

Chapter 3

After embracing Islam, Abu Dharr left Mecca for his country. Abdullah Subaiti writes what when Abu Dharr took leave of the Prophet he was brimful of complete faith, and Islam had pervaded his personality. He started from there with great joy. He was very happy that Allah had guided him to a faith which is accepted by pure bondmen and conscience is satisfied with it and reason whole-heartedly welcomes it.

He went on and reached his country. The first man to greet him was his brother Unais, and he was also the first to get the flash of his faith. Unais came forward to kiss his brother's feet and said, "O brother! You have spent so many days in Mecca. Now tell me what you have made out".

Abu Dharr said:

"Unais! I have arrived at a conclusion which is welcomed by sound reason. I concluded after a lot of thinking that I should accept the faith of Muhammad. O Unais! I cannot tell you that when I met Muhammad and looked at his face, I felt as if my chest was expanding. My heart was filled with pleasure and the mind was intoxicated with faith. I, at once, recited the formula of faith (Kalimah) and acknowledging his Prophethood requested him to teach me the articles of faith. So he explained to me the principles of Islam. O Unais! I ask you honestly with the sincerity of intention to bow your head humbly before Allah and leave the worship of these men made gods of stone".

Hearing this, Unais sat down with his head bowed and started thinking. He got in such a state as if intoxicated. Unais recalled all those things which he himself had seen in Mecca. He spoke after a while, "O brother! My mind confirms your truthfulness and my sound reason asks me not to disobey you. Hence listen! I bear witness that there is no god except Allah and I testify that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah".

Abu Dharr became very happy on Unais's accepting the faith. He said to him: "Now let us go to our mother". Both of them then went to their mother.

Greeting his mother Abu Dharr said, "Dear mother! I beg your pardon! I have been away from you for a very long time. But, I have brought a treasure which nobody possesses here".

His mother asked, "What is that treasure which distinguishes you?" Abu Dharr said, it is the treasure of faith, mother. I met a person in Mecca whose face gleamed with nobleness. He is peerless in good manners and magnanimity. He speaks what is true. He says what is right. He does what is just. There is wisdom in his words. Mother! His enemies also call him truthful and trustworthy. He invites people towards Allah who is the creator of heaven and the earth and is the organizer of the existence of this universe. I have acknowledged faith in him having been influenced by his bearing, statements and sayings, and Unais has also become a Muslim. We have accepted the Oneness of Allah and the Prophethood of Muhammad (s).

Abu Dharr's mother said: "My son, if it is so I also bear witness that there is no god but Allah, and testifies that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah".

Abu Dharr was encouraged when his brother and mother also embraced Islam and now he began thinking how to influence his tribesmen and persuade them towards the right path.

After great deliberation Abu Dharr came out of his house. His mother and brother were also with him. After travelling a little distance they pitched their tent near their tribe's tents.

The night had fallen. These tired travellers were lying in their tents to sleep when they felt that many tribesmen who were present at that place were telling stories among themselves and narrating different events. They were busy in continuous conversation.

When Abu Dharr tried to overhear them he heard that they were talking about him.

After that the people got up from their place and reached near the tent of Abu Dharr. Abu Dharr said to his brother, Unais, "The tribesmen have come close to our tent. Go out and see them".

Unais went out at once. He saw that some young men of the tribe had come. They had come to know that Unais and Abu Dharr were there. They saluted him. Unais, after saluting them in return, asked the reason for their visit. They said, "We have come simply to see you and Abu Dharr".

Unais went in to Abu Dharr and said, "The youths of our tribe have come to know the conditions of journey".

Abu Dharr said, "Call them in. I shall talk to them. May be I make them the worshippers of Allah, the One".

Unais came out and said, "Come in as brother Abu Dharr is calling you".

All of them went to Abu Dharr. One of them said, "O Abu Dharr! We have not seen you since long as a result of which we have become very sad".

Abu Dharr said, "My dear young men! I have great love and sympathy for you in my heart".

One man: "Abu Dharr! Where have you been so long? We have not been able to see you for quite some time".

Abu Dharr: "I had gone to Mecca. I came back a few days ago".

