

The Golden Series of the Prophet's Companions

محمد

Az-Zubair bin Al-Awwam ❁

The Disciple

By

Abdul Basit Ahmad



The Golden Series of the Prophet's Companions

الزبير بن العوام رضي الله عنه - حواري الرسول ﷺ

Az-Zubair bin Al-Awwam رضي الله عنه

The Disciple





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Az-Zubair bin Al-Awwam 

The Disciple

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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)

Publisher's 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 children and encouraging them to be good Muslims.

This story, *'Az-Zubair bin Al-Awwam ؓ –The Disciple'*, is an inspirational account of the life of the Prophet Muhammad's cousin and Companion, Az-Zubair bin Al-Awwam ؓ. He was one of the earliest converts to Islam in Makkah and one of the youth who accepted Islam at a young age. In this story we read about the amazing events and struggles that occurred in the life of Az-Zubair as



he gave his all in support of the Prophet ﷺ and Islam.

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 children, 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 children. 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 prayer is that all praises are due to Allâh, the Lord of all that exists.

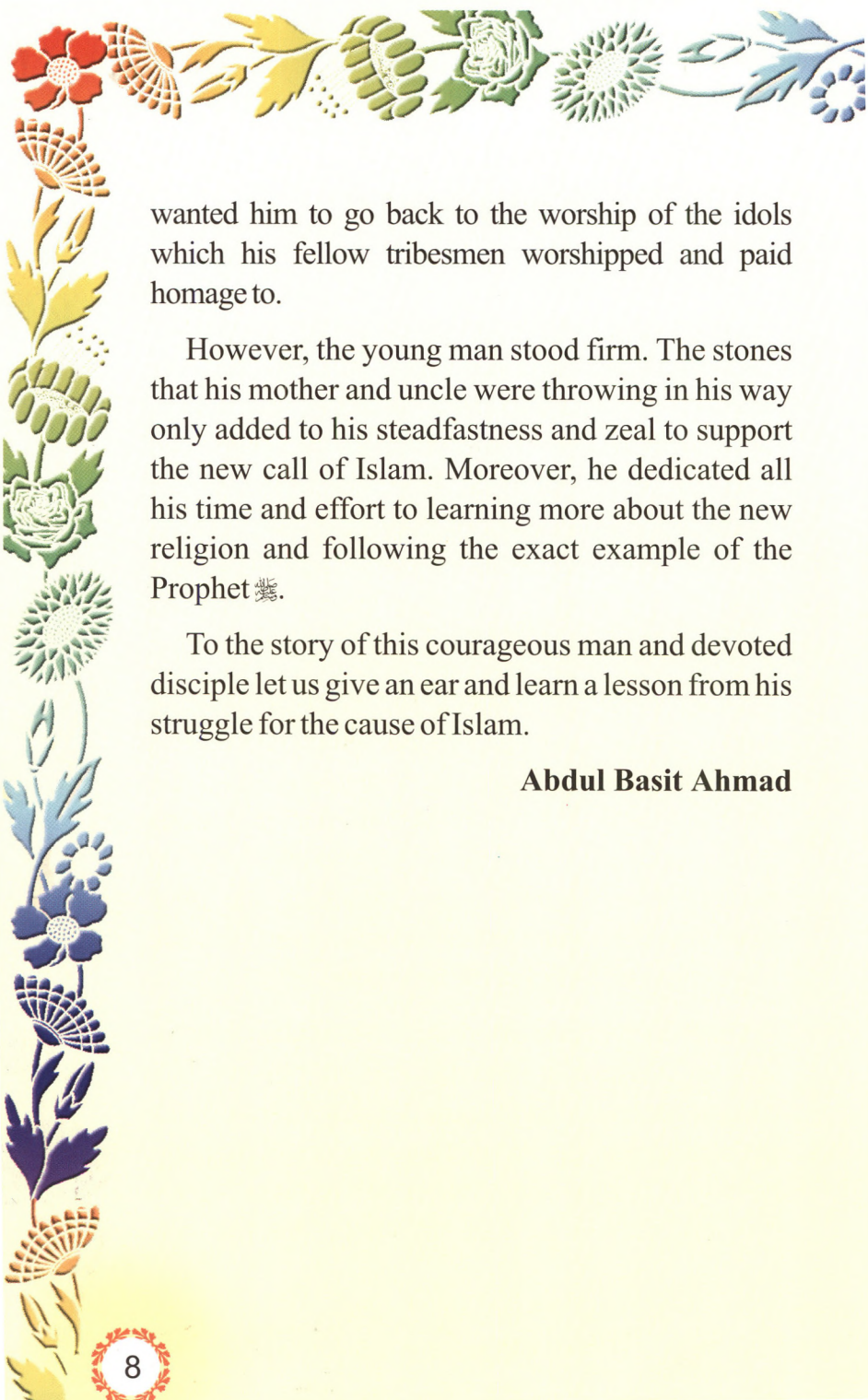
Abdul Malik Mujahid
General Manager

Foreword

Adopting a faith is not an easy step, especially when all the people around you object to this move forward. It is more like walking on thorns barefooted. Many of the youth of Makkah who accepted the religion of Islam received severe oppression by members of their families. Fathers, mothers and even brothers and sisters all joined together in a dirty war against members of their families who converted to the new religion.

Like any other society, the Arab society of Makkah felt that the change that Islam was promising was very great, especially that the Prophet ﷺ came to convert them from an idolatrous and immoral way of life to a pure and highly moral society. They immediately attacked the new religion and set themselves as foes against anyone who expressed belief in the new faith.

This was the case of our hero, Az-Zubair bin Al-Awwam. His mother vented all her anger against him to make him abandon the new religion. In spite of the fact that she was the Prophet's aunt, she stood against the Divine Message and did her best to make her son abandon the way he had chosen for his life. She

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wanted him to go back to the worship of the idols which his fellow tribesmen worshipped and paid homage to.

However, the young man stood firm. The stones that his mother and uncle were throwing in his way only added to his steadfastness and zeal to support the new call of Islam. Moreover, he dedicated all his time and effort to learning more about the new religion and following the exact example of the Prophet ﷺ.

To the story of this courageous man and devoted disciple let us give an ear and learn a lesson from his struggle for the cause of Islam.

