was martyred she went searching for his body amongst the dead and only recognised him by the colour on his cheeks. She looked at him, crestfallen, and said, “How excellent a husband you were. You are the embodiment of the poem of ‘Antarah:

وخليل غانية تركت مجندلا	بالقاع لم يعهد ولم يتلم
فهمتكت بالرمح الطويل إهابة	ليس الكريم على القنا بمحرم

*I have left a beauty to lay on the ground; without promise nor word,*

1 *Siyar A‘lām al-Nubalā’*, vol. 5 pg. 263

2 *Siyar A‘lām al-Nubalā’*, vol. 5 pg. 262

3 *Al-Bidāyah wa al-Nihāyah*, vol. 8 pgs. 317

*And a lengthy spear has pierced his side; for even the noble are not bidden upon the spear.*

She eulogised him with the following:

يري الموت الا بالسيوف حراما	فان تقتلوه تقتل الماجد الذي
الي القوم حتي اوردوه حماما	وقبلك ما خاض الحسين منية

*If you've killed him, you've killed an honoured man; who saw fit only to die at the sword.*

*Before you they did not leave Husayn too; till they had him laying on a bier.*

After the martyrdom of Muṣ'ab ibn Zubayr she intended travelling to Madīnah. The people of Kūfah came to her and prayed for her well-being. Sukaynah said to them:

By Allah! You people killed my grandfather [‘Alī], father, uncles, and husband. You rendered me an orphan whilst young and made me a widow in my old age. May goodness not come to your city and may you reign be wretched.<sup>1</sup>

She then left and headed towards Madīnah.

Sukaynah would take pride in her noble lineage and would do so in a most eloquent and witty manner. The daughter of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه once whilst sitting with her said, “I am the daughter of the martyr.” Sukaynah remained silent and did not respond. A while later when the call to prayer was given and the words ‘I bear witness that Muḥammad is the messenger of Allah’ were uttered, she turned to the daughter of ‘Uthmān رضي الله عنه and said, “Is that your grandfather or mine?” Flabbergasted the reply was, “I shall never entertain the thought of boasting above your stature again.”

The incidents of her life that has reached us speaks volumes of the importance she showed to her noble lineage, always taking pride in Rasūlullāh صلوات الله عليه وآله being

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<sup>1</sup> *Kitāb al-Aghānī*, vol. 16 pg. 167.



her grandfather. Once whilst travelling for the Ḥaj with her co-wife ‘Ā’ishah bint Ṭalḥah, she heard the following from ‘Ā’ishah who was travelling with sixty conveyances laden with carriages.

O ‘Ā’ishah, with sixty conveyances, you will continue traveling like this as long as you live.

Sukaynah countered her by saying:

‘Ā’ishah, this is your co-wife saying, if it weren’t for her father yours would not be guided.

‘Ā’ishah, out of respect at the mention of Rasūlullāh ﷺ held back and did not say anything.

What should be noted is that taking pride did not hinder her worship or cause her to become lax in fulfilling the commands of Allah ﷻ. Her qualities of exertion in worship and abstinence are well documented as she knew that lineage alone cannot do much if actions are lacking. Her taking pride was merely a way of subduing anyone who wanted to boast above her.

She lived till eighty some-odd years and reached the end of her life in the city of Madīnah. Ibn Khallikān dates her demise to, Thursday the 25th of Rabī’ al-Awwal, the year 118 A.H.<sup>1</sup>

At her demise Khālīd ibn ‘Abd Allāh ibn al-Ḥārith ibn al-Ḥakam was the governor of Madīnah. He gave the instructions to wait for him as he will perform the funeral prayers. He left for the Baqī’ graveyard but only managed to get in by midday. Fearing decomposition before the funeral rites could take place, he purchased camphor for her at the cost of 30 gold coins. He then advanced Shaybah ibn Naṣṣaḥ<sup>2</sup> to perform the prayers due to his superiority.<sup>3</sup>

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1 *Wafayāt al- A’yān*, vol. 2 pgs. 396/397.

2 Shaybah ibn Naṣṣaḥ was the freed slave of Umm Salamah and the judge of Madīnah. See *Tahdhīb al-Kamāl*, vol. 12 pg. 608.

3 *Ṭabaqāt ibn Sa’ad*, vol. 8 pg. 475; *Tārīkh Dimashq*, vol. 69 pg. 217.

## ‘Alī ibn al-Ḥusayn

Today we stop and admire a man who worshiped Allah ﷻ with such fervour, exertion, and sincerity that he was given the title *Zayn al ‘Ābidīn!* [The adornment of the worshipers] Allah ﷻ had instilled with him such sublime character that other greats too would find themselves falling short. His father a martyr, his mother royalty, his grandfather the Khalīfah, his grandmother the best of women, and her father the Prophet of Allah ﷺ. Perhaps you, dear reader might have an inkling of whom we converse of, he is Abū al-Ḥusayn Zayn al ‘Ābidīn ‘Alī ibn al-Ḥusayn ibn ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ. Truly a profound personality.

All his brothers were martyred at Karbalā’ whilst he did not fight nor was he affected by the fighting as he was indisposed. He was brought to Damascus with the rest of those who survived and as mentioned before they were then escorted to Madīnah. He was once asked why he cried excessively to which he replied, “Prophet Ya‘qūb عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ cried at the loss of his child till he lost his eyesight not knowing if he had died. I had seen 14 men of my family being butchered in front of me in one day, do you think the pain will ever leave my heart?”<sup>1</sup> He was twenty-three at Karbalā’ and lived thereafter for thirty-five years. A life filled with goodness, generosity, and honour.

He was a practicing scholar and amongst the top tier of the Tābī‘īn. Imām al-Zuhrī says regarding him, “I have not seen an individual of Qurashī descent superior to ‘Alī ibn al-Ḥusayn, neither have I seen anyone with deeper knowledge than him.”<sup>2</sup>

Al-Dhahabī says:

‘Alī ibn al-Ḥusayn was trustworthy and strong in the narration of aḥādīth, noble and pious.

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1 *Ḥilyat al-Awliyā’*, vol. 3 pg. 136.

2 *Tārīkh Dimashq*, vol. 41 pg. 366; *Tahdhīb al-Kamāl*, vol. 20 pg. 384.

A man once came to Saʿīd ibn al-Musayyab and said, “I have not seen a more pious man than so and so.”

Saʿīd ibn al-Musayyab replied, “Have you seen ‘Alī ibn al-Ḥusayn?”

The man replied in the negative.

Saʿīd ibn al-Musayyab then said, “I have not seen a man more pious than him!”<sup>1</sup>

He was extremely eager in seeking knowledge and would sit in the company of the scholars and freed slaves who were more knowledgeable than him. He would say:

انما يجلس العاقل حيث ينتفع

An intelligent person sits where he benefits.

He was once rebuked as he sat in the gathering of Zayd ibn Aslam who was a freed slave. His response was, “Knowledge is sought wherever it may be.”<sup>2</sup>

Humility was a distinguishing feature of his. Al-Zuhrī says that once he narrated aḥādīth to ‘Alī ibn al-Ḥusayn. When he was done narrating he said, ‘Excellent! This is how we have narrated it.’ Al-Zuhrī said, “Any narration I narrate you have more knowledge regarding it than me!” ‘Alī ibn al-Ḥusayn replied:

لا تقل ذلك، فليس من العلم ما لا يعرف، إنما العلم ما عُرِف، وتواطأت عليه الألسن

Do not say this, knowledge is not what is strange. Rather it is what is well known and common amongst the people.<sup>3</sup>

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1 *Ḥilyat al-Awliyāʾ*, vol. 4 pg. 141.

2 *Ṭabaqāt ibn Saʿīd*, vol. 5 pg. 216; *Tārīkh Dimashq*, vol. 41 pg. 369.

3 *Tārīkh Dimashq*, vol. 41 pg. 376.

Ibn al-Jawzī has recorded the following in his book *Ṣifat al-Ṣafwah*:

كان علي بن الحسين إذا توضأ يصفر فيقول له أهله: ما هذا الذي يعتادك عند الوضوء؟ فيقول: تدرّون بين يدي من أريد أن أقوم

‘Alī ibn al-Ḥusayn would turn pale when he would perform ablution. His family would ask him what is this that happens to you at the time of ablution? He would reply, “Do you realise in front of whom I intend to stand?”

Subḥān Allāh, ultimate cognisance and awareness of the greatness of Allah سُبْحَانَكَ وَتَعَالَى had penetrated his heart. ‘Abd Allāh ibn Abī Sālim says, “When he would stand for prayer he would shiver and shudder.” Fear and consciousness of standing in the court of Allah سُبْحَانَكَ وَتَعَالَى in prayer had led him to this. Dear reader, worship when carried out in this fashion has a profound effect on a person and stops one from falling into lewdness and evil.