Second man: "We are happy that you have been to Mecca".

Abu Dharr: "I had, of course, gone to Mecca, but I did not offer any sacrifice to Hubal nor did I prostrate before Laat and Uzza. My young men! Why should have I done all this when I know that these idols have neither life, nor can they harm or benefit anybody? They can neither see nor hear, nor can they ward off a calamity which may befall them.

Listen! I resort to Allah in all my actions and matters. He is certainly single without peer or partner, and I testify to Allah who alone is to be worshipped. He is the Creator of everything and Nourisher of every creature.

I ask you to join me in our plan of action and testify to the Oneness of Allah like us".

Hearing this all the people began to tremble. One of them said in amazement, "O Abu Dharr! What are you saying?"

Abu Dharr: "Listen to what I say. Though I cannot see Allah with my eyes, yet I see Him with the internal eye; and listen! He is seen in everything of the world. Think for a while! How can anything be worthy of human worship when it is made by human hands? It is not wise to worship idols made of stone and wood, and pray to them to satisfy our needs. My tribesmen! You know that these idols do not have any power. They can neither ward off evil, nor do they have the strength to acquire benefit".

Hearing this exhortation of Abu Dharr's people started whispering to one another.

One of them said, "I have told you already that a man has appeared in Mecca, he calls himself a prophet and invites people to worship One Allah. Abu Dharr has met him and has been moved by his preaching, so much so that whatever ideas he puts forth belong to that man".

The other man said, "Conditions are very grave. We are exposed to danger by Abu Dharr's personality and his preaching. We feel that if he goes on preaching like these differences will crop up within our tribe and our lives will be ruined. Better it is that we go to Khafaf, the chief of our tribe, explain to him all the dangers involved, and insist upon him to give full attention to counteract them.

The youngmen of Ghifar took leave of Abu Dharr and went to see Khafaf. On the way they exchanged views with one another.

One of them said, "Abu Dharr has raised a great disturbance".

The other said, "It will be very shameful for us to ignore this great sin of Abu Dharr. He openly outrages our religion and ridicules our gods".

The third one said, "It is obligatory on us to turn him out of our tribe without the least delay, because if we delay his excommunication little; he will overpower our young men, women and slaves and instil his corrupt ideas in their minds. In case it so happened, we shall suffer a great loss".

The fourth one said, "Your viewpoint is correct. But who will bell the cat? He is not a man of an ordinary stature. He is a great man of the tribe, and an elder of the family. I also see that Unais holds the same views, and he is also a man of repute".

The fifth one said, "There is no cause for alarm. Come and let us put the case before Khafaf. We are sure that Khafaf, and other nobles of the tribe will themselves expel him from the tribe".

The sixth one said, "I am pondering over their ideas. I am not sure they will be able to change them. It is possible that they may of themselves come to the right path. We should not be perturbed but should reflect on their religion. Listen to me! I am noticing reality in their faith, Anyway, we are about to reach Khafaf. After our talk with him we expect to arrive at some definite conclusion".

In short, conversing together, these people reached the chief of Ghifar tribe and said to him, "We are coming from Abu Dharr to you".

Khafaf: "Has Abu Dharr come back from the journey to Mecca?"

A man said, "Sir, Abu Dharr has turned a pervert. He ridicules our gods. He says that a man has been appointed as a prophet. His duty is to invite people to the worship of One God and also to teach good things. Abu Dharr is not content with acknowledging his prophethood and keeping it to himself, but he is constantly preaching in the masses and is inviting all others to that prophet and his God.

When Khafaf heard it, he said, "It is a pity that Abu Dharr, leaving all gods, propagates the worship of a Single God. It is a great evil and very repugnant. I foresee that it will stir up a serious commotion in our tribe, which will be destroyed in consequence. O my young men! Do not make haste but give me some time to think over the case of Abu Dharr".

After the young men went back, Khafaf, the chief of the tribe, began to think why all of them were speaking against Abu Dharr. He kept on pondering over the matter the whole night in his bed. He was extremely bewildered and could not form a definite opinion. But his mind had the deep impression of the hearsay expressed by Abu Dharr. He passed sleepless hours and was simply closing and opening his eyes.