Abdul Basit Ahmad

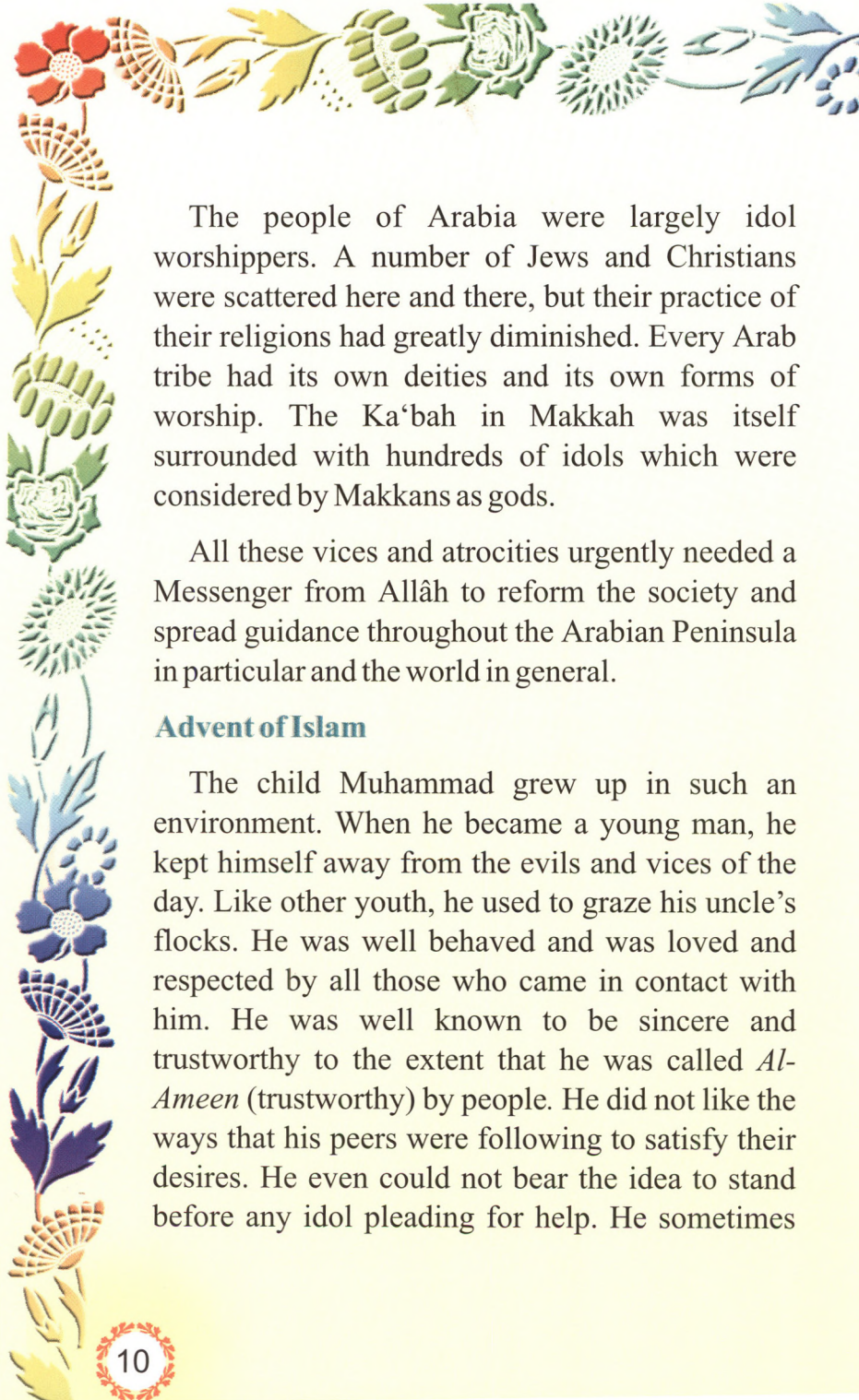


Introduction

Arabs before the rise of Islam

The Arab society in the Arabian Peninsula and surrounding areas mainly consisted of tribes and clans. Some of them lived in towns while most of them followed their flocks everywhere in the desert in search of food and water. These tribes were usually involved in wars amongst each other. Every tribe was invading and invaded by other tribes.

The gloom that loomed over the Arabian Peninsula and the world in general before the rise of Islam killed nearly every virtue in the minds and hearts of human beings at that time. Human rights, for example, were not given any value. Slavery, burying girls alive and injustices were dominating the societies of the city and desert alike. Youth and old were spending their time in grazing animals or practicing trade during the daytime and seeking trivial pleasures during the night. The guidance brought by previous religions was absent from the life of the people. There was no central government; rather, every tribe had its own chief and customs in spite of the fact that some common laws were prevailing in the society.


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The people of Arabia were largely idol worshippers. A number of Jews and Christians were scattered here and there, but their practice of their religions had greatly diminished. Every Arab tribe had its own deities and its own forms of worship. The Ka'bah in Makkah was itself surrounded with hundreds of idols which were considered by Makkans as gods.

All these vices and atrocities urgently needed a Messenger from Allâh to reform the society and spread guidance throughout the Arabian Peninsula in particular and the world in general.

Advent of Islam

The child Muhammad grew up in such an environment. When he became a young man, he kept himself away from the evils and vices of the day. Like other youth, he used to graze his uncle's flocks. He was well behaved and was loved and respected by all those who came in contact with him. He was well known to be sincere and trustworthy to the extent that he was called *Al-Ameen* (trustworthy) by people. He did not like the ways that his peers were following to satisfy their desires. He even could not bear the idea to stand before any idol pleading for help. He sometimes