A fire once broke out in his house whilst he was in prostration. People began shrieking, at him to alert him to the fire. He however stayed in prostration till after the fire was extinguished. When asked what made him unaware of the fire he replied, “The fire of the hereafter made me oblivious of the fire of this world.”<sup>1</sup> Allāh Akbar!

قد زانها الدين والأخلاق والشميم	مناقب كنجوم الليل ظاهرة
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*Virtues like stars they appear; embellished with faith and noble character.*

His concern for the poor and needy was unmatched. When a beggar would come to him he would say:

مرحباً بمن يحمل زادي إلى الآخرة

O welcome, one who will take my provisions to the hereafter

1 *Mukhtaṣar Tārīkh Dimashq*, vol. 1 pg. 2348.

‘Alī ibn al-Ḥusayn came to see Muḥammad ibn Usāmah ibn Zayd whilst he was on his death bed. Muḥammad was crying and upon inquiring the reason for his sobbing he told ‘Alī ibn al-Ḥusayn that he had a debt of fifteen-thousand Dinars which worried him greatly. ‘Alī ibn al-Ḥusayn without second thought took it upon himself to fulfil the debt.<sup>1</sup>

This was his life. Filled with the passion of spending and humanitarian efforts. His title, Zayn al-‘Ābidīn, was earned after much sacrifice and reaching high stages in worship and piety.

Dear reader, do you see anyone who sees to the needs of the poor as he had? Muḥammad ibn Ishāq says:

The people of Madīnah lived not knowing where their expenses came from. Upon the demise of ‘Alī ibn al-Ḥusayn the money that would anonymously be placed at their doorstep at nights stopped coming.<sup>2</sup> The people of Madīnah would say, “We hadn’t thought of secret charity till after the death of Zayn al-‘Ābidīn.”<sup>3</sup> After his death the amount of homes supported by him were numbered at one hundred!

وَيُطْعَمُونَ الطَّعَامَ عَلَىٰ حُبِّهِ مِسْكِينًا وَيَتِيمًا وَأَسِيرًا إِنَّمَا نُطْعِمُكُمْ لِوَجْهِ اللَّهِ لَا نُرِيدُ مِنكُمْ جَزَاءً وَلَا شُكْرًا إِنَّا نَخَافُ مِنْ رَبِّنَا يَوْمًا عَبُوسًا قَمْطَرِيرًا فَوَقَاهُمُ اللَّهُ شَرَّ ذَلِكَ الْيَوْمِ وَلَقَّاهُمْ نَضْرَةً وَسُرُورًا

*And they give food in spite of love for it to the needy, the orphan, and the captive, [Saying], “We feed you only for the countenance of Allah. We wish not from you reward or gratitude. Indeed, We fear from our Lord a Day austere and distressful.” So Allah will protect them from the evil of that Day and give them radiance and happiness.<sup>4</sup>*

1 Ḥilyat al-Awliyā’, vol. 3 pg. 141.

2 Ḥilyat al-Awliyā’, vol. 3 pg. 136; Aḥmad fi al-Zuhd, vol. 1 pg. 166; Tārīkh Dimashq, vol. 41 pg. 383.

3 Ḥilyat al-Awliyā’, vol. 3 pg. 136.

4 Sūrah al-Insān: 8-11.

Wit and intelligence though lacking in many was found brimming in him. A man once asked him what the status of Abū Bakr and ‘Umar رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمَا was in relation to Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ. He replied, “Just as they are now.” And indicated towards their graves, i.e. side by side.<sup>1</sup>

Forgiveness and overlooking featured strongly in him as well. On one occasion a man slandered him. He simply replied, “If what you have said is true then may Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى forgive me and if it is false then may Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى forgive you.” The man stood up kissed his forehead and said, “May I be sacrificed for you. It is certainly not as I had said. Seek forgiveness on my behalf.” When Zayn al-‘Ābidīn had done so the man commented, “Surely Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى knows best where he places his messengers.”<sup>2</sup>

Zayn al-‘Ābidīn would fervently pray to Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى. One of his prayers was, “O Allah! Do not leave me to my own devices that I become helpless, nor to the creation that they leave me to waste.”<sup>3</sup>

His obedience and servitude to his mother was unparalleled. It is narrated that he would not eat in the same dish as her. When asked about this peculiar behaviour, he said, “I fear that my hand advances to a morsel of food which she had intended on taking thereby causing her the slightest of discomfort.”<sup>4</sup> Subḥān Allāh! What great respect.

Zayn al-‘Ābidīn went to the Makkah to perform the pilgrimage. Meanwhile Hishām ibn ‘Abd al-Malik (the crown-prince of the Umayyad dynasty at the time) went there for the same purpose.

Hishām ibn ‘Abd al-Malik tried his best to reach the Ka’bah but he was unable to do that, for the people were overcrowded around it. Every time he would try pushing

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1 *Tārīkh al-Islam*, vol. 2 pg. 267.

2 *Ṣīfat al-Ṣafwah*, vol. 2 pg. 95.

3 *Tārīkh Dimashq*, vol. 41 pg.382.

4 *Wafayāt al-A’yān*, vol. 3 pg. 268.

and forcing his way through, he would be pushed back by the crowd circulating around the Ka'bah. He decided to give up and wait till the crowd became less so would be able to go through with ease. He began looking at the crowds of the people from above. Then Zayn al-Ābidīn came to perform his circulation of the Ka'bah.

With great respect, they parted, made way for him, and allowed him to pass through to kiss the Ḥajr.

One of Hishām ibn 'Abd al-Malik's companions asked him: "Who is that man whom the people have honoured very much?"

Hishām looked at the man, saying: "I do not know him."

The great Arab poet, al-Farazdaq, was there and he said: "I know him."

"Who is he, Abū Firas?" They asked.

The poet, al-Farazdaq, then composed the following:

والبيت يعرفه والحل والحرم	هذا الذي تعرف البطحاء وطأته
إلى مكارم هذا ينتهي الكرم	إذا رأته قريش قال قائلها
بجدّه أنبيا الله قد ختموا	هذا ابن فاطمة إن كنت جاهله
أو قيل من خير أهل الأرض قيل هم	إن عد أهل التقي كانوا أئمتهم
هذا التقي النقي الطاهر العلم	هذا ابن خير عباد الله كلهم
عن نبيا عرب الاسلام والعجم	ينمي إلى ذروة الدين التي قصرت
كفر وقربهم منجى ومعتصم	من معشراً حبه دين وبغضهم
العرب تعرف من أنكرت والعجم	وليس قولكم من هذا بضائه

*This is he whose ability the valley (of Makkah) recognizes; he is known by the (Sacred) House, and the Holy sanctuary, and the lands outside the sanctuary.*

*When the Quraysh saw him, their spokesman said; Liberality terminates at the outstanding qualities of this (man).*

*This is the son of Fāṭimah if you are unaware; his grandfather, the seal of prophethood.*

*If the pious were gathered he would be their leader; the best of those that reside on the earth.*

*This is the son of the best of Allah's servants; This is the pure pious man, the pure eminent man.*

*He belongs to the top of glory which the Arabs of Islam and non-Arabs fall short of reaching.*

*He is from the people whose love is religion, whose hate is unbelief, whose approach is refuge and protection.*

*Your words, "Who is this?" do not harm him. All the Arabs and non-Arabs recognise him whom you deny.*

This poem was an answer to every such man who claims ignorance of such august personalities and scholars of repute. Al-Farazdaq complied what was the translation of love for the Ahl al-Bayt.

والحب يقتل احيانا بلا قود	ترى المحبين صرعى في ديارهم
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*You see the lovers strewn in their homes; love kills, at times without cause.*

From amongst his sons are, Muḥammad al-Bāqir, ‘Abd Allāh al-Bāhir, ‘Umar al-Ashraf, Zayd, Ḥusayn al-Asghar, ‘Alī ibn ‘Alī al-Ḥusayn, ‘Abd al-Raḥmān, Muḥammad al-Asghar, Qāsim, ‘Īsā, Sulaymān, ‘Abd Allāh al-Asghar, and Dāwūd. He had eight daughters, Khadījah who was married to Muḥammad ibn ‘Umar al-Aṭraf, Umm al-Ḥusayn, ‘Abdah, Fāṭimah, Umm Kulthūm, ‘Ulayyah, and Zaynab.<sup>1</sup>

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1 *Al-Shajarah al-Mubārakah*, pg.20.



