

KHABBAB IBN AL-ARATT

(May Allah be pleased with him and raise his status)

خَبَابِ ابْنِ الْارَاتِ رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ

MUHAMMAD NABEEL MUSHARRAF (ed.)

وَقَدْ نَزَّ عَلَيَّ عَلِيمًا

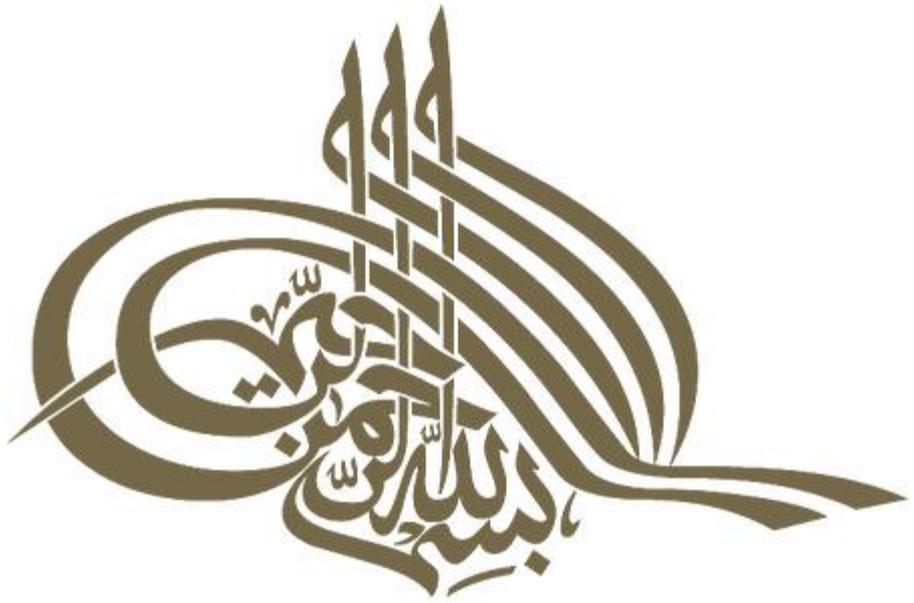
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“

[O You who Believe, fear Allah. And let every soul look to what it has sent on for tomorrow. Fear Allah, surely Allah is well-acquainted with what you do. And do not be like those who forgot Allah, so He made them forget their own souls. Such are the rebellious transgressors.]

(Al-Hashr 59:18-19)

قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم
كل معروف صدقة، والعدل على الخير كفاعله

(البخارى ومسلم)

من دعا إلى هدى كان له من الأجر مثل أجر من تبعه لا ينقص ذلك من أجورهم شيئاً

(مسلم)

وَتَعَاوَنُوا عَلَى الْبِرِّ وَالتَّقْوَىٰ ۗ وَلَا تَعَاوَنُوا عَلَى الْإِثْمِ وَالْعُدْوَانِ
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Dedicated to our beloved Prophet



M O H A M M E D

Peace Be Upon Him

صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَى جَدِّهِ سَيِّدِنَا مُحَمَّدٍ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ

Table of contents

Foreword.....	7
Arab Culture And Climate	8
Sold as Slave.....	11
Working as Blacksmith.....	12
He Finally Finds the Light	15
Extreme Torture and Hardships	20
Khabbab (ra) Attracts Umer (ra) to Islam.....	27
Punishment for Umm Anmaar.....	31
Migration to Abyssinia	32
Migration to Madinah.....	35
Quraish’s Trick:.....	35
Migration to Medina	35
Defending Islam in Madinah.....	37
The Last Days.....	45
REFERENCES:	48

Foreword

Khabbab ibn Al-Aratt (ra) was one of the great companions of our beloved Prophet ﷺ, who accompanied him throughout his life and served Islam till his death. He was one of those who require a special mention about his achievements and greatness. Long before the advent of Islam in Makkah, Khabbab bin Al-Arat (ra), being the first slave and seventh person to accept the Prophet's message, would bear all the hardships reminding himself,

“After every darkness, comes dawn!”

When he witnessed the first rays of hope in the light of Islam, he embraced it with full confidence and optimism.

Khabbab (ra) patiently persevered through the tortures and persecution he received for the cause of Islam with unshaken commitment to his faith. He used his knowledge to teach Muslims how to read the Noble Qur'an and truly dedicated his entire life to support the cause of Allah and His Messenger ﷺ.¹

Indeed all the companions of our beloved Messenger ﷺ are like stars and following them is, without a doubt, the path to salvation.

¹ (Ahmed, 2000)

Arab Culture And Climate

“Arab tribes led miserable lives under the hot sun in the deserts of Arabia. Their whole lives were shrouded with gloom and ignorance. They moved with their camels and tents from one place to another searching for food and water to survive. They had no fixed place to live at and they had to struggle to find a place where they could graze their animals. This was the type of life many Arabs used to lead.

Children of both sexes were taught nothing but to care for camels, invade other tribes, or defend their own tribes against invaders”².

“Gloom and injustice dominated the Pre-Islamic era in the Arabian Peninsula, in particular, and the whole world in general. Many human beings were treated very badly and even not allowed to live freely. The rich and powerful were able to take as many slaves as they wished. Slaves were treated with cruelty. Their masters and mistresses used and abused them. During those days, slavery had its markets where human beings, sometimes prisoners of war, were sold to whoever paid a good price for them. Slave traders, on the other hand, were roaming everywhere to add to the agonies of humanity. No free man could consider himself secure against being taken as a

² (PPC, 2012)

slave. The invasions and retaliations of tribes could turn a master into a slave within no time. The bad treatment of slaves was very common. Hard work, humiliation and oppression were some of the things that no slave escaped. Boys, girls, women and men were subjected to torture and hardships to make them submit to the orders of their masters.

Most houses of Makkah and other major cities contained one or more slaves to serve a master or a mistress. Some of these slaves were professionals and were forced to work hard in order to pay a share of their earnings to their masters or mistresses. One of those slaves is our hero, Khabbab bin Al-Aratt (ra). He was taken as a slave while he was still a boy and sold in the slave market to a midwife in Makkah”³, as explained in coming sections of this book."