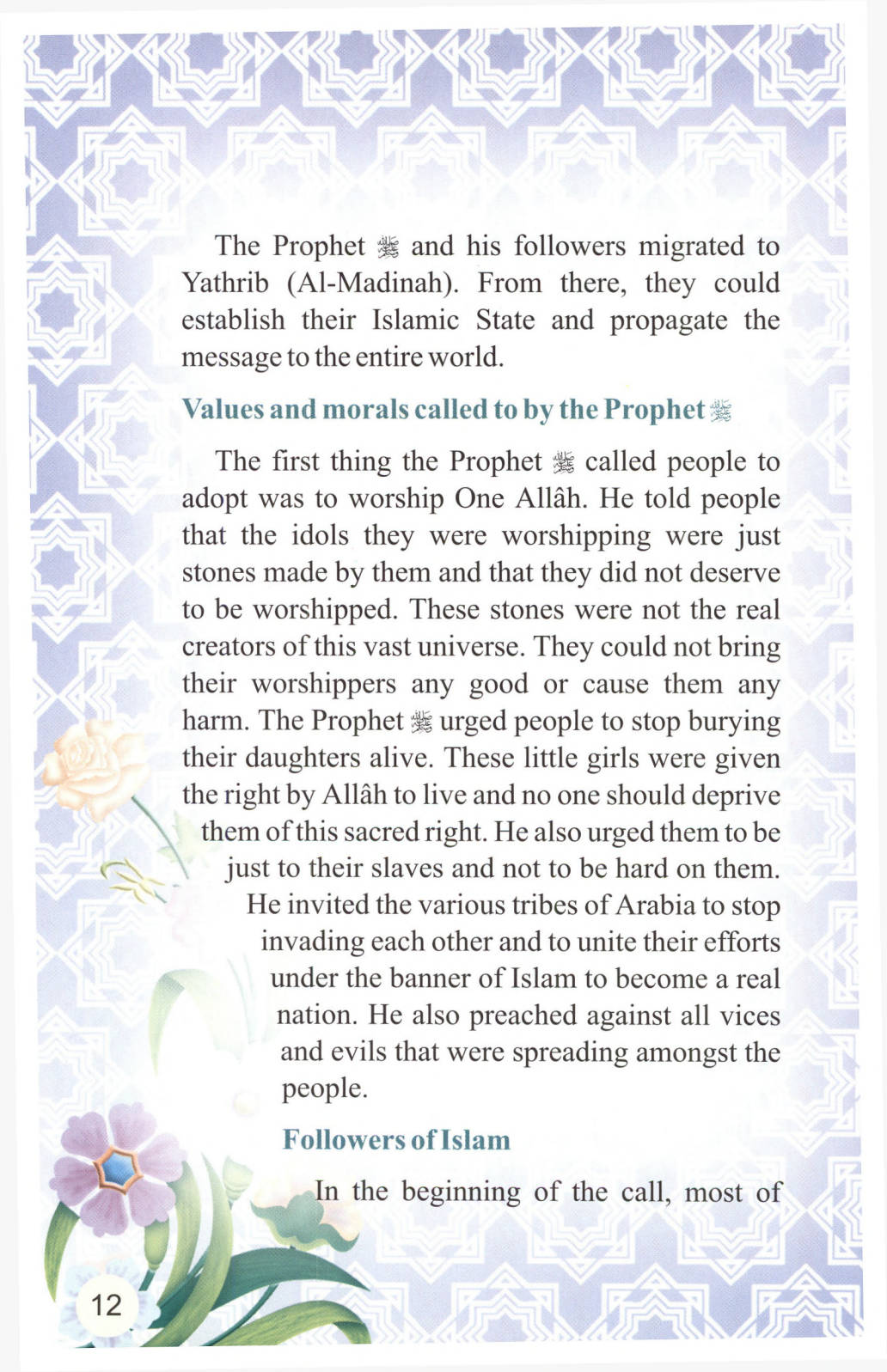


engaged in trade on behalf of wealthy men. It is well known that he visited Damascus twice before he was commissioned with the message of Islam. On the way there, many signs of his Prophethood were seen by his companions and even monks living in isolation. When he was twenty-five years old, he married a wealthy woman who preferred him over the chiefs of the Quraish.

