

Chapter 4

Abdul Hamid Jaudatus Sahar of Egypt writes, "Islam spread in Medina like wild fire". The tribe of Ghifar became overjoyed at it. Muslims congratulated one another that the two tribes of Aus and Khazraj, who were most eloquent, best swordsmen, and best sympathizers, turned Muslims, and also because Allah had willed to raise up His religion, and was determined to help the Holy Prophet and fulfil His promise.

Unais came to his brother Abu Dharr with the happy news and said, "Islam has spread in Medina and Aus and Khazraj have embraced Islam".

Abu Dharr said, "The Messenger of Allah will go to them and migrate to their city very shortly".

Unais looked surprisingly at his brother and said, "Have you received any such information?"

Abu Dharr: "No, neither I have any information about it, nor did I know of the people of Yathrib becoming believers".

Unais: "How, then, did you know that the Messenger of Allah will migrate to Yathrib?"

Abu Dharr: "He had told me the very day I saw him, that he will go to a town of date palms and I think that place is Yathrib. The Messenger had spoken the truth".

Unais: "Is it possible that his tribe lets him go out of that place along with Muslims, so that after making thorough preparation he may attack them?"

Abu Dharr: "They may let him or not, but he will shortly migrate to that place. Of course, only Allah knows how and when it will happen".

Abu Dharr converted his tribe to Islam after he had become a believer. Then he turned his attention to Medina. Since his return from Mecca, till the migration of the Holy Prophet, Abu Dharr remained busy with the preaching of Islam and continued making efforts to take the Divine religion to the masses.

The Holy Prophet kept on doing his duty to preach Islam, and the Quraysh continued to perform their duty of torturing the Prophet. They gave him so much torture that no alternative was left for him except

to leave his home. In short, by the command of Allah, Jibrail asked him to leave Mecca after making Ali sleep in his (Prophet's) bed.

He did likewise. He made Ali sleep in his bed and then left, so that the Quraysh might not know that he was not in his bed. After staying for three days in the cave of Hira he set off for Medina.

Abu Dharr was anxiously waiting for the migration. His tribesmen were also in waiting and used to enquire about the Holy Prophet from everybody who happened to come from his side.

Starting from Mecca and after staying for a few days in cave the Prophet left for Medina. When the tribe of Ghifar came to know that he was between Mecca and Medina they became very happy. Abu Dharr felt a wave of blessing coming. He joined the waiting tribe. People gathered round him and inquired of him about the Prophet of Allah, his temperament, and his face and form.

He replied, "You will see him very soon. He is the best of all and excels everyone in merits". When the people waited long Abu Dharr kept an eye on the way, so that he might be the first to inform the people of the Prophet's arrival and give relief to the eager hearts and remove the fear that had overcome them for their waiting for him for such a long time.

Time passed on. Bani Ghifar were very eager to receive the Prophet. When Abu Dharr cast a glance he saw a camel coming. All began to look towards Abu Dharr's eyes. After a short while Abu Dharr exclaimed, "By Allah, the Prophet has arrived. Allamah Subaiti writes, "The Holy. Prophet's face was shedding a light. In short, all followed Abu Dharr, in shouting with one voice, 'The Prophet of Allah has come'. 'The Prophet of Allah has come'. Abu Dharr rushed forward in haste and caught hold of the rein of his camel".

People started shouting "Allaho Akbar" (Allah is the Greatest) round the Prophet with enthusiasm. All women, old and young, boys and girls were shouting with great joy. 'The Prophet of Allah has come'. 'The Prophet of Allah has come'.

The Holy Prophet got down from the camel and began reciting the Holy Qur'an. His voice entered the people's hearts. Then he began preaching. People came forward in groups to swear allegiance to him. Abu Dharr was standing proudly near the Holy Prophet overjoyed.

The Ghifar tribe came forward and said, "O Prophet of Allah! Abu Dharr taught us whatever you had told him. We became Muslims and we testified that you are the Prophet of Allah".

After that the people of the tribe of Aslam said, "We have also embraced Islam in the same way as our brethren (Ghifar) have done". The Prophet of Allah became happy and raising his hands towards the sky

prayed, "O Lord of the world! Pardon the tribe of Ghifar and keep the tribe of Aslam safe".

People were very happy and were looking at the Prophet's face again and again. Abdul Hamid Jaudatus Sahar writes, "People began to look at his (Prophet's) face intently. They saw that he was a man of a shining face, smiling lips and sweet morals. He was neither lean and thin, nor fat. His features were beautiful.

He possessed big and black eyes, long eye lashes, arch like black brows, black hair, a long neck and a thick beard. He was dignified when silent and awe-inspiring when he spoke. His talks were sweet. He was neither taciturn, nor was he a talkative person speaking with a loud voice. He looked most handsome from a distance, and most sweet from near. He was middle sized, neither so tall as to be unpleasant to look at, nor so short as to be considered lowly by the people. After that the Holy Prophet set off for Medina and Abu Dharr stayed back in his tribe".