“In response to the Prophet's call to Islam, many slaves believed in him and accepted the message of Islam. They found justice and equality in the principles preached by the Prophet Bilal, Khabbab (ra) and many others were among the slaves who received cruel treatment at the hands of their masters when they abandoned the worship of idols and converted to the true religion of Allah. The rich Companions of the Prophet helped in freeing their brother Muslims from the grip of disbelievers. Many Verses in the Noble Quran encouraged the Muslims to free slaves, especially as repentance from sins that they might have committed. They were also requested by Allah to

³ (Ahmed, 2000)

agree with their slaves on a certain compensation for their freedom”⁴.

⁴ (Ahmed, 2000, pp. 10–11)

Sold as Slave

Hazrat Khabab Bin Al-Aratt (ra) was from the Banu Tamim clan in Najd. He was a free man of free parents (not a slave). In the days of ignorance, one of the Arab tribes raided their territory and took their cattle, capturing women and children. Hazrat Khabab (R.A) was among the youths captured. He was passed from one hand to another until he ended up in Makkah, in city's slave market.⁵

A woman named Umm Anmaar who belonged to the Khuza-a tribe in Makkah went to the slave market in the city with an intention to buy herself a youth for her domestic chores and to exploit his labour for economic gains. As she scrutinized the faces of those who were displayed for sale, her eyes fell on a boy who was obviously not yet in his teens. She saw that he was strong and healthy and that there were clear signs of intelligence on his face. She needed no further incentive to purchase him. She paid for Khabbab (ra) and purchased him⁶.

She was the one, along with her brother Siba'a ibn Abd-al-Uzza, who badly tortured this young Muslim boy later on his life after he converted to Islam.

⁵ ("Hazrat Khabab Bin Al-Aratt (R.A)," 2013)

⁶ (Hamid, 1995)

Working as Blacksmith

“Umm Anmaar placed the youth as an apprentice to one of the blacksmiths in Makkah to learn the art of making swords. The youth learnt quickly and was soon an expert at the profession”⁷.

When he was strong enough, Umm Anmaar set up a workshop for him with all the necessary tools and equipment for making swords. Before long he was quite famous in Makkah for his excellent craftsmanship. People also liked dealing with him because of his honesty and integrity. Umm Anmaar gained much profit through him and exploited his talents to the full.

He was considered to be the very best in making swords in the whole area. Even top leaders of Quresh used to come to him to get their swords made. Those leaders therefore knew who Khabbab (ra) was ⁸.

He earned a lot of money from this craft, but only to pour in Umm Anmar’s pocket. The woman was taking full advantage of his talents. Indeed it was a miserable life that he led where no one cared for him or felt any sympathy towards him.

“Khabbab had a weak body and skinny face. He spent most of his day in front of the furnace melting iron over red blocks of coal, moving them to the anvil and shaping

⁷ (Hamid, 1995)

⁸ (Mufti Ismail Menk, 2014)

them into sharp swords and spears. The flames of the fire in the furnace were very uncomfortable for his eyes and face. Unfortunately, this was the life the poor young man had to live”⁹.

“After a very hard day’s work, instead of taking some rest, young Khabbab kept busy serving his mistress at her house. He was always asked to clean the house, make food and even care for the camels. So, his life was a sad series of humiliation, oppression and starvation. He was not even allowed to take rest after a hard day’s work in front of the furnace”(Hamid, 1995)¹⁰.

Days were passing with great difficulty. Khabbab felt as though the whole world was fighting against him. Sometimes, he would spend the whole night sleepless thinking about his miserable life. To add to his agony, his mistress was forcing him to pray to idols. Khabbab ibn al-Aratt (ra) hated the idea of worshiping stones. He knew very well that those stones were not gods. They could not even help themselves let alone help him.

“In spite of his youthfulness, Khabbab (ra) displayed unique intelligence and wisdom. Often, when he had finished work and was left to himself, he would reflect deeply on the state of Arabian society which was so steeped in corruption”¹¹.

“Khabbab ibn al-Aratt often wondered who was the real deity that deserved to be worshiped and to whom he

⁹ (PPC, 2012)

¹⁰ (PPC, 2012)

¹¹ (Hamid, 1995)

should turn for help. He spent his nights in front of the window of his small and miserable room staring at the moon and the stars, asking himself who would save him from this miserable life. He felt as though the stars were staring back at him with sympathy and the moon was pleading with him to think more deeply to find an answer. Many thoughts crossed his mind. He longed to find a way out of this miserable and painful life, but there was no way out for him. Poverty, misery, humiliation and lonely nights added to his sadness"¹² .

“He was appalled at the aimless wandering, the ignorance and the tyranny which he saw. He was one of the victims of this tyranny and he would say to himself: *After this night of darkness, there must be a dawn.* And he hoped that he would live long enough to see the darkness dissipate with the steady glow and brightness of new light"¹³.

¹² (PPC, 2012)

¹³ (Hamid, 1995)

He Finally Finds the Light

“Khabbab did not have to wait long. He was privileged to be in Makkah when the first rays of the light of Islam penetrated the city. It emanated from the lips of Muhammad ibn Abdullah ﷺ, the messenger of Allah, as he announced that none deserves to be worshipped or adored except the Creator and Sustainer of the universe. He called for an end to injustice and oppression and sharply criticised the practices of the rich in accumulating wealth at the expense of the poor and the outcast. He denounced aristocratic privileges and attitudes and called for a new order based on respect for human dignity and compassion for the underprivileged including orphans, wayfarers and the needy.”¹⁴

“The people of Mecca received the message of Muhammad (Pbuh) with indifference. A few of them believed in it but most of them did not. Those who wanted to stay in power and oppress the weak and poor did not want to believe in the message that Muhammad (Pbuh) came with, because they did not want to lose their power. They did their best to stop the message of Islam and tried to put an end to the life of the Prophet (Pbuh).