## Zayd ibn 'Alī ibn Ḥusayn

Respecting people relative to their stature and revering the noble of history is worship in its own right. The noblest of men to have walked this earth are the Ahl al-Bayt, the family of Rasūlullāh ﷺ. Our faith dictates we remember their virtue and accomplishments together with honouring their memories. It is unfortunate that we find the average Muslim today knowing more about western celebrities than the stalwarts of the Islamic cause who shed blood ensuring the spread of this divine creed. Correcting this mentality and fulfilling this societal gap was one of the leading reasons in authoring these chapters. Chapters of the august personalities from the Ahl al-Bayt. This chapter seeks to take a glimpse in the life of an eminent individual, Zayd ibn 'Alī ibn Ḥusayn.

Zayd was one of the sons of Zayn al 'Ābidīn 'Alī ibn al-Ḥusayn ibn 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib ﷺ. This brother of the famed Muḥammad al-Bāqir was born around the eightieth year of the hijrah in the Hāshimī family. His father, the inheritor of the knowledge of his grandfather and granduncles, Ḥusayn, Ḥasan and Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥanafiyah ﷺ saw to his upbringing amid knowledge and sublime character.

He has narrated aḥādīth from his father, Zayn al 'Ābidīn, his brother, Muḥammad al-Bāqir, and 'Urwah ibn Zubayr. Many sat under his tutorship gaining knowledge. Ja'far al-Ṣādiq, Shu'bah, Fuḍayl ibn Marzūq, Muṭṭalib ibn Ziyād, Sa'īd ibn Khuthaym, Ibn Abī Zinād and many others sought knowledge from this great sage. He had taken leaps in amassing knowledge. Imām Abū Ḥanīfah attests to his status with the following:

ما رأيت في زمانه أفقه منه ولا أسرع جوابا ولا أبين قولا

I have not seen anyone in his era with deeper understanding, more witty, or vibrant in speech.<sup>1</sup>

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1 *Al-A'lām li al-Zarkalī*, vol. 3 pg. 59.

An indication to his high pedigree in the sciences by the greatest scholar of Iraq!

In the 94th year of the hijrah his father passed away whilst he was a young lad of fourteen. Zayd then went under the guardianship of his brother, Muḥammad al-Bāqir, who loved him deeply and saw to his needs as a loving father would. As he grew he continued seeking knowledge from the scholars of the Ahl al-Bayt in his era. His thirst for knowledge not quenched he began travelling the breadth of the earth in search of the divine sciences. Though Madīnah was a centre of learning he travelled beyond, going to Iraq and as such meeting its scholars and benefiting from them. Al-Dhahabī writes regarding him, “He was a man of great knowledge and piety. A lapse in judgment resulted in his martyrdom.”<sup>1</sup> The incident of his martyrdom will be discussed shortly, Allah willing.

The celebrated scholar of the Ahl al-Bayt and his student, Ja‘far al-Ṣādiq, says:

كان والله أقرأنا لكتاب الله وأفتقنا في دين الله وأوصلنا للرحم ما تركنا وفينا مثله

By Allah! He was the most well versed amongst us in the sciences of the Qur’ān, held deep understanding of the faith, and strove to join family ties.

The likes of him have not succeeded him.<sup>2</sup>

He was opinionated in the fields of jurisprudence and politics as he was a master theologian and scholar. A leader holding the torch of guidance. Abū Zuhrah says, “Zayd was the first Imām (leader) from the Ahl al-Bayt after Ḥusayn رضي الله عنه. He would call people towards his opinions and envisioning novel methods of da‘wah.”<sup>3</sup>

As I read and researched the life of this great man, what really struck home was his quality of sincerity and truthfulness. His faith, speech, actions, and stances all

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1 *Siyar A‘lām al-Nubalā’*, vol. 5 pg. 389.

2 *Siyar A‘lām al-Nubalā’*, vol. 5 pg. 390.

3 *Al-Imām Zayd*, Abū Zuhrah رضي الله عنه.

dripped with sincerity. This inner quality affected his outer appearance as well, as contemporaries would say:

كنت إذا رأيت زيد بن علي رأيت أسارير النور في وجهه

Whenever I cast a glance at Zayd ibn ‘Alī, I would perceive divine light emanating from his features.<sup>1</sup>

He was affixed to the Qur’ān, continuously reciting it and pondering over its meanings. The running theme in his life was concern for the ummah at large. His concern was to work towards achieving unity in the ummah together with seeing to the needs of the people in his era.

He would say to those around him, “Remove yourselves from disgrace and rise to honour. Leave your miserable state and attain good fortune. Eradicate feebleness and come unto glory.”

This was the train of thought amongst the Ahl al-Bayt. Unifying the ummah, their words and strength. ‘Abd Allāh ibn Muslim ibn Bābak, a companion of his mentions the following:

We travelled to Makkah with Zayd ibn ‘Alī. As the night grew dark and the stars became bright he said to me, “Do you see the bright stars of the Pleiades? Do you think anyone could reach it?” I replied in the negative. He said “By Allah! I wish to grab it and bring it to earth if that’s what it takes to unify the ummah of Rasūlullāh ﷺ!”<sup>2</sup>

هذا الثناء الذي ما صاغه كلم	وها هو المجد عند الباب يزدهم
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*Words cannot justify his praise; this is majesty personified.*

1 This quote is attributed to Khaṣīb al-Wābīshī. See *Maqātil al-Ṭālibiyyīn*, pg. 36.

2 *Al-Murtaḍā li al-Nadwī*, pg. 229 from *Maqātil al-Ṭālibiyyīn*, pg. 129.

Subhān Allāh! Hopes and desires of the stuff dreams are made off. These are the lessons left for us by the Ahl al-Bayt. Their dreams were of unity and love. O lover of the Ahl al-Bayt, this is their path and guidance.

The last and perhaps most challenging part of the life of this great leader was his martyrdom and the events that led to it. Some ungodly men whispered into the ears of Hishām ibn ‘Abd al-Malik that Zayd ibn ‘Alī intended starting a rebellion. He was summoned to the court and asked to face these allegations. Zayd said that they were not true, however Hishām refused to believe him.

Zayd said, “Would you like me then to take an oath by Allah on my innocence?”

Hishām replied, “Even if you do take an oath I will not believe you.”

Zayd, “You are not greater than Allah, that you refuse to accept testimony given by his name.”

Hishām became angry and told him to leave. Zayd promised that he would see him again in a manner not pleasing to him. The people of Kūfah then came to him pledging their allegiance at his hand. Unfortunately, he accepted their word and prepared for battle. The governor of Iraq faced him with his army. Zayd was martyred in this battle and then crucified for four years!

Al-Dhahabī says, “He went to battle on a complication and was martyred. If only he had not done so.”<sup>1</sup>

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1 *Siyar A‘lām al-Nubalā’*, vol. 5 pg. 391.

## Muḥammad al-Bāqir

A noble descendant of the Prophet ﷺ and an eminent figure of history. The sweet scent of his sublime character and the piercing light of his knowledge follows us into this chapter. Muḥammad al-Bāqir ibn Zayn al-‘Ābidīn ‘Alī ibn Ḥusayn ibn ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ. I ask of you dear reader to read this chapter with an attentive heart. This Imām deserves a place deep in your heart and soul.

He was born in the 56th year of the hijrah in the city of the Prophet ﷺ, Madīnah Munawwarah. He was an ardent worshiper of Allah ﷻ. His views in the divine sciences, particularly in the exegesis of the Qur’ān is well noted and referenced by scholars of the past and present. He is counted amongst the great scholars in the era of the Tābi‘īn. He is an authority in Islamic law and lines up with the great lawmakers in Islamic history. An avid reciter of the Qur’ān. The scholars of ḥadīth unanimously accept him as strong and trustworthy, one who can be trusted upon in establishing laws based on his narrations. Giants of knowledge in his era would sit at his feet as students and would perceive their need of his expertise. His title, *Bāqir* (cleaver) was an attestation to him having cleaved open the metaphorical body of knowledge, taking out its secrets and wisdoms.

The poet says:

يا باقر العلم لأهل التقى	وخير من لبي على الأجل
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*O the cleaver of knowledge for people devout, the best to raise Talbiyah over the plains.<sup>1</sup>*

Together with having attained tremendous amounts of knowledge, he was a devout worshipper who practiced abstention from worldly riches. He was truly, a leader of the people of the monotheistic faith. He would perform one hundred and fifty units of prayer in a day and night.<sup>2</sup> He did not take solace in his lineage

1 *Tārīkh Dimashq*, vol. 45 pg. 271.