At the age of forty, he was blessed by Allâh with the gift of Prophethood. He started preaching the new religion to his close relatives as ordered by Allâh. After three years of calling to Islam, he was ordered by Allâh to preach Islam in public. He met hard opposition and cruel oppression, especially by his tribesmen.

The Prophet ﷺ spent thirteen years in Makkah calling the people of Makkah and its surrounding areas to accept Islam. However, he did not realize much success.

The Prophet ﷺ changed his way of preaching Islam. He began asking visitors of Makkah to provide him protection to be able to proclaim the Word of Allâh. A group of visitors from a town called Yathrib believed in the message of Islam and pledged to provide the needed protection.



The Prophet ﷺ and his followers migrated to Yathrib (Al-Madinah). From there, they could establish their Islamic State and propagate the message to the entire world.

Values and morals called to by the Prophet ﷺ

The first thing the Prophet ﷺ called people to adopt was to worship One Allâh. He told people that the idols they were worshipping were just stones made by them and that they did not deserve to be worshipped. These stones were not the real creators of this vast universe. They could not bring their worshippers any good or cause them any harm. The Prophet ﷺ urged people to stop burying their daughters alive. These little girls were given the right by Allâh to live and no one should deprive them of this sacred right. He also urged them to be just to their slaves and not to be hard on them.

He invited the various tribes of Arabia to stop invading each other and to unite their efforts under the banner of Islam to become a real nation. He also preached against all vices and evils that were spreading amongst the people.

Followers of Islam

In the beginning of the call, most of

those who accepted Islam were weak people and slaves. They found justice and truth in the principles preached by the Prophet ﷺ. Although some of the early believers held good positions in their society, they also received their share of oppression and torture.

These followers were worshipping Allâh secretly. They faced the challenge with courage and steadfastness. All means to make them abandon their faith were of no avail. The torture they received at the hands of the pagans did not succeed in making them even say one word against their faith. Some of them were even killed under torture.

Attempts of the Quraish to stop the Call

The chiefs of the Quraish were furious to see Islam spread among people. In the beginning, they tried their best to make the followers of Islam recant. When they could not force the believers to give up their faith, they began accusing the Prophet ﷺ of things that they themselves knew were untrue. They alleged that Muhammad was a magician or a liar, although they themselves used to call him the Trustworthy. However, all their attempts were of no avail. They

followed another direction. They began negotiating with the Prophet ﷺ and his uncle to reach a compromise. They told the Prophet ﷺ that they would make him a king or give him all the money he might ask for. However, the Prophet ﷺ rejected all of their worldly proposals and continued preaching the message of Islam to all humanity.




The Orphan

Background

The Quraish tribe was comprised of several clans. The most prominent clan among them was the family of Bani Hashim. This clan had more than one religious and worldly function during the pre-Islamic period. It was notable and noble both in family lineage and position amongst the clans and tribes that inhabited Makkah. The Prophet ﷺ belonged to this clan.

Safiyah bint Abdul Muttalib, who belonged to this high-class family, finally married the notable man whom she loved and admired. She dreamt for a long time to have a son that would add to her happiness. Days were passing very slowly while she was waiting for the baby to come to this life. The bride felt she was coming closer to the day when she would be a mother.

Within the society of the Quraish, as well as other societies in the Arabian Peninsula, the household that had more male offspring was given more esteem.



They felt that such boys, later on as youth, would be the ones who would protect the tribe and give the family dignity and honour.

The Dream came True

Nine months later and for the good fortune of Safiyah, she gave birth to her son. She named him Az-Zubair. From the first minute, she gave him all the care and affection that would make him a man of notable rank among his peers. The baby grew day by day and the eyes of his mother followed his steps wherever he went. Like any other mother, she considered him a piece of herself and looked at him with hope and dreams as the young man who would give her a lofty position among the women of her society.