Khabbab ibn al-aratt learnt from the people passing by his shop that Muhammad (pbuh) was claiming to have

¹⁴ (Hamid, 1995)

received revelation from Allah. The people of Mecca were saying different things about him. Some falsely claimed he was a lunatic and others alleged he was a magician. A few people believed that he was indeed a Messenger sent by Allah to save mankind from the miserable and false Jives they were leading”.¹⁵

“Khabbab ibn al-aratt thought deeply regarding what he was hearing about the Prophet (pbuh) and Islam. Being unsatisfied with the things he heard from people, he decided to hear the message of Islam directly from the man who was preaching it. He felt that change was near, and that the teachings of Muhammad were like a powerful light paving the way for him in utter darkness.

His mind was full of different thoughts. Sometimes, he would think of his miserable condition and the light the new religion could bring to his Life. Yet other times he would think that his mistress would make his life more difficult if he would follow the new religion.

Khabbab ibn al-aratt spent the whole night haunted by such thoughts. Dawn was about to break. Khabbab was still awake. He had not slept a wink as he made his way to his shop; he passed by some slaves who were chained to rocks. Their lips were dry and desperate for a drop of water. The disbelievers had beaten them severely for abandoning the worship of idols and following the religion that Muhammad (Pbuh) had been sent with.

¹⁵ (PPC, 2012)

For a moment he thought he could help them, but then he immediately turned back with tears rolling down his cheeks. He opened the door of his shop with his shivering hand and supported his body against the wall. He let out a sigh full of sorrow. He felt that the people who were passing outside his shop were shadows. It seemed to him as though he was in an unreal world. He closed his eyes for a moment, and the stream of his life passed swiftly through his mind. Suddenly he stood up, and told himself that he had to make his mind up either way.

Khabbab ibn al-Aratt was finally determined to meet the Prophet (Pbuh). However, it was very dangerous to openly meet him during the day. He waited until it became dark again and set off to meet the Prophet g,

Something unusual was indeed waiting Khabbab ibn al-Aratt. In the depth of his heart he knew that meeting the Prophet ﷺ would change his life, because he knew that the religion of Islam was the true religion of Allah. The message of Islam touched his soul and mind very powerfully.

He spent the whole day in his shop; sometimes looking at the furnace and then looking towards the road that led to the Ka'bah. He did not get much work done that day. His mind was preoccupied with thinking whether this would be his last day of physical and mental misery or would it make things worse for him.

The sun began moving towards the west. Khabbab ibn al-aratt closed his shop and left to his house. When he got

home it was already dark. He went into his room, threw himself on his bed and closed his eyes. He slept, and paid no attention to the calls of his mistress. A few hours later he woke up. Everything around him was quiet. He peeped through the cracks of the door to make sure his mistress was asleep. He opened the door and went out into the dark. Everything around him was so quiet. The stars were shining with joy and the moon was gazing from behind the eastern mountains of Mecca.

Khabbab ibn al-aratt was told that the Prophet (pbuh) and his Companions were secretly gathering in a house near the Ka'bah. When he got to the house, he went inside and there he was face to face with the Prophet (Pbuh). Khabbab listened to the Word of Allah; it was like sparks of light coming out of the mouth of the Prophet (pbuh). The words filled his heart with guidance and conviction. Minutes later, the young man was melting like a piece of ice under the sun".¹⁶

"To Khabbab, the teachings of Muhammad were like a powerful light dispelling the darkness of ignorance"¹⁷. "Without any hesitation he stretched out his hand to the Prophet in allegiance and testified that *There is no god but Allah and Muhammad is His servant and His messenger*. He was among the first ten persons to accept Islam."¹⁸

"He knew that by accepting Islam he would face a lot of oppression and torture, because he was poor and weak.

¹⁶ (PPC, 2012)

¹⁷ (Hamid, 1995)

¹⁸ (Hamid, 1995)

However, he happily welcomed whatever hardships he might have to face for the sake of his new faith and belief".¹⁹

¹⁹ (Ahmed, 2000, p. 26)

Extreme Torture and Hardships

Khabbab did not hide his acceptance of Islam from anyone.

“The Khabbab affair shook the leaders of the Quraysh. They did not expect that a blacksmith, such as belonged to Umm Anmaar and who had no clan in Makkah to protect him and no *asabeyyah* to prevent him from injury, would be bold enough to go outside her authority, denounce her gods and reject the religion of her forefathers. They realized that this was only the beginning.

The Quraysh were not wrong in their expectations. Khabbab's courage impressed many of his friends and encouraged them to announce their acceptance of Islam. One after another, they began to proclaim publicly the message of truth.

In the precincts of the Haram, near the Ka'bah, the Quraysh leaders gathered to discuss the problem of Muhammad. Among them were Abu Sufyan ibn Harb, al-Walid ibn al-Mughira and Abu Jahl ibn Hisham. They noted that Muhammad was getting stronger and that his following was increasing day by day, indeed hour by hour. To them this was like a terrible disease and they made up their minds to stop it before it got out of control.

They decided that each tribe should get hold of any follower of Muhammad among them and punish him until he either recants his faith or dies.

On Siba'a ibn Abd al-Uzza and his people fell the task of punishing Khabbab"²⁰.

"Siba'a ibn Abd al-Uzza gathered a gang of youths from the Khuza'a tribe and together they made their way to Khabbab. They found him completely engrossed in his work. Siba'a went up to him and said:

"We have heard some news from you which we don't believe."

"What is it?" asked Khabbab.

"We have been told that you have given up your religion and that you now follow that man from the Banu Hashim ."

"I have not given up my religion," replied Khabbab calmly. *"I only believe in One God Who has no partner. I reject your idols and I believe that Muhammad is the servant of God and His messenger."*

No sooner had Khabbab (ra) spoken these words than Siba'a and his gang set upon him. They beat him with their fists and with iron bars and they kicked him until he fell unconscious to the ground, with blood streaming from the wounds he received."²¹

²⁰ (Hamid, 1995)

²¹ (Hamid, 1995)

Umm Anmar, Khabbab's mistress, also became very angry and vicious. Her heart burned with hatred. She asked her slaves to bring Khabbab to her. He was brought to her chained and was thrown down at her feet. The nasty woman stripped his shirt off, brought a piece of glowing iron, and placed it on his back. Khabbab (ra) was in so much pain that he lost consciousness. Umm Anmar was very evil. She felt no shame of what she was doing. She in fact enjoyed the smell of poor Khabbab's burnt skin.²²

"The news of what happened between Khabbab and his slave mistress spread throughout Makkah like wild-fire. People were astonished at Khabbab's daring. They had not yet heard of anyone who followed Muhammad and who had had the audacity to announce the fact with such frankness and defiant confidence."²³

Siba'a regularly began taking him to an open area in the city when the sun was at its zenith and the ground was scorching hot. He and his gang would take off his clothes and dress him in iron armour and lay him on the ground. In the intense heat his skin would be seared and his body would become inert. When it appeared that all strength had left him, they would come up and challenge him:

"What do you say about Muhammad?"

