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Sa'd bin Abi Waqqas رضي الله عنه **The Lion in the Den**

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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the Name of Allâh,
the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful

“Among the believers are men who have been true to their covenant with Allâh [i.e., they have gone out for *Jihâd* (holy fighting), and showed not their backs to the disbelievers]; of them some have fulfilled their obligations (i.e., have been martyred); and some of them are still waiting, but they have never changed (i.e., they never proved treacherous to their covenant which they concluded with Allâh) in the least.” (33:23)

Publishers Note

All praises are due to Allâh, the Lord of all that exists. May Allâh’s peace and blessings be upon His final Prophet and Messenger, Muhammad, his family and his Companions.

Darussalam is pleased to present this valuable series, ‘*The Golden Series of the Prophet’s Companions*’, to the Muslim youth. The purpose of these books is to enlighten our youth about the lives of the greatest heroes of Islam, the Prophet’s Companions. Also, we wish to increase the enthusiasm of the Muslim youth for following and adhering to their religion. In this way, these books achieve two very important tasks: educating our younger and encouraging them to be good Muslims.

In the following story, ‘*Sa’d bin Abi Waqqas* – *The Lion in the Den*’, the life of one of the greatest heroes of Islam is reviewed. He was among the great warriors of Islam and one of the ten people whom the Prophet ﷺ promised their entry into Paradise. He was the Prophet’s uncle and the great commander who led the Muslim

army in their conquest of Persia.

We hope that these books are beneficial to our Muslim youth, as they are the future of Islam. We, at Darussalam realize the importance of good Islamic literature for Muslim youth, especially in the West where non-Islamic influences are so strong. For this reason, we feel that the availability of this series will be a valuable aid in instilling a genuine love for Islam in our youth. We would like to thank the author, Mr. Abdul Basit Ahmad, the editors, Mr. Aqeel Walker and Mr. Muhammad Ayub Sapra for their diligent work in preparing this series. As Allâh says:

“Is there any reward for good other than good?” (55:60)

And our final invocation is that all praises are due to Allâh, the Lord of all that exists.

Abdul Malik Mujahid
General Manager

Foreword

Most Arabs, if not all, were directly or indirectly devoted to protecting their long established customs and traditions. They were mostly idol worshippers. Some of them thought of a different way of life that kept them away from doing the evils, which had spread in their societies. Nevertheless, these people did not have the courage to change any of the misguided traditions that they were adopting. Therefore, they kept themselves to a limited measure, away from the practices of their societies.

There were no pure heavenly teachings to direct the communities that were dispersed over the Arabian desert. Tribes were upholding traditions that no one dared to change. The Bibles of the Jews and Christians were mostly corrupted by priests who claimed to have received them from the original source.

Gloom and ignorance spread over the entire globe. Therefore, it was time to reveal a new light of guidance to bring back those who lost the way to true faith.

Our hero Sa'd bin Abi Waqqas ؓ lived in these dark days. He was one of those few people who discovered that the gods whom people used to worship were false. He realized through deep thinking that these deities were not the true creators of this universe.

Therefore, when Sa'd ؓ received the news of Muhammad's call to a new religion following the steps of the Prophet ﷺ who came before him, he took it as his cause to support it to the last minute of his life. He never hesitated to sacrifice all worldly pleasures and even his own life to spread the new light of Islam and to change the long established ways of thinking.

Sa'd ؓ was challenged even by the closest people to him. He was harshly and constantly pressed to revert to the false deities of his forefathers; but he vigorously and diligently kept his stance. He felt from the first moment that he was commissioned to raise the new flag of Islam high and to take it to the four corners of the world.

He was truly a man who made the whole

world speak of his bravery and loyalty to the new faith. He led the Muslim army away from his homeland to introduce the new religion to humanity at large.

At the same time, he was the type of man who led a pious life, thinking of only one thing: to meet his Creator on the Day of Judgment light and free from any worldly burdens. Even though he was told by the Prophet ﷺ that his place in Paradise was assured, he spared no minute of his life to worship Allâh with all humility and sincerity.

He finally passed away fully satisfied that he did his best to spread the light of Islam everywhere. When he heard his son crying beside his deathbed, he told him with a very sure tone:

“Do not cry! Allâh will never torture your father.”

Abdul Basit Ahmad

Introduction

Muhammad ﷺ was born in Makkah in the noblest family of the Quraish tribe. His father was Abdullah bin Abdul Muttalib, the chief of Bani Hashim clan, and his mother was Aminah bint Wahb, from Bani Zuhrah clan.