The Orphan and his Mother

As tribes during those ancient days used to invade and be invaded by other tribes and as wars were normally waged for trivial reasons, it was ordinary for a man like Al-Awwam (Az-Zubair's father) to spend the first half of the day with his family and to become a dead body under the earth in the second half of the day. All of a sudden, Az-Zubair was left an orphan under the custody of his mother. His father had been killed in a battle among

the tribes of Arabia that left nothing for many households other than mourning wives and miserable orphans.

After losing her husband, Az-Zubair's mother felt how much life was hard on her. Hence she was very keen to have recompense in her son. She ordered the boy to be trained how to use his sword and spear and how to become a man of dignity. She was very hard on him. She even beat him now and then. When she was asked why she beat him, she replied that she was doing so to make him a real man. Safiyah observed her son grow day by day. She felt very happy to learn that her son had quarreled with an adult man and had broken that man's arm. She was very proud to have a strong son.





In the Shrine of Islam

Monotheism and idolatry face to face

Az-Zubair grew into a strong and handsome young man. He enjoyed all the dignity and reputation that his horsemanship gave him amongst his tribesmen. He enjoyed his time with his peers. His main concern was to spend as much as he could of his time hunting and training with his sword and spear.

In addition to idolatry and setting up partners with Allâh, all the people of Makkah indulged in vices that made their life corrupt and empty of any sign of guidance from heaven. Injustices overwhelmed their acts and made the relations between the powerful and the weak tend to be tense most of the time.

In these bad conditions that prevailed in Makkah and the world in general, Muhammad bin Abdullah was sent by Allâh to preach the message of Islam. All the chiefs of the Quraish were against the message of Islam. In spite of all their cruelty, the Prophet ﷺ invited them to accept Islam to reform their society and to save them from the punishment of Allâh on the Day of Judgment. He was very

merciful toward them. Although they insulted him and made his mission very difficult, he exercised patience with them. He and his few followers stood fast in the face of torture and oppression that the Quraish inflicted on them. Neither the Prophet ﷺ nor any of his followers were violent against their oppressors.

Az-Zubair and the New Message

Az-Zubair (Muhammad's cousin) saw all the agonies that the Muslims were undergoing. Although he was too young, he was sensible enough to understand what the principles of Islam meant. He, among others, listened carefully to the Prophet ﷺ and decided to adopt the new religion as a way of life.

Even before the advent of Islam, Az-Zubair was well aware of the bad condition of the people in Makkah. He felt inside himself that some sort of guidance should come to change the corrupt society of the Arabs.

On a dark night, Az-Zubair isolated himself and began thinking of those a few people who followed the new religion. He saw how much they suffered for no reason but because they held fast to their faith. The guidance that came from up high



had touched his heart. He knew how much Muhammad was honest. His mother had told him before that her nephew was famous for his truthfulness. However, after Muhammad proclaimed Islam, she extremely opposed him. Conflicting thoughts tore his mind. He could not figure a way out of this inner conflict.

Az-Zubair kept the whole night awake. The dawn was about to break and the gentle breeze of early morning gave him new hopes. He thought that it was better to know more about the new religion from the closest man to the Prophet ﷺ. He left his home and went to Abu Bakr's house. Abu Bakr ﷺ had already accepted Islam without any hesitation from the first moment the Prophet ﷺ called him to be a Muslim. Abu Bakr told Az-Zubair that Muhammad was a true Messenger from Allâh. He explained to him the principles of Islam and urged him to follow the teachings of the Prophet ﷺ. Az-Zubair became convinced that Islam was the solution to all the problems that his society was undergoing. He immediately expressed his interest to meet the Prophet ﷺ and embrace Islam.

Az-Zubair Defends Islam

Abu Bakr ﷺ immediately took the young man to the Prophet's house. There, Az-Zubair declared that he accepted Islam. He was fifteen years old at that time. He was the fifth person to accept Islam. He pledged to defend his faith to the last moment of his life.

Day after day, the Quraish added to their oppression of the Muslims. Az-Zubair kept his acceptance of Islam secret. However, he could not stand aggression against the followers of the new religion.