²² (PPC, 2012)

²³ (Hamid, 1995)

"He is the servant of God and His messenger. He has come with the religion of guidance and truth, to lead us from darkness into light."

They would become more furious and intensify their beating. They would ask about al-Laat and al-Uzza and he would reply firmly:

"Two idols, deaf and dumb, that cannot cause harm or bring any benefit..."

This enraged them even more and they would take a big hot stone and place it on his back. Khabbab's pain and anguish would be excruciating but he did not recant."²⁴

Hardships for Khabbab (ra) were not only physical. He was also put under financial pressures. Imam Ahmad reported from Khabbaab Bin Arat that he said:

I was a blacksmith and Al-Aas Bin Wail²⁵, a tyrant from Quraish²⁶, owed me a debt, so I went to him to collect my debt from him. He said to me "No, By Allaah, I will not pay my debt to you until you disbelieve in Muhammad." I replied to him "No, by Allaah, I will not disbelieve in Muhammad (saw) until you die and are resurrected again (which according to the disbeliever meant 'never')". He then said to me, "Verily if I die and am resurrected, and you come to me, I will also have abundance of wealth and children and I will repay you then." Then Allaah revealed these aayaat (verses of The Qur'aan):

²⁴ (Hamid, 1995)

²⁵ (Abdul-Rahman, 2009, p. 55)

²⁶ (Mufti Ismail Menk, 2014)

Have you seen him who disbelieved in Our Ayat (this Quran and Muhammad SAW) and (yet) says: "I shall certainly be given wealth and children [if I will be alive (again)],"

Has he known the unseen or has he taken a covenant from the Most Beneficent (Allah)?

Nay! We shall record what he says, and We shall increase his torment (in the Hell);

And We shall inherit from him (at his death) all that he talks of (i.e. wealth and children which We have bestowed upon him in this world), and he shall come to Us alone.²⁷

If Quran mentions about punishment of a non-believing person in the hereafter, it means that particular person cannot accept Islam any more²⁸. It accordingly becomes clear to us that Al-Aas Bin Wail is one of the people from the hell and his mocking of Khabbab (ra) did not bring him anything but humiliation and empty-handedness in the here-after.

In spite of all the torture and agonies, Khabbab ibn al-aratt (ra) kept steadfast and firm to his faith. His mistress and people of Quresh tried their best to make him abandon Islam but could not even get him to utter a single word against his newly found faith. He did not despair a bit, nor did he lose patience in the face of his sufferings.

²⁷ Quran 19: 77-80

²⁸ (Mufti Ismail Menk, 2014)

He was as strong as the high mountains that surrounded Mecca.²⁹

When Khabbab informed Prophet Muhammad ﷺ informed him about such hardships, he told him about similar treatment that believers in previous prophets used to face as well:

"Among the nations before you a (believing) man would be put in a ditch that was dug for him, and a saw would be put over his head and he would be cut into two pieces; yet that (torture) would not make him give up his religion. His body would be combed with iron combs that would remove his flesh from the bones and nerves, yet that would not make him abandon his religion. By Allah, this religion (i.e. Islam) will prevail till a traveler from Sana (in Yemen) to Hadrarmaut will fear none but Allah, or a wolf as regards his sheep, but you (people) are hasty."³⁰

Hazrat Khabab (R.A) narrates, his own painful story, "One day I saw that the pagans kindled the fire for me. They laid me and put the burning coals on my back. Due to its enormous heat, fats of my back melted away and thus the burning coals were blown out".³¹

Once Hazrat Khabab (ra) came to Hazrat Umar (R.A), he made him sit near him and said, only one person deserves more than you to sit down here. I asked, "O Amirul Mumineen! Who is that"? He said, "Bilal".

²⁹ (PPC, 2012)

³⁰ (Abdul-Rahman, 2009, p. 55; Muslim & Bukhari, 2014, p. 488)

³¹ Al-Syrat-ul-Halbiah, Vol. 1, P386

I said, “Bilal does not deserve more than me because there were people who used to stop the pagans tormenting him, but none for me. I remember, one day they lit fire for me and they dragged me into it. Then a pagan put his foot on my chest”. Then Hazrat Khabab (R.A) rolled his shirt up from his back and there were leprosy like spots on it.³²

³² Sabal-ul-Huda Walrrashad. Vol 2, P479

Khabbab (ra) Attracts Umer (ra) to Islam

Khabbab (ra) was one of those oppressed believers who had no hope of protection or safety except for his (ra) strong belief in Allah and His Messenger ﷺ. He arose from the life of slavery to become a great teacher of the Holy Quran owing to his reading and writing skills coupled with strong desire to earn Allah's pleasure³³. He used to listen and ponder over every verse of Quran and attended gatherings of believers at night to learn Quran. Abdullah Ibn Masud (ra) says that when he used to have any questions about Quran, Khabbab (ra) was the person he used to go to get his answers³⁴.

The pagan Arabs were torturing the Muslims in many ways, so the Muslims had to meet secretly to learn the Qur'an.