2 *Tārīkh al-Islām*, vol. 7 pg. 464.

nor did he use it as a means of being lax. Rather he doubled his efforts and lived as an ascetic. These words would often be on his lips, “This world is a conveyance that I have alighted upon or a garment that I have worn.”<sup>1</sup>

Al-Dhahabī says, “He is of those special ones who managed to master the art of reconciling between knowledge and worship, power and nobility, poise and confidence, and was worthy of khilāfah.”<sup>2</sup>

Muḥammad al-Bāqir married into the family of Abū Bakr رضي الله عنه. His wife is Umm Farwah bint al-Qāsim ibn Muḥammad ibn Abī Bakr رضي الله عنه. Whilst going through the pangs of death he said, “O Allah, Abū Bakr and ‘Umar رضي الله عنه are my forerunners. If there is anything besides love for them in my heart, then deprive me of prophetic intercession.”<sup>3</sup>

The reverence he had attached to Abū Bakr and ‘Umar رضي الله عنه is narrated in traditions that are many and successive, contrary to the false propaganda emerging from Iraq. He once said to Jābir:

O Jābir news has reached me of the people in Iraq who claim to love us harbour ill feelings towards Abū Bakr and ‘Umar رضي الله عنه. They believe that I have instructed them so. Let it reach their ears and hearts, I absolve myself of their claims. By the being in whose hand the life of Muḥammad lies! If it was not for my prayer and seeking forgiveness on the behalf of Abū Bakr and ‘Umar رضي الله عنه, I would not attain the intercession of Muḥammad صلى الله عليه وسلم. Surely those that are unaware of their status are enemies of Allah.<sup>4</sup> [In another statement he says]: Let the people of Kūfah know, I absolve myself from him who harbours ill feelings towards Abū Bakr and ‘Umar رضي الله عنه.<sup>5</sup>

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1 *Ḥilyat al-Awliyā’*, vol. 3 pg. 182; Ibn Abī al-Dunyā Dhamm al-Dunyā, 385; *Siyar A’lām al-Nubalā’*, vol. 4 pg. 405.

2 *Siyar A’lām al-Nubalā’*, vol. 4 pg. 402.

3 *Tārīkh Dimashq*, vol. 45 pg. 286.

4 *Ḥilyah al-Awliyā’*, vol.3 pg. 185.

5 *Ibid.*

Dear reader, though Imām Bāqir had such a grand standing, he was extremely humble. He would despise the haughty and say, “The amount of pride a person has in his heart is relative to the amount of intelligence snatched from his mind.”<sup>1</sup> His level of patience and contentment with the decision of Allah ﷻ too is worthy mention. His son once fell ill, which he dealt with by crying unto Allah ﷻ, however as soon as his child had passed away he immediately discontinued crying and displayed patience. When he was asked about this strange behaviour he said, “When he fell ill I prayed for him, once he had passed away I did not oppose Allah ﷻ in that which he loved. I was patient and content.”

The life of Imām Bāqir and by extension the lives of the Ahl al-Bayt are like guiding stars for the lost traveller. Their lives are embodiments of sublime character, high aspirations, and respect. Who knows not of Muḥammad al-Bāqir has been left oblivious of a great man. How can one be unaware of a man who has an entire era of history dedicated to him by way of books and journals. He is a guide for the people of abstinence, the light of the authorities in Islamic law, and the role model for those to come after.

Mālik ibn A‘yun says:

كانت قریش عليه عيالا	اذا طلب الناس علم القرآن
نلت بذالك فرعا طوالا	وان قيل ان ابن بنت الرسول
جبال تورث علما حبالا	تحوم تهلل للمدلجين

*When people seek knowledge of the divine book; they are at lost without the Quraysh.*

*If it were said, the grandson of the prophet; took great strides in the sciences,*

*Those that seek out knowledge would swarm; this luminary upon the mountain of knowledge.<sup>2</sup>*

1 Ibid; Ibn Abī al-Dunyā: *Al-Tawādu‘ wa al-Khumūl*, pg. 226.

2 *Tārīkh Dimashq*, vol. 54 pg. 271.

Muḥammad al-Bāqir distinguished himself from others by virtue of his devotion to praying before Allah *سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى*. His father Imām Zayn al ‘Ābidīn would often say:

O Allah, you say:

وَإِذْ تَأَذَّنَ رَبُّكُمْ لَئِن شَكَرْتُمْ لَأَزِيدَنَّكُمْ وَلَئِن كَفَرْتُمْ إِنَّ عَذَابِي لَشَدِيدٌ

*And [remember] when your Lord proclaimed, ‘If you are grateful, I will surely increase you [in favour]; but if you deny, indeed, My punishment is severe<sup>1</sup>*

And you say:

وَقَالَ رَبُّكُمْ ادْعُونِي أَسْتَجِبْ لَكُمْ إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يَسْتَكْبِرُونَ عَنْ عِبَادَتِي سَيَدْخُلُونَ جَهَنَّمَ دَاخِرِينَ

*And your Lord says, “Call upon Me; I will respond to you.” Indeed, those who disdain My worship will enter Hell [rendered] contemptible.<sup>2</sup>*

You have thus attached asking of you a worship and not asking of you a sign of pride, which will guarantee a person’s entry into hell.<sup>3</sup>

Where are the Muslims of today in relation to their asking of and begging to Allah *سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى*? Where are the ill, widowed, and depressed? Are they praying to Allah *سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى*?

Muḥammad al-Bāqir was clear in his stance that du‘ā is the best form of worship.<sup>4</sup> He was once asked, “What type of worship is the most superior?” He replied:

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1 Sūrah Ibrāhīm: 7.

2 Sūrah al-Ghāfir: 60.

3 *Al-ṣaḥīfah al-Sajjādiyyah*, pg. 294.

4 *Al-Wasāil*, chapter on selecting Du‘ā over other forms of desirable worship, vol. 7 pg. 30.



There is nothing more noble in the sight of Allah than a person asking of him what Allah has by him. And there is nothing more despicable in the sight of Allah than one who is too proud to worship and ask of him.<sup>1</sup>

Why is it that we do not turn to Allah *سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى* in du‘ā? We complain of our worries to people not raising our hands to Allah *سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى*. We exhaust all other avenues before turning our attention to the creator of the skies and earth, one who does not turn back hands that are raised to him empty handed. Ponder over the saying of Imām Bāqir, “There is nothing more superior in the sight of Allah than asking of him.”

It is no wonder than that he would sincerely beg of Allah *سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى* in the last portion of the night when men are asleep, knowing full well that this act of his is a worship like none other. He would beg in sweet words and rhythms to his creator:

اللهم لك الحمد يا رب أنت نور السماوات والأرض فلك الحمد وأنت قوام السماوات والأرض فلك الحمد وأنت جمال السماوات والأرض فلك الحمد وأنت صريخ المستصرخين فلك الحمد وأنت غياث المستغيثين فلك الحمد وأنت تجيب دعوة المضطرين فلك الحمد وأنت أرحم الراحمين فلك الحمد اللهم بك تنزل كل حاجة فلك الحمد وبك يا إلهي أنزلت حوائجي الليلة فاقضها لي يا قاضي الحوائج اللهم أنت الحق وقولك الحق ووعدك الحق وأنت ملك الحق أشهد أن لقائك الحق وأن الساعة آتية لا ريب فيها وأنت تبعث من في القبور اللهم لك أسلمت وبك آمنت و عليك توكلت وبك خاصمت وإليك حاكمت فاغفر لي ما قدمت وأخرت وأسرت وأعلنت إنك الحي الذي لا إله إلا أنت

All praise is to You my Sustainer the Light of the heavens and earth; praise is to You, the Keeper of the heavens and earth; praise is to You, the Beautifier of the heavens and earth; praise is to You, the Object of the caller's; praise is to You, the Helper of the helpless; praise is to You, the Answerer to the coerced; praise is to you, the Most Merciful of those who show mercy; praise is to You. O Allah, all needs are fulfilled through You; praise is to You, to You I present my needs of this night I beg of You to

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1 'Awālī al-Laālī, vol. 4 pg. 19; al-Kāfī, vol. 2 pg. 466, Book of Du‘ā, what should one say in the morning and evening.

fulfil my needs. O Allah, You are true, Your Word is true, Your promise is true, You are the true Supreme Being. I bear witness that meeting You is true and the Last Day is true in which there is no doubt. You will resurrect the dwellers of the grave. O Allah, I submit to You, believe in You, place my trust in You, fight by You, and judge through You. Forgive my past and future sins, those committed openly and those committed in secret. You are truly alive, there is no deity besides You.<sup>1</sup>

With these words of praise Muḥammad al-Bāqir would call unto his Lord. When dawn would rise he would say:

The morning has come, and my Lord is praiseworthy. The morning has come and do not ascribe partners to Him, nor do I beseech anyone but Him. Besides him no one is my Helper.<sup>2</sup>

These are some pearls from the life of this noble saint. Character and mannerisms that mirror those of prophethood, inherited by Imām al-Bāqir from his grandfather Rasūlullāh ﷺ. This was his life until he bid farewell to this temporary abode in the year 114 A.H. in Madīnah having instilled these qualities into his son, Ja‘far al-Ṣādiq.