He also recalled an address of the Arab philosopher, Qays bin Sa'idah, in the market-place; He had said that the Creator of the universe is undoubtedly One and only He is worthy of worship. He had completely endorsed Abu Dharr's views in his remarkable address, and had also mentioned that the ideas of Warqa bin Naufil, Zayd bin Amr, Uthman bin Hoverath and Abdullah bin Hajash had changed, and all of them were inclined towards the faith of Abu Dharr .

He was in this puzzling situation when his reason guided him and he said to himself, "Indeed! Abu Dharr is right because Qays bin Sa'ida has supported him and I am sure that Qays will not misunderstand, nor will he accept any false belief. Undoubtedly, there must be a reformer for this world, and there must exist a Being who may run the system of the universe, and it is quite obvious that our gods of stone and wood are far from such capabilities. O God of Abu Dharr! Guide us and delivering us from this perversion put us on the right path".

While Khafaf was busy making his important decision, the day dawned till the sun appeared in the sky and with the spread of sunlight the news also gained currency that Abu Dharr, his brother and his mother have all come back from Mecca and worship only One God.

With the spreading of this news there stirred an agitation. People started reviling Abu Dharr and said, "He has gone mad and has seen incapacitated to understand that these very idols of ours heal us, give us food and protect us. Abu Dharr is a strange man who invites us to an Invisible God. It appears to us that Abu Dharr wants to create disturbance and trouble among our young people and mislead our children and women. Surely he is a liar and what he claims is wrong. He should be expelled from the tribe".

One of them said, "Why! How could you express the idea of his expulsion? How can it be done? No, never! It can not happen. He is the bravest man of our tribe".

After these conversations those people decided to draw the attention of their elders to this point. Accordingly they asked their elders to deliberate on this matter. The elders of the tribe decided to take the case of Abu Dharr to the chief. Consequently all of them went to Khafaf.

The chief of the tribe sent his slave immediately to call Abu Dharr to him. The slave on reaching him

said, "Abu Dharr! you and Unais have been called on by the chief".

Abu Dharr said that he was just coming. After the slave had left, Abu Dharr held his sword in the belt and said to his brother Unais, "Come on; let us go to Khafaf".

Unais: "O brother! I hear bad things about you from the people. I am afraid this meeting of ours may not prove useful; something unexpected may come out, instead".

Abu Dharr: "No, it is not so. I know Khafaf very well. He is a wise man. Allah has blessed him with wisdom. He is the most intelligent man of our tribe".

The two brothers were going on talking together till they reached Khafaf. There they saw that the nobles of the tribe were sitting in a circle around him.

Addressing them all Abu Dharr said, "Salamun Alaykum" (Peace be upon you).

Hearing Abu Dharr's salutation in the Islamic way the nobles of the tribe got enraged and spoke in a furious manner. "What is this wishing which we have never heard before".

Then one of them said, "It is a pity. We do not know which side Abu Dharr goes".

Another man said, "Just look at him. He is sitting with his sword, and has no respect for the chief".

The third man said, "You are right. But he is a horse rider of the tribe and brave people are always armed".

Abu Dharr spoke, "Listen! I respect you because you are the nobles of the tribe, worthy of our pride and esteem. The salute I have offered to you is the Islamic salute".

After this Abu Dharr and Unais took their seats face to face with the chief of the tribe, Khafaf.

Khafaf spoke in a kind but sharp tone, "O Abu Dharr! I am informed that you have been inclined to the worship of Allah Who is Invisible. The nobles of the tribe are offended with this attitude of yours. They say that Abu Dharr insults their gods and calls them devoid of all wisdom".

"O Abu Dharr! We do respect you but it does not mean that we are willing to tolerate the insult of our gods. I ask you to give up your present ideas and come back to your ancestral faith, or else explain your faith to me so that I may be able to understand the reality of your faith. Also, I assure you that I shall think to accept it if you prove that your faith is reasonably better than ours".

At this Abu Dharr replied, "O chief of the tribe! We respect you and honour whatever you say. But, at the

same time, we want to explain that Allah, the One, Whom we have decided to worship and in Whom we believe, is the same Who has created the earth and the sky, Who gives sustenance to all creatures, Who has a control over the life of every animate object and Whose power knows no bounds".