From there the Holy Prophet left for Medina. When he reached Medina people gave him a very warm welcome. Soon after his arrival he started preaching the message of Islam. Abu Dharr who could not accompany the Holy Prophet to Medina stayed so long in his home that the three great Islamic wars (Ghazawat) –Badr in 2nd Hijra, Uhud in 3rd Hijra and Ahzab in 5th Hijra had been fought to a finish.

After the Battle of Ahzab, a verse of the Holy Qur'an forced Abu Dharr to leave for Medina. One day he was busy in his post-prayer recitals after offering his evening prayers in the masjid of his home town, when he heard a man reciting the verse:

***"O believers! Should I show you a bargain which can save you from a painful punishment".
(Surah al-Saf, 61: 10)***

After a reflection on the meaning of this verse he became anxious for Jihad and said to Unais, "I will leave for Yathrib tomorrow".

Unais: All right! Go. May Allah take you there safely! But tell me, when will you come back?

Abu Dharr: I will not come back. I will spend the rest of my life in the service of the Holy Prophet.

Unais: O Brother! You have become a true believer and the faith has penetrated in your heart and soul. Your tribe and your people here need you very much. There will be a great loss if you go away from here. I think you should give up the idea of leaving for Medina and spend the rest of your life here.

Abu Dharr: The Holy Prophet is better than these people. Whatever has been lapsed is quite enough. The Holy Prophet fought in Badr and I could not join him. He fought in Uhud and I could not join him. He fought in Ahzab and I could not join him. How long should I serve my tribe and be deprived of the blessing of martyrdom. Whatever has happened up till now is enough. Now, I will not for a moment give up the idea of leaving for Yathrib.

Unais: My proposal is that you should stay in your home as usual. The Holy Prophet will himself call you whenever he needs you. Just see! There were many people who were in their home towns and left for Medina at the call of the Holy Prophet.

Abu Dharr: The period of waiting has passed. If the Prophet has not called me, I have also an obligation. I will not be waiting now but will go uninvited.

Unais: All right! But do not make haste. Take some necessary provisions for the journey.

Abu Dharr: I need no provisions. Some dried bits of bread are enough for me. Abu Dharr left his hearth and home for Medina. Reaching there he got the honour of meeting the Prophet and stayed in his company.

He used to live in the Prophet's masjid the whole night, and met people throughout the day. He used to take food with the Prophet and adorn his material life with piety and virtuousness. He fully concentrated on learning the hadith (tradition of the Holy Prophet) by heart. After his arrival in Medina, Abu Dharr fell ill on account of the change of climate. The Prophet got the news of his ailment. He came to see Abu Dharr and said to him, "Abu Dharr! You should stay for some days at the place outside Medina where the camels, sheep and goats of the public property graze, and take note that you should not eat anything as food except their milk during your stay there".

As soon as he received the command of the Prophet Abu Dharr left for the appointed place with his wife. The illness was severe for some days but gradually he regained his health after which he performed the sexual obligation with his wife. Now there was the difficulty of getting water for the obligatory bath as a pre-requisite for offering prayers. Till then he did not know the method of "Tayammum" (prescribed rubbing of hands and forehead with clay). So he was in a fix for some time as to what he should do. At last his reason guided him and he went to the Prophet on the back of a very fast camel.

As soon as the Prophet caught sight of Abu Dharr he smiled and spoke before Abu Dharr opened his lips, "Abu Dharr! Do not worry. Water is arranged for you here and now. So a slave girl brought water and he took the bath. After that he came to the Holy Prophet and he taught him the method of Tayammum ".¹

Abu Dharr was passing his life-time when the Battle of Tabuk came by in the 9th year of Hijra. Historians say that the Prophet came to know that the Christians of Syria had made a firm resolve to attack Medina with forty thousand troops from Hercules, the Roman King: Hence the Prophet, as a precautionary measure, intended to leave for Syria with thirty to forty thousand troops. He appointed Ali as his viceroy at Medina. After arraying his army he left Medina.

After his departure the hypocrites started taunting Ali that the Messenger of Allah had left him behind to lighten his own burden. In order to prove the hypocrites liars he decided to go to the Prophet.

Accordingly he left Medina and joined the Prophet at Jaraf and informed him of the hypocrites' taunting.

The Prophet said, "The hypocrites are liars. I have come here after having made you my deputy. O Ali! Are you not happy with your rank made higher? You have with me the same relation as Harun had with Musa with the only difference that there will be no prophet after me."²

By this he meant that when Musa went to the Mount Tur he appointed Harun as his deputy and he (the Holy Prophet) had also conducted himself in the same way."³

Having heard this Ali returned to Medina, and the Prophet made for Tabuk which was situated on the border of the then Roman Empire at a distance of ten stages from Medina and Damascus both. Having arrived at Tabuk he stayed there for twenty days. During his stay there he sent sariyas (army of Islam under the command of somebody other than the Prophet) all round, and laid emphasis on invitation to Islam.