"Once Khabbab ibn al-aratt (ra) was at the house of Said bin Zaid (ra), teaching both him and his wife, Fatimah bint Al-Khattab (ra) how to read the Qur'an. Umar bin Al-Khattab, Fatimah's brother, who was an idol worshipper at the time, was very much against Islam. He even took an oath to kill Prophet ﷺ and put an end to Islam. One day Umar took his sword and set off on his mission to kill the Prophet ﷺ. On the way he met a man

³³ ("Hazrat Khabbab Bin Al-Aratt (R.A)," 2013)

³⁴ (Mufti Ismail Menk, 2014)

named Na'eem. He had already accepted Islam and kept it secret. When he saw that Umar was in a very bad mood storming his way through the streets of Mecca, he asked Umar where he was going. Umar replied that he was going to kill Muhammad ﷺ and put an end to the message of Islam. Na'eem wanted to divert Umar's bad intentions. He told him that he should see his sister before killing the Prophet ﷺ, for even she had become a Muslim. Umar became very angry when he heard that his sister had become a Muslim. He immediately made his way towards his sister's house and banged on her door. Inside he could hear Khabbab (ra) teaching Fatimah (ra) and her husband the Quran. Khabbab ibn al-aratt (ra) was reading some Verses from Surah Ta-Ha of the Quran. Fatimah peeped through the cracks of the door. She saw her brother with a sword in his hand and signs of anger on his face. She asked Khabbab (ra) to hide, and she opened the door for her brother.

Umar stepped inside and shouted: "What were you reading?" Fatimah (ra) answered that they were reading nothing.

He told her that he knew they were reading the Qur'an. Fatimah denied that they were reading the Qur'an. Umar told her that he knew they had become Muslims. Fatimah (ra) admitted that they had become Muslims. Upon hearing this, Umar slapped Fatimah (ra) violently on her face so much so that she began bleeding from her nose.

When Umar saw blood streaming out of his sister's nose, he felt very ashamed of what he had done. He asked his sister to show him what they were reading. Fatimah allowed Umar to see the written pages. Umar began reading the Verses from Surah Ta-Ha in which Allah says:

“We have not sent down the Qur'an unto you (O Muhammad) to cause you distress, but only as a Reminder to those who fear (Allah). A revelation from Him (Allah) Who has created the earth and high heavens.” (20:2-4)

As soon as Khabbab heard Umar reciting the Quran, he came out of his hiding place. When Umar read these Verses his heart melted. He knew that the Quran was from the true God, Allah. Tears rolled down his cheeks. Khabbab told Umar that he heard the Prophet praying to Allah to strengthen Islam by guiding Umar to accept Islam. Umar immediately left to meet the Prophet ﷺ and accepted Islam.

Umar was a tall and a very powerful young man. He was well known for his temper. He knocked on the door of the house where the Prophet (ra) and his Companions were gathering and waited for someone to open the door. The Prophet (ra) asked one of his Companions to see who was at the door. The man came back full of horror. He told the Prophet that Umar was at the door.

Hamza (ra), Prophet ﷺ's uncle who had already accepted Islam, asked the Prophet (ra) to allow him to kill Umar. However, the Prophet ﷺ told his Companions to

be patient and to open the door for Umar (ra), As soon as Umar stepped in, the Prophet ﷺ asked him:

“What do you want? I fear for you lest Allah sends down His punishment on you”.

Umar gently told the Prophet (Pbuh) that he came to embrace Islam. The Muslims who were with the Prophet ﷺ at that time were very happy. They felt that Umar added to their strength.

So Khabbab ibn al-aratt (ra) was able to attract Umar to Islam. Umar later became one of the most prominent supporters’ of Islam. He was also the second Caliph of Islam after the Prophet.”³⁵

³⁵ (Ahmed, 2000, pp. 29–33)

Punishment for Umm Anmaar

One day, deeply in pain due to continued torture, he (R.A) complained regarding this torture to the Holy Prophet (S.A.W). “Rasoolullah (S.A.W) prayed for him; “O Allah! Help him in such fatal crisis”. As the lips of Holy Prophet (S.A.W) moved, that cruel lady felt headache. By the intensity of this headache, she began to haul like dogs³⁶. The only way she would feel at ease would be to have warm piece of iron placed on her head, so Hazrat Khabab (R.A) used to warm a piece of iron and put it on her head to cure her headache.

Allah punished the cruel lady for her deeds in a pitiful manner. Since Umm Anmaar was afflicted with a terrible illness which no one had heard of before, she could not prevent Khabab from going when Prophet ﷺ allowed Muslims to migrate.

There is a clear message for us in this that anyone who harms others, it comes back to him or herself back. Let us aim not to harm any fellow human being through our hands or tongue³⁷.

³⁶ (“Hazrat Khabab Bin Al-Aratt (R.A),” 2013; Mufti Ismail Menk, 2014)

³⁷ (Mufti Ismail Menk, 2014)

Migration to Abyssinia

“The pagans of Mecca had made life very difficult for the Muslims. The Muslims eventually had to leave their hometown and settle in another place to escape the Quraish’s oppression and to be able to worship Allah in peace.

Khabbab ibn al-aratt (ra) and some other Muslims had no choice but to leave the land of oppression and agonies. They asked the Prophet (Pbuh) to allow them to move to another place where they would be safe to worship Allah.

The Prophet (Pbuh) allowed some of his Companions to migrate to Abyssinia (now Ethiopia). He told them that the king of Abyssinia was a just Christian ruler. He did not allow any injustice in his land. The Prophet (Pbuh) told his Companions that the king would treat them with justice and would never allow anyone to harm them.

Khabbab ibn al-aratt (ra) and some other Muslims left Mecca while it was dark. When the pagans found out that some of the Muslims had left Mecca and gone to settle in Abyssinia where they would be safe from their oppression, they became very angry. They tried their best to stop them, but it was too late. The Muslims had already gone too far.

The Quraish then decided to send a delegation to Najashi, king of Abyssinia, asking him to send the Muslims back to Mecca. Amr bin Al-Aas, who was the king's friend, was sent to Abyssinia to undertake this mission. The Quraish sent some very expensive presents for the king, hoping that he would expel the Muslims from his land.

Amr bin Al-Aas went to Abyssinia and met the king. He told him that some rebels had sought shelter in his land and that these rebels had left the religion of their people for a strange religion.

After hearing what Amr bin Al-Aas had to say, the king being a very fair judge said that he wanted to hear what the Muslims had to say before he could make a decision.