While the chiefs of the Quraish were sitting near the Ka'bah mocking the Prophet ﷺ and his followers, a young man approached them crying. He began shouting that Az-Zubair had beaten up his father and had broken his arm. The young man added: "He was about to kill my father." He urged the chiefs of the Quraish to stop the orphan.

The chiefs of the Quraish asked the young man about the reason that made Az-Zubair beat his father. He explained:

"It was because of the difference of religion. My father had said something bad about Muhammad and Islam. Az-Zubair was angry to hear such insults because he had already accepted Islam.

He beat my father and was about to kill him.”

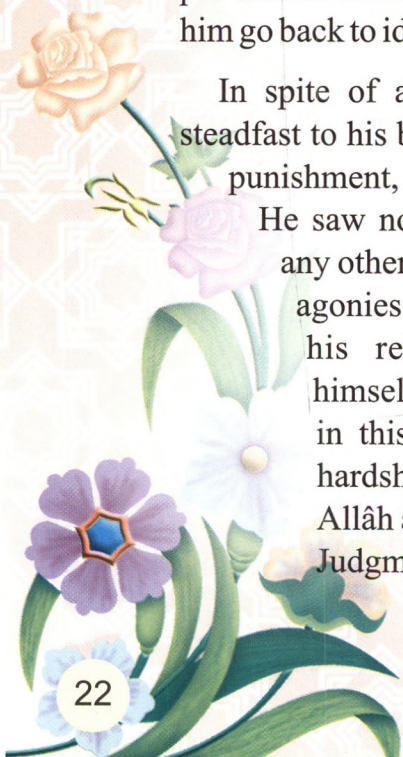
Oppression

Az-Zubair’s uncle and mother tried their best to make him apologize for what they considered as misconduct. However, Az-Zubair did not even pay any attention to their threats. They urged him to abandon the new faith but he never hesitated to declare his steadfast clinging to his religion. He also called them to embrace Islam as he had done.

His mother was very hard on him to make him recant. His uncle used to wrap him with a mat and put him in smoke to suffocate him so as to make him go back to idolatry.

In spite of all hardships, Az-Zubair ﷺ kept steadfast to his belief. The more they added to his punishment, the more he held fast to his faith.

He saw no difference between himself and any other Muslim subjected to pressure and agonies that would allow him to abandon his religion. Rather, he considered himself fortunate to be treated by pagans in this harsh way. He knew that such hardships would bring him closer to Allâh and make his reward on the Day of Judgment greater.



Migration to Abyssinia


No Choice but to Migrate

The Prophet ﷺ and the few early Muslims met unbearable hardships in Makkah. They were oppressed by the Quraish to the extent that they had no chance even to worship Allâh or live in peace. Muslims were mostly weak people and slaves. They had nobody to support them against the wave of oppression they were facing in Makkah.

The Muslims complained to the Prophet ﷺ. They felt that there was no choice but to leave the city or to face death. The Prophet ﷺ felt very sad for their condition but he had no power to protect them or himself against the oppression of the Quraish. Therefore, the Prophet ﷺ asked his Companions to leave to Abyssinia. He told them that land was ruled by a just and merciful Emperor. They would receive good treatment under his rule.

Leaving the Homeland

Az-Zubair ؓ and many other Muslims left Makkah secretly to Abyssinia. When they arrived there they found the people




very nice to them. They received good treatment and lived in peace. They could worship Allâh and practice their religion in the way ordained by Allâh.

When the Muslims felt secure and protected under the care of the Emperor, they found out that an opponent of the Emperor had revolted against him. The Muslims were afraid that the rebel might seize power and overcome the Emperor. They prayed to Allâh to give victory to the Emperor.

The Emperor had to fight a big battle against his foe. The Muslims were very anxious to know the result of the battle which was about to take place behind the Nile river. They asked Az-Zubair ﷺ to go to the scene of the battle and bring them news. Az-Zubair ﷺ made a float and swam to where the battle was taking place. He saw that the Emperor had defeated his opponent and came back to his fellow Muslims with this good news. The migrants were very happy for the Emperor to defeat his enemy.