No army came to fight from Rome. Hence he had to return from there. During his return one night when he was passing through the valley of Aqaba zi Fatq the hypocrites wanted to kill him in the same valley by frightening his camel, which might throw him down, but Huzayfah bin Yaman and Ammar bin Yasir saved him. After the Holy Prophet had crossed the valley, told Huzayfah b. Yaman the names of those hypocrites who wanted to kill him in the darkness of night, and commanded him to keep the names secret. Notable companions were included in this list.⁴

According to Tahzibut Tahzib those people tried to get their names from Huzayfah but he did not disclose. At last, a companion himself admitted, "Whether you tell me or not, by Allah I was one of those hypocrites", In short, the Prophet returned to Medina during the month of Ramadhan.

At the time of his departure from Medina for the Battle of Tabuk Abu Dharr was also with him. But his camel being very weak and thin could not keep pace with the caravan. He, however, remained behind the caravan at a distance of three days journey. He tried his best to be with him but could not succeed. He became extremely distressed when he saw that it was impossible for him to catch up with the caravan.

According to another version when he was left behind, some people said to the Prophet that it was very difficult for Abu Dharr to keep up with him. Upon this he said, "Leave him to himself. He will come up if Allah wills". So the caravan proceeded further and Abu Dharr was left behind in perplexity and anxiety.

Sometimes he thought to go back to Medina and at sometime he intended to reach Tabuk at any cost because lagging behind the Prophet was tormenting him badly. He drove his camel in a fit of excitement but he could not move quickly on account of his weakness. Seeing this he got down from the camel and taking all his luggage from its back loaded it upon his own back and started on foot. It was a very hot

season. Hence it is not unknown to the travellers what the intensity of his thirst would have been.

He was going with the luggage on his back when thirst almost over-powered him. He was already fatigued and now the thirst made his condition all the worse. Abu Dharr being in intense thirst moved about in search of water till he saw some rain water collected in a pit. He reached the pit while he was extremely thirsty, and wanted to drink a handful of water from it, when, all of a sudden, he thought that the water was very cold and it was unfair on his part to drink it before the Holy Prophet did it. So, as this idea occurred to him he threw away the water from the hand and filled container with it.

Abu Dharr was going alone in his extreme thirst with the water-skin till he reached the borders of Tabuk.

As soon as he reached the borders of Tabuk the Muslims saw him and informed the Prophet of the arrival of a distressed traveller. At once, he said, "He is my companion, Abu Dharr. Run on, O my companions, and bring him to me. Hearing this, the companions rushed to Abu Dharr and returned with him to the Prophet. The Prophet after enquiring about his health said, "O Abu Dharr, you have water with you. Why, then, are you so thirsty?"

Abu Dharr: My master! Water is, of course, there, but I cannot drink it.

The Prophet: What is the reason for that?

Abu Dharr: My Lord! On my way here I found cold water at the foot of a hill, but my conscience did not allow me to use it in advance of you. Hence I have brought that water with me for you. I shall taste it after you drink it.

Hearing this, the Prophet said, "O Abu Dharr! Allah will have His mercy on you. You will live alone and will go away from this world alone. You will rise alone on the Day of Judgment. You will enter Heaven alone and a group of Iraqis will get bliss on your account, that is, they will give you a bath, shroud you, and offer prayers for you".

This incident not only shows Abu Dharr's unparalleled love for the Holy Prophet, but through it the Holy Prophet clearly foretold the troubles and calamities which were to befall Abu Dharr. It becomes clear from the statement of the renowned Shi'ah scholar, Allamah Majlisi that the Prophet had thrown light on different occasions, on the coming events which Abu Dharr had to face.

He quotes an incident on authority of Ibn Babwayh from Abdullah bin Abbas that one day the Holy Prophet was sitting in Masjid of Quba and many of his companions were around him. He said, "The man who is first to enter the gate this masjid, will be from the people of the Heaven". At a while Abu Dharr entered the gate. He was the first who came from outside all alone.

The Holy Prophet, there up said, "O Abu Dharr! You are from the people of the Heaven. He continued to say, "You will be banished from me, on account of your love for the people of my House. You will live in

foreign land and will die in loneliness. A group of the people of Iraq will be blessed for giving you funeral bath and shrouding your dead body, and will be with me in the Heaven".

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1. Musnad Ahmad bin Hanbal
 2. Sahih Bukhari.
 3. Fatahul Bari vol. 3, page 387
 4. Madarijun Nubuwwah page 302

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