Jafar bin Abi Talib (ra) was chosen as the spokesperson for the Muslims. The king asked them about the new religion. Ja'far (ra) told the king that they used to be ignorant people, worshipping stones, robbing each other and treating the poor and weak very badly, Allah sent a messenger from among themselves, well known to them with good morals that none of them ever doubted him in any respect. Jafar went on saying that the Messenger taught them to worship Allah Alone, the Creator of the universe, without joining any partners to Him. He taught them to treat the weak and poor with kindness and to be good to each other.

The king asked them what Islam said about Jesus Christ and his mother. Jafar recited the opening Verses of

Surah Maryam. As soon as the king heard the Verses, tears began to flow from his eyes. When the meeting came to an end, the king told the migrants that they were free to live in his kingdom.

The Muslims stayed in Abyssinia under the care and protection of the king until they left to Medina to join the Prophet (Pbuh) and his Companions in building the new Islamic State”³⁸.

³⁸ (Ahmed, 2000, pp. 34–37)

Migration to Madinah

Quraish's Trick:

Some spies from the Quraish had spread rumors that the situation in Mecca was better. They said that the Prophet (Pbuh) reached an agreement with the Quraish. Some of the Muslims believed the rumors to be true and happily returned back to Mecca. However, this was an attempt on the part of the Quraish to bring the Muslims back to Mecca so that they could torture them again. Khabbab ibn al-aratt and his Companions were able to escape the oppression once more and migrate to Medina.³⁹

Migration to Medina

Prophet Muhammad ﷺ not only called his own tribesmen to Islam but also others outside Mecca. Many people from the Arabian Peninsula came to Mecca every year to visit the Kaaba and do trade with the people there.

A group of men from Yathrib (known later as Medina) visited Mecca. The Prophet ﷺ called them to Islam and asked them to provide protection Muslims in their town so that he may be able to further propagating the word of Allah.

³⁹ (Ahmed, 2000; PPC, 2012)

The people of Medina had already heard prophecies from the Jews who lived in the suburbs of Medina that a Prophet was going to appear in the Arabian Peninsula. “So, the men were sure that it was Muhammad ﷺ - the final Messenger. They immediately believed in him and promised to come the next year with the chiefs of their tribes to make an agreement with the Prophet.

Next year, the number of the Muslims increased. Seventy-three men and women from Medina made a trip to Mecca to make the agreement with the Prophet ﷺ.”⁴⁰ The people of Madinah were willing to accept Muslim migrants and do whatever they could to assist Prophet ﷺ spread the word of Allah.

“The Prophet ﷺ, accordingly, asked his companions to migrate to Madinah. Khabbab ibn al-aratt (ra) set off to Medina under the cover of darkness. He arrived there and found much support and help from his brothers in Islam in Al-Madinah”⁴¹.

⁴⁰ (PPC, 2012)

⁴¹(Ahmed, 2000, p. 39)

Defending Islam in Madinah

In Medina, Khabbab (ra) along with other Muslims began building a new Islamic State. After a while, the Prophet ﷺ accompanied by Abu Bakr (ra) left Mecca to Medina. In Medina, the Prophet ﷺ was very warmly welcomed by the migrants and the supporters.

“At Madinah, among the generous and hospitable Ansar, Khabbab (ra) experienced a state of ease and restfulness which he had not known for a long time. He was delighted to be near the Prophet ﷺ, peace be upon him, with no one to molest him or disturb his happiness”.⁴²

Quraish did not accept Muslims to live in peace in Madinah and started preparations for attack. Muslims, despite low in resources, were very high in their commitment to Islam and the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. Khabbab ibn al-aratt was one of the courageous warrior among Muslims and was ready to sacrifice his soul and all his belongings for the sake of Islam.

“In the second year after the Muslims had settled in Madinah, Muslims began patrolling outside Madinah for security purposes. They received the news of a Quraish caravan nearby and went towards it to check it. Abu Sufyan, the caravan leader, quickly took a different route. At the same time, however, Abu Sufyan sent a message to

⁴² (Hamid, 1995)

Mecca warning the rest of the Quraish that their caravan was in danger.

The Quraish chiefs were very angry that the Muslims were threatening their economic interests. Therefore, they organized a heavily armed army of about one thousand fighters and headed toward Medinah to put an end to Islam and its followers.

The Prophet ﷺ and his Companions heard of the Quraish's plan and decided to protect their city against the overwhelming attack. The Prophet ﷺ consulted his companions who all decided to fight for their faith. The Muslims prepared a barely armed army of three hundred and thirteen men.

Both armies met at a place called Badr near Medina. Khabbab ibn al-aratt felt very happy for this occasion and was well prepared to sacrifice himself for the cause of Allah. Full of devotion and self-denial, Khabbab fought an honorable battle that ended in a great victory for the Muslims. This battle is known as the battle of Badr⁴³.

The Quraish did not accept the fact that they had lost their battle against such a small number of Muslims. "The idolaters, to revenge their loss at Badr, made tremendous preparations for a new attack upon the Muslims. They collected an army of three thousand strong men, of whom seven hundred were armed with coats of mail, and two hundred horses. These forces advanced under the conduct of Abu Sufyan and encamped at a village six miles from

⁴³ (Ahmed, 2000, pp. 40–41)

Medina, where they gave themselves up to spoiling the fields and flocks of the Medinites. The Prophet, being much inferior to his enemies in number, at first determined to keep himself within the town and to receive them there; but afterwards, the advice of some of his companions prevailing he marched out against them at the head of one thousand men, of whom one hundred were armed with coats of mail; but he had no more than one horse, besides his own, in his whole army. With these forces he halted at Mount Uhud. He was soon abandoned by 'Abdullah Ibn Ubai, the leader of the Hypocrites, with three hundred of his followers. Thus, the small force of the Prophet was reduced to seven hundred.”⁴⁴

“Both the Muslim army and the Quraish army met at the valley of Uhud. The Prophet ﷺ chose fifty archers and positioned them on a small hill behind the Muslim army to protect the backs of the Muslims against any attack by the pagan army from behind.

Khabbab ibn al-aratt and his Muslim brothers fought very bravely in the battle.”⁴⁵ Khabbab (ra) had the satisfaction of seeing Siba'a ibn Abd al-Uzza, his hard-hearted torturer; meet his end at the hands of Hamza ibn Abd al-Muttalib (ra), the uncle of the Prophet⁴⁶.