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1 *Al-Kāfi*, vol. 2 pg. 388

2 *Ibid.*

## Ja'far al-Şādiq

Allah ﷻ paid tribute to his Prophet ﷺ by saying:

وَإِنَّكَ لَعَلَىٰ خُلُقٍ عَظِيمٍ

*And indeed, you are of a great moral character.*<sup>1</sup>

This praise was an indication to the sublime character traits possessed by Rasūlullāh ﷺ and the importance of adopting such by all others. Under the general meaning of this comes the trait of continuously seeking out the truth. Allah ﷻ commands us:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَكُونُوا مَعَ الصَّادِقِينَ

*O you who have believed, fear Allah and be with those who are true.*

Falling under the banner of ‘those who are true’ is whom we speak of today. Abū ‘Abd Allāh Ja’far al-Şādiq al-Qurashī al-Hāshimī al-‘Alawī al-Madanī. An eminent personality and son of Muḥammad al-Bāqir ibn Zayn al-Ābidīn ‘Alī ibn Ḥusayn ibn ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib رضي الله عنه. So, by extension he is the son of Fāṭimah رضي الله عنها, daughter of Rasūlullāh ﷺ.

نورا و من فلق الصباح ضياء

نسب كان عليه من بدر الدجى

*Lineage upon which shines the full moon; lustres with divine light as dawn breaks.*

When the grandfather of Ja’far al-Şādiq saw that his son, Muḥammad al-Bāqir, had reached the beginning of his youth with a fervour for knowledge and abstinence, he intended marrying him to a pious spouse. His eye fell on Umm Farwah bint al-Qāsim ibn Muḥammad ibn Abī Bakr رضي الله عنه. Searching for a true partner he looked

1 Sūrah al-Qalam: 4.

at the house of truth, the house of Ṣiddīq رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ. He spoke to his son, Muḥammad al-Bāqir, regarding the relation to which he expressed jubilation. After the union was sanctified and he went to see his new bride, he found her to be a woman of knowledge. She had inherited her fathers' knowledge, one of the seven master theologians of Madīnah who had been under the tutelage of 'Ā'ishah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا. Knowledge passed down by luminaries. It is no wonder he would say, "I am the grandson of Abū Bakr in relation and knowledge."<sup>1</sup>

Ja'far al-Ṣādiq would take pride in the connection he shared with Abū Bakr رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ. The love he had for the Khalīfah would shine through when he would come to know of someone speaking ill of him.

Sālim Ibn Abī Ḥafṣah says:

Ja'far once said to me, O Sālim, you know well Abū Bakr رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ is my grandfather, can one speak ill of their own grandfather? The intercession of my Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ can never be attained by me unless I love Abū Bakr and 'Umar رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمَا together with absolving myself from those who harbour ill towards them.<sup>2</sup>

The title of al-Ṣiddīq was given to Abū Bakr رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ just as the title of al-Ṣādiq was given to Ja'far. They both shared a common peculiarity. Abū Bakr رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ had never belied Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ and Ja'far was never known to utter a falsity in his life.

Imām Ja'far al-Ṣādiq was born in the 80th year of the hijrah in Madīnah and held the great fortune of seeing the Ṣaḥābah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ. He is counted amongst the great Tābi'īn and scholars of Madīnah. The city of his birth and death. He had reached the epitome of knowledge which is why great scholars would narrate from him

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1 *Kashf al-Ghummah*, vol. 2 pg. 374; *Tahdhīb al-Kamāl*, vol. 5 pg. 575; *Tadhkirat al-Ḥuffādh*, vol. 1 pg. 166.

2 *Musnad Imām Aḥmad fi Faḍā'il al-Ṣaḥābah*, 176; *Sunnah li 'Abd Allāh ibn al-Imām Aḥmad*, vol. 2 pg. 558; *Uṣūl I'tiqād Ahl al-Sunnah*, vol. 7 pg. 1301; *Siyar A'lām al-Nubalā'*, vol. 6 pgs. 258/259; *Tārīkh al-Islām*, vol. 1 pg. 1054 with a sound chain of narration.

and the critical evaluators of narrators consider him strong and trustworthy. When Imām Abū Ḥanīfah was asked whom he had encountered with the deepest understanding, he replied Ja'far ibn Muḥammad.<sup>1</sup>

One wonders at the accomplishments of this august personality that erudite scholars found it an honour to pay tribute to him. His personality an embodiment of awe, his knowledge an ocean, and his lineage that of the prophets. 'Amr ibn Abī al-Miqdām says, "When I would look at Ja'far ibn Muḥammad, I could clearly see his prophetic lineage."<sup>2</sup>

His teachers played a major role in his intricate knowledge of the sciences. They were masters in their fields. He acquired knowledge from his father Muḥammad al-Bāqir, his grandfather Qāsīm ibn Muḥammad, 'Ubayd Allāh ibn Abī Rafī', 'Aṭā ibn Abī Rabāḥ, Muḥammad ibn Munkadir, Zuhri, and others. He narrates from 'Urwah ibn Zubayr who was a special student of his aunt, 'Ā'ishah رضي الله عنها. He therefore had gathered the knowledge of 'Ā'ishah رضي الله عنها via 'Urwah as well.

His students were countless and of those that became leaders in their own right here are many. However here are some of those that studied under his tutelage, his son Mūsā al-Kāzīm, Yaḥyā ibn Sa'īd al-Anṣārī, Abān ibn Taghlib, Ibn Jurayj, Sufyān, Shu'bah, Mālik, Ismā'īl ibn Ja'far, Yaḥyā al-Qaṭṭān, Sufyān ibn 'Uyaynah, and others.

Ja'far al-Ṣādiq has narrated a particularly lengthy ḥadīth which describes the pilgrimage of Rasūlullāh صلى الله عليه وسلم as Jābir رضي الله عنه had witnessed it. Imām Muslim has included this narration in his authentic compilation.<sup>3</sup>

Ja'far al-Ṣādiq though an Imām in the sciences was down to earth and humble as though the following verse was always at the top of his mind:

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1 *Siyar A'lām al-Nubalā'*, vol. 6 pgs. 258.

2 *Al-Kāmil*, Ibn 'Adī, vol. 2 pg. 132; *Ḥilyat al-Awliyā'*, vol. 3 pg. 193.

3 *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, 1218.

وَمَا أُوتِيتُمْ مِّنَ الْعِلْمِ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا

*And mankind have not been given of knowledge except a little.*<sup>1</sup>

This has always been the true hallmark of true scholars and the advice of prophets and pious. Ayyūb says, “I heard Ja’far saying ‘I do not know all that you ask me, others are superior in knowledge to me.’”<sup>2</sup> Humility through and through. It was this humility of his that raised his rank and spread his fame throughout the earth. The narration is clear:

من تواضع لله رفعه الله

Whoever humbles himself for the sake of Allah, will be elevated by Allah.<sup>3</sup>

Together with his humility his generosity was famed. Hayyāj ibn Biṣṭām says, “He would spend so much in charity that nothing would remain for his family.”<sup>4</sup>

لجَاد بِهَا فَلْيَتَّقِ اللَّهَ سَائِلَهُ	وَلَوْ لَمْ يَجِدْ مِنْ مَالِهِ غَيْرَ نَفْسِهِ
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*If there was nothing left but his life, he would give that too, fear Allah, O beggar.*

Just as his heart was big, so too was it clean. Though he was truthful to no end, lies were fabricated against him just as was done to his father and grandfather. He was not unaware of this and was quoted saying, “People are dead set on fabricating lies against us.”<sup>5</sup> It is imperative for us to know that some of what has been attributed to him are nothing short of lies. Not everything we read with his name attached to it guarantees its authenticity. Research and investigation through the proper channels are a must to confirm the veracity of such statements.

1 Sūrah al-Isrā’: 85

2 *Siyar A’lām al-Nubalā’* vol. 6 pg. 261.

3 *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, 4689.

4 *Ḥilyat al-Awliyā’*, vol. 3 pg. 194.

5 *Biḥār al-Anwār* of al-Majlisī, vol. 2 pg. 246.

Extremists rose and attributing things to the Ahl al-Bayt which can only be attributed to Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى. They attributed the qualities of giving life and death, harm and benefit, and the ability to control natural phenomena to them. Other erroneous beliefs they held were that the Ahl al-Bayt had knowledge of the unseen, knowing when they will die, and death only comes through their permission.

Imām Ja'far al-Ṣādiq stood against this barrage of falsities, halting this dam of misguidance.