Abdul Muttalib saw a dream ordering him to uncover the well of Zamzam (a blessed well which sprung from under the feet of Isma'il عليه السلام when he was left with his mother Hajar by his father Ibrahim عليه السلام in the valley of Makkah). The location of the well was missed until Abdul Muttalib saw this dream. The man who came to him in the dream showed him the location of the well. Abdul Muttalib uncovered the well. The other chiefs of the Quraish wanted to have their share of honour of providing water to pilgrims from the well. They were stronger than Abdul Muttalib because he had no sons to support him. Abdul Muttalib made an oath that if he was given ten sons by Allâh, he would give one of them as a sacrifice. Abdul Muttalib got ten sons as he wished. He wanted to fulfill his

promise. He took his sons to the Ka'bah and cast the lot on them. For ten times, the lot fell on Abdullah. Abdul Muttalib took Abdullah to sacrifice him. All the chiefs of Quraish objected to Abdul Muttalib sacrificing his son. They asked him to have another option. Abdul Muttalib elected to exchange a number of camels for the life of his son. The lot was cast on Abdullah and the camels. Every lot was cast on ten camels in exchange of Abdullah's life until the number of camels reached one hundred.

Abdul Muttalib sacrificed one hundred camels for his son's life. All the people of Makkah and neighbouring tribes shared in the ceremony.

Abdullah was dearly loved by his father. He wanted to find him a wife of a noble origin. He selected Aminah as a wife for his son. The couple led a happy life and dreamt of having their first baby.

It was summer time when the trade caravans of the Quraish would travel to Syria. A short time after Abdullah got married, he prepared his

The First Steps on the Way to Truth

Background

A short time before the advent of Islam, Makkans were mainly interested in satisfying their worldly desires and worshipping idols. They adopted deities which they, in the depth of their hearts, knew that they would not hold them accountable for the evils they were doing. They persisted on enjoying all pleasures because they never thought of a day of reckoning. Every member of each tribe could not imagine anything else other than drawing his sword in defense of his tribal customs and traditions.

The chiefs of Makkah found many means to collect as much money as they could. Their orders were taken for granted and their acts were never questioned. They could, by a single war cry, gather hundreds and thousands to defend the dignity of the tribe. They always invented enemies to use the youth to satisfy their whims.

The youth of Makkah, on the other hand, had

nothing to do but to quench their thirst for drinking and women. Young men of rich families were most of the time either chasing after pleasures or preparing for a new invasion against a weaker tribe. However, when they had any leisure time, they only thought of going hunting or drinking.

Sa'd ؓ was one of those youth who belonged to a first class family. He was a member of the Quraish tribe, the most dignified tribe in Makkah. He led his life in an atmosphere where no one cared for anything but for personal pleasures and tribal deities.

Roses amid Thorns

However, Sa'd looked with an eye of pity at the youth around him. He was well aware that the trivial pleasures they indulged themselves in were not the ultimate end for which a youth should dedicate his life. Chiefs, slaves and women around him could not convince him that they were doing the right thing. He could, like any other youth, have anything he liked. Those around him were always trying to pull his legs to

after day his faith was becoming stronger and more profound.

The Challenge

One day Sa'd ﷺ came back to his house. There, he saw his mother waiting for him. She angrily asked:

“Is it true that you have become a Muslim?”

Someone had told her that her son had abandoned the religion of his people and followed the new religion. Without any hesitation, he replied:

“Yes, mother! I have followed the light of truth.”

He asked her to follow his example and embrace Islam. However, she denied him the right to do so and announced a hunger strike to force him to come back to his old false beliefs.

With all tenderness and mercy, Sa'd ﷺ asked his mother to stop her harassment. He loved her very much and was keen not to make her suffer. She insisted and told him that she would not eat or

drink till she died or he would go back to the religion of his forefathers.

At the end of the first day, the old woman became very weak. Sa'd ﷺ was suffering a great conflict of whether to hold on to his faith or to please his mother. She was very decisive and did not accept any appeal.

The second day, the old woman began fainting and she was about to die. Sa'd looked at her with tears in his eyes and said:

“O mother, listen to me! If you have one hundred souls and you lose them one after the other to make me abandon this religion, I would not do it. I have found my way to happiness in this life and in the Hereafter.”

His words touched her heart. She thought that his acceptance of Islam was a mere desire that he would quit for her sake. When she knew that her son was serious, she stopped her hunger strike.

The Prophet ﷺ knew of the story and praised Sa'd's steadfastness. Verses of the Noble Qur'an were revealed unto the Prophet ﷺ

The Migrant

Days were passing very heavy on the new Muslims in Makkah. The chiefs of Makkah were sparing no effort to make them recant. Most of the early Muslims were slaves and weak persons who had no tribes to support them. Even those who belonged to the Quraish tribe received their share of torture and oppression. The pagans did their best to make the few number of Muslims abandon their new faith. The Prophet ﷺ himself was treated very badly by his uncle Abu Lahab, and his uncle's wife Umm Jameel.