They were defeating the pagan army. The archers saw their Muslim brothers collecting booty. They thought that they had finally defeated the pagans. Therefore, they left

⁴⁴ (“The Battle of Uhud,” 2010)

⁴⁵ (Ahmed, 2000, pp. 42–43)

⁴⁶ (Hamid, 1995)

their positions and shared in collecting booty. The pagan horsemen found it a good chance to attack the Muslim army from behind. The victory turned into a heavy loss for the Muslims as a result of the act of the archers.

As the pagans inflicted heavy losses on Muslims in Uhud, they were filled with arrogance. They thought that the Muslims could not withstand another battle and considered another battle to be essential in eliminating Muslims. They convinced other Arab tribes to collaborate with them in destroying Islam. The Jews, on the other hand, also found it to be a good chance to get rid of the Muslims although they had already made agreements with the Muslims to support them in their struggle against idolatry. One of the three powerful and wealthy Jewish tribes, Bani Nadir, was asked to leave Madinah an year before, for trying to kill prophet Muhammad ﷺ twice and breaking their treaty. The tribe left Madinah with its wealth and went to the walled fortress of Khaybar. A leader from the Bani Nadir is reported to have asked the Quraysh to help raise an army that would put an end to the Muslims at Madinah⁴⁷. Quraish agreed with the Jews to attack the Muslims from all sides.

The Quraish and their allies gathered an even bigger army as compared to battle of Uhud - ten thousand fighters, sponsored by Jews of Khyber⁴⁸. They headed to Madinah to put an end to Islam and destroy the newly built Islamic State.

⁴⁷ (Gulam, 2010)

⁴⁸ ("The Battle of Trench," 2015)

“When the Prophet (peace be upon him) learned of the Jews evil designs to wipe the Muslims out of existence, he conferred with his companions (May Allah be pleased with them) on how to take the threat. It was decided that they launch a defensive war resisting the attack of the enemy against the city instead of facing the coalition in a pitched battle outside Madinah. So the Prophet ﷺ assembled a force of three thousand armed men in defense of the city. A Persian companion called Salman Al-Farsi (ra), advised digging a trench along the side of Madinah which was laid open to cavalry attack⁴⁹. This advice was well-known to the Iranians”⁵⁰.

The Prophet (peace be upon him) agreed to his suggestion and decided to have a trench dug in the open ground lying to the north of Madinah. The city was exposed to assault only on that side and was well protected to the west, south and east by clumped plantations, volcanic rocky plains and granitic hills, presenting a considerable obstacle to the cause of a mounted army.

The Prophet (peace be upon him) marked the planned ditch and assigned every group of ten persons to dig forty cubits.

Khabbab ibn al-aratt (ra) did all he could to help his fellow Muslims in completing the trench before the arrival of the pagan army along with Prophet ﷺ who was

⁴⁹ (Ibn Hisham, 2000)

⁵⁰ (“The Battle of Trench,” 2015)

himself moving soil and stones on his shoulder while leading from the front.

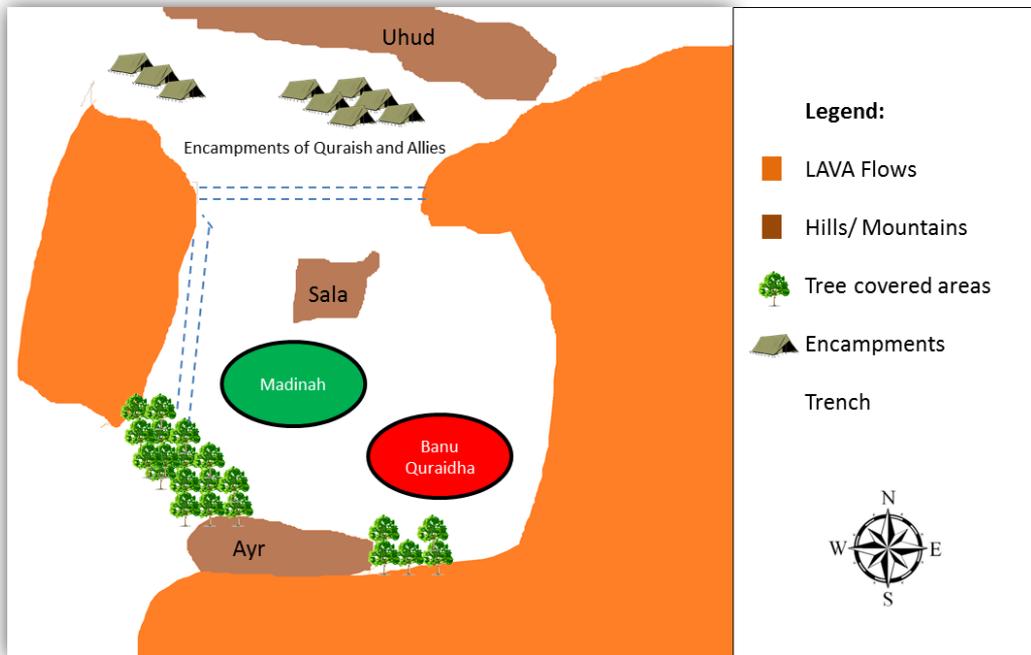


Figure 1: Battle of Trench

“Upon the arrival of the pagan army, Khabbab and his fellow Muslims stood on the other side of the trench daring anyone of the pagans to cross over. The siege continued for about one month. The pagans with their huge army were trying their best to cross over the trench and the Jews were waiting for the chance to see the Muslims surrender to have them as an easy prey.⁵¹

Muslims during this time were facing a lot of hardships. Living on limited supplies, they were often very hungry. Khabbab and the other Muslims kept steadfast in the face of this huge dilemma.