فوالله ما نحن إلا عبيد الذي خلقنا واصطفانا وما نقدر على ضرر ولا نفع وإن رحمتنا فبرحمته وإن عذبتنا فبذنوبنا والله ما لنا على الله من حجة ولا معنا من الله براءة وإنما لميتون ومقبورون ومنشرون ومبعوثون وموقوفون ومسؤولون

By Allah! We are the slaves of the Being Who created us. We do not have power to cause harm or benefit. If we are blessed it is through His mercy and if we are punished it is through our sins. We have no might against Allah, nor are we independent of Him. We will die, be buried, resurrected, made to stand before Him, and be questioned. I make you witnesses that I am a man, a descendant of Rasūlullāh عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ and have nowhere to turn but to Allah. If I obey Him he will shower His mercies upon me and if I disobey Him he will punish me. <sup>1</sup>

Ja'far al-Ṣādiq held a very close link to Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى, whom he fully placed his trust in. He would continuously engage in Du'ā, beseeching Him. This saying of his speaks volumes of his deep insight:

ان الله تبارك وتعالى يعلم ما يريد العبد إذا دعا ولكنّه يحبّ أن تبتّ إليه الحوائج

Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى knows what a slave wants when he prays to Him, He however loves that the slave pours his heart out to Him.<sup>2</sup>

1 *Bihār al-Anwār*, vol. 25 pg. 289; *Rijāl al-Kashī*, 225; *Mu'jam Rijāl al-Ḥadīth*, vol. 19 pg. 301.

2 *'Awālī al-Laālī*, vol. 4 pg. 20.

We conclude this chapter with a Du'ā of his:

اللهم احرسني بعينك التي لا تنام واكنفني بركنك الذي لا يرام واحفظني بقدرتك علي ولا تهلكني وأنت رجائي رب كم من نعمة أنعمت بها علي قل لك عندها شكري وكم من بلية ابتليتني بها قل لك عندها صبري فيا من قل عند نعمته شكري فلم يحرمني ويا من قل عند بليته صبري فلم يخذلني ويا من رأني علي المعاصي فلم يفضحني ويا ذا النعماء التي لا تحصى أبدا ويا ذا المعروف الذي لا ينقضي أبدا أعني على ديني بدنيا وعلى آخرتي بتقوى يا من لا تضره الذنوب ولا تنقصه المغفرة اغفر لي ما لا يضرك وأعطني ما لا ينقصك يا وهاب أسألك فرجا قريبا وصبرا جميلا والعافية من جميع البلايا وشكر العافية

O Allah keep me in check with your Eye that never sleeps, surround me with Your impenetrable forces, protect Me with the power You hold over me. Do not destroy Me, You are my hope. My Lord, how many favours You have bestowed upon me that I have not thanked You for and how many trials You have afflicted me with where I haven't displayed patience. O the One who hasn't deprived me despite my ingratitude nor despised me despite my impatience. O the One who has seen me sinning and has not punished me. O the One of innumerable favours. O the One who showers goodness without end. Assist me in my faith by the world and my hereafter by taqwā. O the One who sins do not harm nor reduce His forgiveness. Forgive me as that will not harm You and grant me as that will not decrease Your treasures. O the Best of Givers, I ask of comfort and patience together with ease from all trials and gratitude on that.<sup>1</sup>

May Allah accept. Such sweet words in the calm of the night as a slave beseeches his Master. This is what Ja'far al-Ṣādiq has taught us by way of truth and sincerity in Du'ā to the only Lord, Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى.

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1 Ibn Abī al-Dunyā in *Al-Farj ba'd al-Shiddah*, vol. 1 pg. 45; *Tārīkh Dimashq*.



## Mūsā al-Kāzim

Allah ﷻ says in his holy book:

إِنَّمَا يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ لِيُذْهِبَ عَنْكُمُ الرِّجْسَ أَهْلَ الْبَيْتِ وَيُطَهِّرَكُمْ تَطْهِيرًا

*Allah intends only to remove from you the impurity [of sin], O people of the [Prophet's] household, and to purify you with [extensive] purification.*<sup>1</sup>

Allah ﷻ has most definitely purified the Ahl al-Bayt and adorned the young and old with sublime character. They illuminated the path for those wishing to tread the path to Allah ﷻ. Dear reader, if you are searching for role models that had perfect character, an undeniably faultless moral compass, and knowledge of the sages then take to this group of noble men and women of the Ahl al-Bayt, you will find what you search for.

Mūsā al-Kāzim ibn Ja'far al-Ṣādiq ibn Muḥammad al-Bāqir ibn Zayn al 'Ābidīn 'Alī ibn Ḥusayn ibn 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib عليه السلام is one of those saintly, knowledgeable, and revered of the Ahl al-Bayt whose life adorns the pages of this chapter.

The title *al-Kāzim* (Controller of anger) was given to him due to his intense will to do good to others by adopting patience, swallowing his anger, and repaying evil with good.

There was a man who repeatedly caused harm to him. His companions wished to attack him, but he did not allow them to do so. He then went to the man's farm. When the man saw Mūsā al-Kāzim, he cried out to him not to tread on his crops.

He approached the farmer and kindly asked, "How much did you spend on cultivating your crops?"

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1 Sūrah al-Aḥzāb: 33.

The man replied, “100 dīnārs.”

He then asked, “How much will you benefit from the farm?”

The man said, “I do not have the knowledge of the hidden.”

Mūsā al-Kāẓim asked, “How much do you hope to benefit?”

The man replied, “200 dīnārs.”

The Imām gave 300 dīnārs to him and said, “These 300 are yours and keep your crops as well.”

The man, speechless stood before Mūsā al-Kāẓim and kissed his forehead. He then said, “Allah ﷻ knows best where he places his message.” This man would thereafter continuously pray for him. Mūsā al-Kāẓim then turned his attention to his companions and posed a rhetorical question to them asking which was better, what they had intended doing to the man or what he achieved by way of reconciliation. Al-Dhahabī, after quoting this incident says, “If this incident is authentic, it is the epitome of forbearance and forgiveness.”<sup>1</sup>

لا يذهب العرف بين الله و بين الناس	من يفعل الخير لا يعدم جوازيه
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*Good acts will attract returns; from Allah ﷻ and from man.*

Yaḥyā ibn al Ḥasan says, “Mūsā al-Kāẓim was known as a pious man due to his worship and tireless devotions.”<sup>2</sup> Al-Dhahabī has mentioned an incident of him entering the masjid of Rasūlullāh ﷺ at the beginning of the night, prostrating and praying thus, “My sins are great, forgive me from your side, O the One that forgives.” He continued praying in this manner till the morning.<sup>3</sup>

1 *Siyar A'lām al-Nubalā'*, vol. 6 pg. 272.

2 *Ibid.*

3 *Ibid.*

He was a leader of the Banū Hashim in his era, well known for his devotions and knowledge. He was born at Abwā, a place near Madīnah and resided in Madīnah. His contribution to knowledge can be identified by his narrations from his father, ‘Abd Allāh ibn Dīnār, ‘Abd al-Malik ibn Qudāmah and others which are recorded in books such as *Jāmi‘ al-Tirmidhī* and *Sunan ibn Mājah*.

Together with possessing a great amount of piety, he would constantly fast during the days and stand during the night observing the night prayer vigil, crying and beseeching his Creator. Besides these inordinate virtues, he was the grandson of Rasūlullāh ﷺ thereby being part of the Ahl al-Bayt. Once Hārūn al-Rashīd was visiting Madīnah. He went to the grave of the prophet—with him was Mūsā al-Kāẓim—and said, “My greetings and salutations to you, O Rasūlullāh, O cousin [Hārūn al-Rashīd was a descendant of ‘Abbās رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ, the uncle of Rasūlullāh ﷺ].” Mūsā al-Kāẓim then saluted the grave of the Prophet ﷺ with the words, “My greetings and salutations to you. O father.” Subhān Allāh! If Hārūn al-Rashīd intended boasting then Mūsā al-Kāẓim was more worthy of it. He is the grandson of Rasūlullāh ﷺ and he in turn unto him like a father. Hārūn al-Rashīd though disconcerted, asserted the right of Mūsā al-Kāẓim saying, “O Abū al-Ḥasan, this truly is worth boasting.”<sup>1</sup>

This Imām, notwithstanding his great status, was arrested and jailed on the false accusation of people wanting to pledge allegiance at his hands. Though he distanced himself from any claim to leadership, the seat of khilāfah was adamant on imprisoning him. ‘Ammār ibn Abān says, “Mūsā al-Kāẓim was imprisoned at Sindī ibn Shāhik who had his sister see to his needs upon her request. She relates his amazing devotions:

When Mūsā al-Kāẓim would conclude the night prayer he would engage himself in Du‘ā and remembrance of Allah ﷻ till a portion of the night would lapse. He would then take to standing in prayer till he would conclude at Fajr. After Fajr he would sit and make dhikr till the sun had

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1 *Tārīkh al-Islam*, vol. 2 pg. 1416.

risen. After ablution and partaking of food he would wait till just before the sun reached its zenith and continue remembering Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى till the night. His days in prison were spent on worship. She would say, the people that have interfered with this man are losers.<sup>1</sup>

إذ لمولاهم أجاجوا البطونا	أفلح الزاهدون والعابدون
فمضى ليلاهم وهم ساهرونا	اسهروا الأعين العلييلة فيه

*The abstinent worshippers have succeeded; keeping themselves hungry for their Master.*

*Keeping awake at night; spending their nights without sleep for Him.*

Mūsā al-Kāẓim was the envy of the pious by way of his worship and charity. Worship is a crown on the head of a man amongst the pious slaves, worthier than the crown atop the heads of kings and rulers. When the inactive tire the worshippers tread on for their Lord.