The idols whom we have been worshipping up till now, have been made by our own hands and have been cut with our own chisels and hammers. Can reason believe that he who is our handmade should be our creator, our sustainer and the listener of our prayers?"

"Man is the noblest of the creation. How can it be worthy of his dignity to bow his head before a stone? My chief! Please think dispassionately what I say. They have no power even to repel their enemy from themselves".

Listen to me, O chief! Once I went to Manat and offered a cup of milk to him. I was still there when a fox came, drank up the cupful of milk and urinated on Manat. This incident had a great effect on me and I thought how a god could be so helpless!"

"This thing made it clear to me that it cannot be god. I am sure and every reasonable man will believe that the Creator of the heavens is better than the heavens and the Maker of the earth is better than the earth. According to this rule of reason the idols cannot be better than us and when they are not superior to us it is meaningless for us to worship them".

"O my chief! I have come to the truth that Allah is one Who is the Creator and Sustainer of the whole universe, and Muhammad Mustafa who had been sent in Mecca is His Messenger".

"He possesses such good qualities that he has no match in the world. The Quraysh who are his bitter enemies admit his truthfulness and capability. Even knowing well that Muhammad is against their gods and religion, they have given him the title of Sadiq and Amin, as I have come to know quite lately. Listen! Light reflects from his face and wisdom flows from his words".

As soon as Abu Dharr finished his speech there arose a great noise all round, "How sweetly Abu Dharr talks! So, our gods are deaf and dumb! Abu Dharr has humiliated our faith and has insulted our gods". A group of them also said, "My friends! Do not talk nonsense. We sincerely say that whatever Abu Dharr has said appears to be right, and reason demands that we should accept the truth. We are sure that we cannot get better guidance than whatever Abu Dharr has brought for us".

Another voice arose: "Arabia needs a reformer and there does not appear to be a better reformer than the one introduced by Abu Dharr". Then another voice was raised, "Abu Dharr's speech is very reasonable". After this a very loud voice rose; it pierced the ear drums, "O Abu Dharr! I bear witness that there is no god except Allah and I testify that Muhammad is His Messenger".

Seeing this, Khafaf, the chief of the tribe, after intense thinking raised up his head and said to his people: "My dear tribesmen! Listen attentively. You have heard whatever Abu Dharr said. It is our duty to think over his speech very carefully and intensively and find out how much truth it contains. Hastiness is not advisable. It does not carry sense to dismiss somebody's suggestion without examining it.

My friends! You are aware how much confusion prevails among us and how excessive are the crimes in which we are involved. The rich squeeze the poor, and there is no limit to sins and evils. I have come to the conclusion that I should accept and endorse what Abu Dharr says. Now it is up to you to form an opinion for yourselves. Listen you all: I bear witness that there is no god but Allah and Muhammad is His Messenger"

As soon as Khafaf recited the Kalimah (La ila ha illal lah Muhammadun Rasulullah) there was an outburst of noise in the tribe, "Khafaf became a Muslim. Khafaf embraced Islam".

No sooner had Khafaf become a Muslim than the condition of the tribe completely changed. Most of them accepted Islam then and there, while others waited to acknowledge Islam at the hands of the Holy Prophet at the time of his arrival at Medina.

In short, with the great efforts of Abu Dharr the majority of the tribesmen of Ghifar embraced Islam, and there arose the cries of "God is the Greatest", and "God is praise worthy", and the name of the Holy Prophet began to be proclaimed day and night.

After infusing the spirit of Islam in the tribe of Ghifar and converting the people to Islam Abu Dharr turned his attention to Asfan. Reaching there he preached Islam among the people. As this place lay on the high way frequented by the Quraysh, and he had developed a feeling against them which was due to the tortures he had suffered at their hands he exercised a little strictness in making them Muslims. When a group of the Quraysh came over there, he presented Islam to them, and consequently a large number of the Quraysh embraced Islam.

Source URL: <https://www.al-islam.org/the-great-companion-of-prophet-abu-dharr/chapter-3>