⁵¹ (Ahmed, 2000, pp. 44–45)

“Prophet ﷺ asked one of his men, Hudhayfah ibn al-Yaman (ra), to go on a dangerous mission. The Prophet ﷺ told him to make his way across the trench to the enemy camp where he should find out what they were doing. With much difficulty Hudhayfah crossed the trench and made his way to a circle of Quraysh warriors talking in the darkness. He sat near them, but as there was no fire, no one noticed him. He then heard Abu Sufyan 's voice: 'Let us go home!' he said. 'We have had enough. The horses and camels are dying, the tents keep blowing away, most of the equipment has been lost, and we cannot cook our food. There is no reason to stay!' Shortly after hearing this Hudhayfah made his way quickly and quietly back across the trench and the next morning the Muslims rejoiced to find that what he had overheard had come true-Quraysh and their allies had gone away! The siege of Medina had ended in a great victory for Islam.”⁵²

Afterwards, Khabbab ibn al-aratt took part in all battles fought in defense of Islam. He participated with the Prophet ﷺ and his fellow Muslims in conquest of Mecca and putting an end to idolatry in the Arabian Peninsula. He also joined the Prophet ﷺ in the Farewell Pilgrimage and was one of the committed believers listening attentively to the farewell sermon of their beloved Prophet ﷺ.

The Prophet (Pbuh) and his Companions returned to Medina after completing the pilgrimage. The Messenger of

⁵² (Alsergany, 2008)

Allah ﷺ passed away and handed over the mission of spreading his noble message to his Ummah.

Khabbab (ra) also fought the apostates who rebelled against the Muslims and brought them back to Islam. He continued his efforts to spread the light of Islam. He lived long enough to witness the great expansion of Islam under the four Khulafaa ar- Rashidun (ra).

The Last Days

Khabbab ibn al-aratt spent his life fully devoted to the cause of Islam. He did whatever he could to support Islam, and he wished he could spread Islam all over the world. He had never cared about the pleasures of this short life as to him what mattered more was the lift of hereafter. Even though he was leading a life of poverty and hardship, he was always afraid that he might have lived a life of pleasure.

Khabbab ibn al-aratt was very sad when he saw the Prophet ﷺ and some of his companions leave this world. He always prayed to Allah to be with them in the Paradise.

“Khabbab continued his way of life as he used to during the life of the Prophet ﷺ. He did not change even one little bit, even though the Islamic State was became much more well-established and wealthier during the rule of rashidun caliphs.

During the rule of Ali bin Abi Talib (ra), Khabbab ibn al-aratt (ra) left to Kufah in Iraq. In Kufah he stood by the Caliph and supported him against those who aimed to seize power. As time went on, old age made him ill. He stayed in his house remembering the days when he shared in the building of the Islamic State. He looked forward to

the next life, where he longed to be with the Prophet ﷺ and his Companions.”⁵³

In the last phase of his life, Khabbab (ra) was blessed with wealth such as he had never before thought of. He was, however, well-known for his generosity. It is said that he placed his dirhams and his dinars in a part of his house that was known to the poor and the needy. He did not secure this money in any way and those in need would come and take what they needed without seeking any permission or asking any questions⁵⁴.

A group of his friends visited him while he was dying on his bed. They told him that his dream to meet the Prophet and his Companions would at last come true. Khabbab (ra) cried, not because he was afraid to die, but because he was afraid that he might not be with the Prophet ﷺ and his Companions in the Hereafter owing to his God-fearing nature considering that he did not do enough for Islam!

"I weep," he said, "because my companions have passed away and they did not obtain any such reward in this world. I have lived on and have acquired this wealth and I fear that this will be the only reward for my deeds." These were his thoughts even when he never said 'no' to any person who ever asked anything from him⁵⁵. Such was the humility and taqwa of companions of our beloved Messenger.

⁵³ (Ahmed, 2000, p. 48)

⁵⁴ (Hamid, 1995; Mufti Ismail Menk, 2014)

⁵⁵ (Mufti Ismail Menk, 2014)

Soon after Khabbab (ra) passed away.

The fourth of the rashidoon caliphs, Ali ibn abi Talib, may God be pleased with him, one stood at his grave and said:

"May God have mercy on Khabbab. He accepted Islam wholeheartedly. He performed hijrah willingly. He lived as a mujahid and God shall not withhold the reward of one who has done good."⁵⁶

Khabbab ibn al-aratt died but he left behind an excellent example of sacrifice and self-denial for the coming generations of Muslims to follow.

⁵⁶ (Ahmed, 2000, p. 48; Hamid, 1995)

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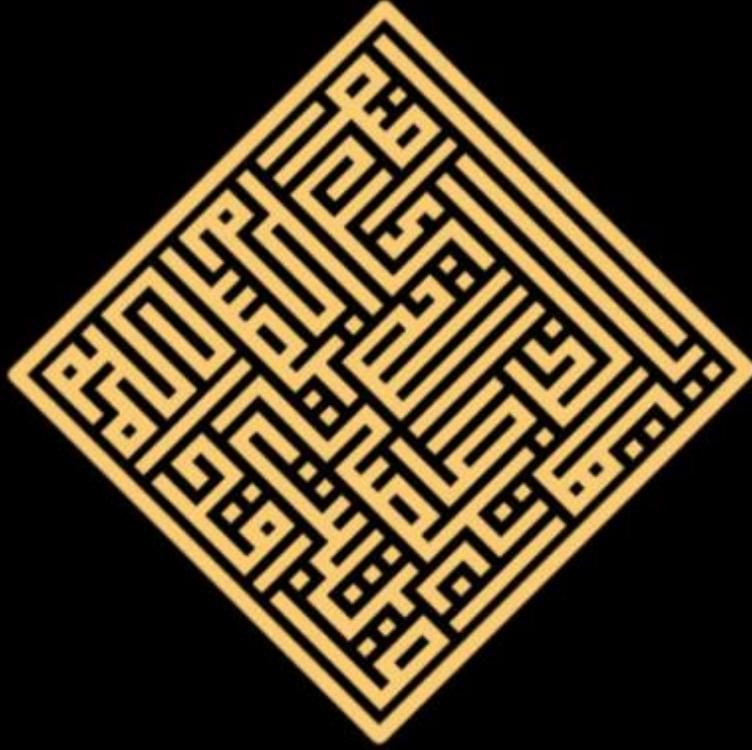
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يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِن تَنْصُرُوا اللَّهَ يَنْصُرْكُمْ وَيُثَبِّتْ أَقْدَامَكُمْ

Believers, if you aid Allah, He will come to your aid and will plant your feet firmly. Quran(47:7)

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