Mūsā al-Kāẓim once sent a letter to the khalīfah, its words bearing the weight of his tears and laments, “Each day of difficulty I spend mirrors a day of ease you spend till we both will come to our last days, wherein the sedentary folk will despair.”<sup>2</sup>

May Allah have mercy on those souls who tired their bodies in his devotion till they tasted the sweetness thereof. Mūsā al-Kāẓim is a role model for us in sincerity of worship, charity, and ultimate trust in Allah سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى.

O Allah be pleased with the Ṣaḥābah, and the Ahl al-Bayt. O Allah we bear witness to our love for your Prophet صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ, his Ahl al-Bayt, Ṣaḥābah, and those that tread the path of your Beloved صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ.

1 *Siyar A'lām al-Nubalā'*, vol. 6 pg. 273.

2 *Tārīkh Baḡdad*, vol. 13 pg. 31; *Tahdhīb al-Kamāl*, vol. 29 pg. 50.

## Muḥammad ibn Idrīs al-Shāfi‘ī

A master theologian, poet of repute, and erudite scholar. One who managed to combine many sciences mastering them all. Well-read and studious together with being eloquent to no end.

He spent many days amongst the Banū Hudhayl tribe which had a deep impact on his development of Arabic in its purest form. His mastery in the tongue led him to be a point of reference for the speakers of the language. His is the Qurashī Imām, Muḥammad ibn Idrīs al-Shāfi‘ī رَحِمَهُ اللهُ. Abū ‘Ubayd says, “Al-Shāfi‘ī was a hub for seeking language.”

Aṣma‘ī says, “The poetry of the Banū Hudhayl was perfected by a youngster of the Quraysh, Muḥammad ibn Idrīs.”

Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal says, “Al-Shāfi‘ī was amongst the most eloquent, Imām Mālik would be pleased with his correct recitation of texts.”<sup>1</sup>

The scholar of his era, Muḥammad ibn Idrīs ibn ‘Abbās ibn ‘Uthmān ibn Shafi‘ ibn Sāib ibn ‘Ubayd ibn ‘Abd Yazīd ibn Hishām ibn ‘Abd al-Muṭṭalib ibn ‘Abd Manāf.<sup>2</sup> The supporter of prophetic traditions and the theologian of an entire school of thought. The descendant of Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ. He is famous by al-Shāfi‘ī attributing himself to his grandfather Shāfi‘.

He was born in Gaza, Palestine in the year 150 A.H, after his father had met his demise travelling with him and his mother from Makkah. His father passed away not knowing his son and leaving behind a pregnant wife. This scholar began his life as a poor orphan, moving back to Makkah with his mother at the age of two. He says regarding himself, “I was born in Gaza in the year 150 and was taken to Makkah at the age of two.”<sup>3</sup>

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1 *Al-‘Ilal wa Ma‘rifah al-Rijāl*, vol. 1 pg. 462; *Tārīkh Dimashq*, vol. 51 pg. 296.

2 *Ādāb al-Shāfi‘ī wa Manāqib*, pg. 38.

3 *Ḥilyat al-Awliyā’*, vol. 9 pg. 67; *Tārīkh Dimashq*, vol. 2 pg. 59.

He was nurtured in Makkah and gained mastery in archery hitting the target 9 times out of 10. He then turned his attention to the Arabic language which he attained excellence in. Not long after, Fiqh became beloved to him which he excelled his peers in. He memorized the Qur'an aged seven and learnt the Muwaṭṭa by heart aged ten.

Dear reader, have a look at our children at the same age, wasting their precious time in games and useless activities. If they do memorize anything, it is the lyrics to music or names of celebrities and sports players who are by no means role models for us!

Al-Shāfi'ī on the other hand embraced life with the Banū Hudhayl whose language remained pure, where he exerted his efforts in language. He then turned his attention to Fiqh and Aḥādīth, memorizing the Muwaṭṭa. Imām Mālik on an occasion says to him, "O Muḥammad fear Allah, you will have a bright future."<sup>1</sup>

Much is reported regarding his astounding intelligence and ability to memorize. It is said that when reading texts, he would cover the opposing page with his hand to lay confusion at bay as he would memorize anything he read. These unnatural abilities were put to use by him in the noblest of ways, studying divine knowledge.

He studied under Muslim ibn Khālīd, the Muftī, and Sufyān ibn 'Uyaynah amongst others in Makkah. Going to Madīnah he sought knowledge from Imām Mālik after which he travelled to Yemen ascending a position there. In the year 184 he set out to Iraq gathering the knowledge of its scholars.

He studied under Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥasan al-Shaybānī the venerated student of Imām Abū Ḥanīfah. He then went to Egypt learning and teaching the scholars, returning to Baghdad in the year 195. In this time span he became an Imām, formulating his own school of thought and authoring his book *al-Ḥujjah*. He then

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1 *Tārīkh Dimashq*, vol. 51 pg. 286.

returned to Egypt where he reviewed his opinions and retracted much that what was penned down in *al-Hujjah*.<sup>1</sup>

He authored and formulated the principles of fiqh and its branches, attracting many students. What stands out with regards to him is that he formulated and gathered the rulings of his own school of thought as opposed to others doing it after him. He is also thought to be the first to author in the field of ‘principles of fiqh’. This is quite clear in his book *Al-Risālah* which he authored and sent to ‘Abd al-Raḥmān ibn Maḥdī.

The life of this leading authority is filled with sacrifice, travelling from one city to the next in search for knowledge.

Al-Muzanī says, I heard Al-Shāfi‘ī saying:

من تعلم القرآن عظمت قيمته ومن نظر في الفقه نبل قدره. ومن كتب الحديث قويت حجته ومن نظر في اللغة رق طبعه ومن نظر في الحساب جزل رأيه ومن لم يصن نفسه لم ينفعه علمه

Whoever recites Qur’an, his value is amplified. Whoever records hadith, his proof is strengthened. Whoever learns jurisprudence, his status is ennobled. Whoever learns Arabic, his disposition becomes gentle. Whoever learns mathematics, his opinion will be copious. And whoever fails to defend his chastity will not benefit from his knowledge.<sup>2</sup>

Celebrated for his poetry, here are a few glimpses into his creativity weaving words together with ease. He says:

وما لزماننا عيب سوانا	نعيب زماننا والعيب فينا
ولو نطق الزمان لنا لهجانا	ونهبجو ذا الزمان بغير ذنب
ويأكل بعضنا بعض عيانا	وليس الذئب يأكل لحم ذئب

1 Verdicts are given according to the later view, only about 10 rulings are taken from the old as mentioned by al-Suyūṭī at the end of *al-Ashbāh wa al-Nazā’ir*.

2 *Manāqib al-Bayhaqī*, vol. 1 pg. 282; *Manāqib al-Rāzī*, pg. 70; *Ṭabaqāt al-Shafi’iyah*, pg. 32.

*We blame our time though we are to blame; No fault has time but only us.*

*We scold the time for all the shame; Had it a tongue, it would scold us.*

*Wolves do not eat wolves; yet here we are preying on each other.*

Abū Bakr al-Sibā'ī says, "I heard some of our teachers relating that many people criticised Al-Shāfi'ī due to his intense love for the Ahl al-Bayt, some going to the extent of linking him to the Rawāfiḍ! In reply he conjured the following couplets:<sup>1</sup>

واهتف بقاعد خيفها والناهض	قف بالمحصب من منى فاهتف بها
فليشهد الثقلان أني رافضي	إن كان رفضا حب آل محمد

*Pause shortly in the pebbled land toward Minā; like a roaring river, call upon them and say, "If Rafḍ means to love the Prophet's family, then let man and Jinn know that I am a Rafiḍi.*

A tribute to his sincerity and piety, Allah ﷻ intended his fiqh to be known and his school of thought to spread. In the Arab lands, Iraq, Egypt, Syria, Palestine, and other cities he stayed issuing verdicts and spreading knowledge till his demise in Egypt in the year 204 A.H.