Hardships Test for True Believers

The Prophet ﷺ and his Companions felt that if they continued to stay in Makkah, they would not be able to spread or even to maintain their faith. The pagans were plotting day and night to keep the new faith limited to the first few Muslims who embraced Islam during these thirteen years of struggle. They even plotted to kill the Prophet ﷺ on the day he migrated to Al-Madinah.

Therefore, the Prophet ﷺ decided to allow his Companions to migrate to Al-Madinah (formerly Yathrib) after he had made an agreement with the inhabitants of the town to protect him and his followers.

Many Muslims left their properties and houses to be robbed by the pagans and migrated to Al-Madinah to save their lives and faith. Some of them, like Suhaib رضي الله عنه, surrendered all of their wealth to the pagans in order to escape the humiliation and pressures imposed on them by the pagans.

The March to the New Land

Under the cover of a dark night, Sa'd left his house and took a road different from the usual roads to escape from the eyes of the guards whom the Quraish had assigned to stop the Muslims from leaving Makkah.

At the outskirts of the city, he looked behind with sorrow and tear-filled eyes. He never wanted to leave the city where he was brought up. However, there was no other choice. He felt

The Conqueror

Sa'd ؓ had been taught by the Prophet ﷺ that spreading the Word of Allâh should not stop at any time or at any place. It is the Eternal Message that should prevail all over the world.

Abu Bakr ؓ was selected as the Caliph. As Islam was not deeply rooted in some parts of Arabia, many of the people in these parts reverted to idolatry as soon as they received the news of the death of the Prophet ﷺ. Some Arab chiefs found it a good chance to regain their privileges over others, which they had lost after the advent of Islam. However, Abu Bakr ؓ supported by Sa'd ؓ and other true Muslims, vowed to conquer the rebels and restore peace to the Arabian Peninsula. Sa'd ؓ fought as a sincere soldier against the apostates. He and the other true Muslims finally defeated the powers of evil and undermined any attempts to return to idolatry in the Arabian Peninsula.

Before Abu Bakr ؓ passed away, he proposed to hand over the trust to 'Umar bin Al-Khattab ؓ. At that period of time, the Muslims began sending

their armies outside of the borders of the Arabian Peninsula to call other nations to Islam.

In continuation of Abu Bakr's efforts to stop any threat against the Islamic State, 'Umar ؓ thought that the Persians, who first rejected to hear the Word of Allâh and prepared to fight the Muslims, should not be given the chance to threaten Islam. Therefore, he decided to take the initiative. Al-Muthana bin Haritha ؓ asked 'Umar ؓ to fight the Persians in order to stop their attacks at the borders of the Islamic State. He told 'Umar ؓ that it was a good time to defeat the Persians for they were suffering some conflicts over power. 'Umar ؓ welcomed the idea and wished to lead the army to Persia himself. However, the Muslims objected to the idea and suggested trusting the mission to another leader. After a lengthy discussion, all the Muslims agreed to Sa'd bin Abi Waqqas ؓ. 'Umar ؓ immediately shouted:

“Yes, you are true, it should be Sa'd ؓ, for he is the lion in the den.”

the soil carried by the delegation to the Muslim leader.

Negotiating a Peaceful Solution

Rustam asked Sa'd ﷺ to send him another messenger to negotiate. Al-Mugheerah bin Shu'bah ﷺ came to Rustam. As soon as he arrived, Rustam started negotiating with him in a very gentle manner and asked him to tell Sa'd ﷺ that it was better for them to leave to their homeland. Al-Mugheerah ﷺ told Rustam that it was their mission to spread the light of Islam. He explained to him the principles of Islam. Rustam felt the just teachings of Islam and asked the messenger to give him time to discuss them with the heads of the nation. Rustam told his people that it was better for them to accept Islam, but they refused.

Sa'd ﷺ sent the third messenger, Rab'i bin 'Amer ﷺ to Rustam. Before his arrival to the place of the Persian army, the Persians wanted to show him how rich and powerful they were. The whole palace was furnished with gold and silver. Rab'i ﷺ came inside on his horse with his

humble dress until he stepped on the carpets. The soldiers asked him to leave his horse out and to put down his arms. He refused and stepped ahead on the carpets and ruined them with his spear. He jumped down from the back of his horse and sat beside Rustam. He was not amazed by the vanity they wanted to show him.

Rustam inquired about the Muslims' motives behind coming to his land. Rab'i ﷺ told him that they were ordered by Allâh to spread the true word of Islam over the whole earth. Rustam asked him whether he was a chief. The humble messenger replied that the Muslims were like one body and anyone of them would decide for others.

Rustam told Sa'd ﷺ that he would give the Muslims a bitter defeat if they insisted on fighting.

Both armies began preparing for the battle. The Persians prepared about one hundred thousand fully armed soldiers supported by elephants and other heavy combat equipment. The Muslims on the opposite side gathered with their humble arms to fight against this huge