Al-Muzanī says, "I came to Al-Shāfi'ī in his final sickness and asked him how he was on that morning." He said to me, "I wake as a traveller leaving this world, separating from my brothers, drinking from the cup of death, meeting the evil of my actions, and heading to Allah ﷻ. I do not know if my soul is headed to Jannah that I wish it well or to Jahannam that I seek to solace it." He then said:<sup>2</sup>

ولما قسا قلبي وضافت مذاهبي	جعلتُ الرجاء مني لعفوك سلما
تعاطمني ذنبي فلما قرنته	بعفوك ربي كان عفوك أعظما
فما زلت ذا عفوك عن الذنب لم تزل	تجود وتعفو منّي وتكرّما
إني لآتي الذنب أعرف قدره	وأعلم أن الله يعفو ترحما

1 *Hilyat al-Awliyā'*, vol. 9 pg. 152.

2 *Siyar A'lām al-Nubalā'*, vol. 10 pgs. 75/76.



*When my heart hardened, and my ways narrowed; My hope of Your forgiveness towards You was my approach.*

*My sins seem very great, yet when I compare it with your forgiveness; My Lord Your forgiveness was greater.*

*Yet, you forgive sins and still; generously and gracefully bestow and forgive.*

*I come with sins, knowing well how great; Yet I know Allah forgives from his mercy*

In this manner al-Shāfiʿī closed the chapter to his worldly life, filled with knowledge and nobility. His death marked a date of loss for this ummah. Many scholars, past and present, have authored books on his feats and virtues which this chapter is unable to condense. May Allah be pleased with him and enter him into Jannah.

## Epilogue and Lessons from the Lives of August Personalities

Our lives have been one for the past chapters, entangled in a web of love, wisdom and spiritual ascension. Discussing great stalwarts of the Ahl al-Bayt, lighting up these pages and so the pages of our history by their mention. Hereunder are some of the many lessons we take back with us from their lives as we turn the last pages of this book.

1. A true believer shows love for his faith and by defending it and giving his life for it. His life is always ready to be put on the line for Allah ﷻ and his Messenger ﷺ when called. His life holds no value in relation to the magnanimity of upholding the faith just as ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib رضي الله عنه had done the night of hijrah, and as Ḥamzah رضي الله عنه had done at Badr and Uḥud, and as Ja‘far al-Ṭayyār رضي الله عنه had done at Mu’tah. They showed what sincerity and true faith meant. As for the hypocrites and liars, their tongues are never in conformity with their hearts.
2. The importance of patience in the life of a Muslim. We learn from Ṣafiyyah رضي الله عنها the lesson of patiently facing hardships as she had done when faced with the martyred and mutilated body of Ḥamzah رضي الله عنه. All she said was, “I will display patience and hope for reward.”<sup>1</sup> The life of Zaynab bint ‘Alī teaches us the same. She was called ‘Mother of Hardships’ due to the intense difficulties she bore. She endured the death of her grandfather the Prophet ﷺ, her mother, father, brothers, sons, and many of her family at Karbalā’. She was patient and hoped for rewards. These qualities differentiate the normal from the great.
3. The importance given to acquiring knowledge, be it memorising the Qur’ān or attaining proficiency in the field of ḥadīth. Most of the prominent personalities had to some degree gained a good footing into the divine sciences such as ‘Alī, ‘Ā’ishah, Zayn al ‘Ābidīn, his son Zayd, Muḥammad al-

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1 Sīrah Ibn Hishām, vol. 3 pg. 612.

Bāqir, his son Ja‘far al-Ṣādiq, and the head of the Shāfi‘ī school of thought, Imām Muḥammad ibn Idrīs al-Shāfi‘ī.

4. They didn’t suffice on just talk. They acted upon the knowledge they had acquired becoming ascetics in worship and showing distaste to the paltry gains of this world. If their devotion of worship were to be discussed, it would encompass volumes.
5. The nobility of being a descendant of Rasūlullāh ﷺ is dependent on that person’s faith. Without faith there is no nobility. Allah ﷻ says:

إِنَّ أَكْرَمَكُمْ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ أَتْقَاكُمْ

*Indeed, the most noble of you in the sight of Allah is the most righteous of you.*<sup>1</sup>

Greatness cannot be attained solely through lineage. Good actions go hand in hand with it. Abū Lahab for example will not benefit from having ties to this pure family. It is rather imperative that we hate him for the hurt he caused Rasūlullāh ﷺ. He who has been gifted this lineage should not merely rely on it. After thanking Allah ﷻ he should hasten towards good actions. Whoever hasn’t been included in this lineage should ask of Allah ﷻ the love of the Ahl al-Bayt, as one will be with whom he loves, together with the ability to carry out pious deeds. Piety is the scale worthy of note in the sight of Allah.

6. The correct belief with regards to the Ahl al-Bayt is to love them all which includes the noble Consorts of Rasūlullāh ﷺ. Placing each on their respective level with justice, not by being blinded by emotions or by exceeded the bounds, we revere all those who are of the pure lineage and faith.

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1 Sūrah al-Ḥujurāt: 13.

O Allah grant us the sublime character of the previous pious ones and delight our hearts by granting us true and sincere martyrdom in your path under the flag of Islam.

Dear Muslims, where are those to stand at night in prayer and spend their days fasting? Where are the likes of ‘Alī, Fāṭimah, Ḥafṣah, ‘Ā’ishah, Zayn al ‘Ābidīn, Zayd, Muḥammad al-Bāqir, Ja’far al-Ṣādiq, and Kāzīm? The brave have long gone leaving behind people who do not amount to much. The leaders have left in their wake generations of idle minds and bodies.

*They were in Makkah, the Banū Hāshim; whilst I sway in the desert lost.*

These greats left after having helped the faith and defended it against its enemies. They have tasted death whilst we remain here. The question that remains is, what have we sent forth firstly for ourselves and for the Dīn of Allah ﷺ? And secondly for the rest of the ummah?

Have we followed the footsteps of the Companions رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ in fervor to do good for others and annihilate ourselves for the faith? Allah ﷻ says:

مُحَمَّدٌ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ وَالَّذِينَ مَعَهُ أَشِدَّاءُ عَلَى الْكُفَرَاءِ رُحَمَاءُ بَيْنَهُمْ تَرَاهُمْ رُكَّعًا سُجَّدًا يَبْتَغُونَ فَضْلًا  
مِّنَ اللَّهِ وَرِضْوَانًا سِيمَاهُمْ فِي وُجُوهِهِمْ مِّنْ أَثَرِ السُّجُودِ

*Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah; and those with him are forceful against the disbelievers, merciful among themselves. You see them bowing and prostrating [in prayer], seeking bounty from Allah and [His] pleasure. Their mark is on their faces from the trace of prostration.*<sup>1</sup>

The crux of the matter is, dear Reader, this ummah will only succeed by the principles laid out by its founding greats: sincerity in speech and action together with following the sunnah of Rasūlullāh ﷺ. Add to this refraining from following one’s desires and treading the footsteps of the true and noble. They

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1 Sūrah al- Fath: 29.

were people who witnessed revelation and its meaning being disseminated. They were people whose speech matched their actions. Vanity had died in them. Reaching Allah ﷻ remained their only goal. Following their prophet was their only dream.

They acted deliberately with proofs and gave up formalities. They stood far from gossip and mundane useless activities. Upon their necks lay the trust of spreading divine knowledge. They worshipped Allah ﷻ as he ought to be worshipped resulting in mighty kings bowing to them.

Ḥasan ibn ‘Alī رضي الله عنه was told, Abū Dhar prefers poverty to wealth and sickness to health. He said, “May Allah have mercy on Abū Dhar. I say, whoever is happy with the decisions of Allah will not wish for anything.”<sup>1</sup>

In conclusion, I hope that I have been able to present a scholarly read which benefits the reader regarding the greats of the Ahl al-Bayt. I hope that you, dearest reader, have benefitted from what you have read.

May Allah ﷻ have mercy on the Ahl al-Bayt and be pleased with them, the noble Consorts of Rasūlullāh صلى الله عليه وسلم, and his Companions رضي الله عنهم. O Allah! Send blessings upon Muḥammad and upon the followers of Muḥammad as You sent blessings upon Ibrāhīm and upon the followers of Ibrāhīm; indeed, You are praiseworthy and glorious. O Allah! Bless Muḥammad and the followers of Muḥammad as You blessed Ibrāhīm and the follower of Ibrāhīm; indeed, You are praise worthy and glorious.

O Allah we bear witness that we love our Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم, his family and Companions. O Allah gather us with them in Jannah. O Allah forgive the Muslims that are alive and that have passed away. Enlighten their graves and forgive the living. Make their matters easy and forgive the seekers of forgiveness. Overlook our sins and cure our ill, O Most Merciful.

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1 *Tārīkh Dimashq*, vol. 13 pg. 253; *Siyar A’lām al-Nubalā’*, vol. 3 pg. 262.



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