Plots against the Migrants

The chiefs of the Quraish felt that they had lost control over the Muslims. They were very angry to see the Muslims living in peace in Abyssinia. They did not like the Muslims to escape their oppression

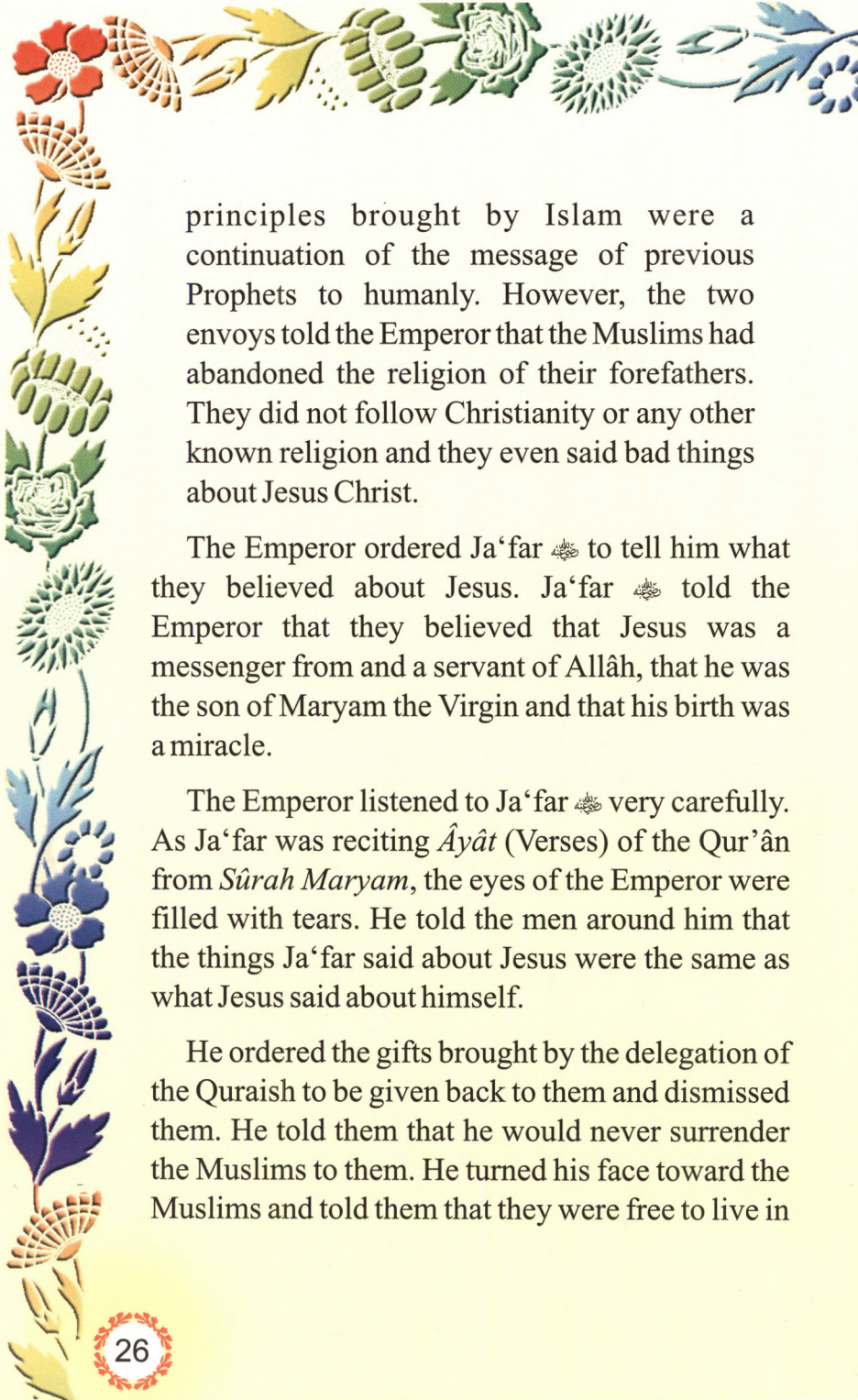


and torture. Therefore, they decided to send an envoy to the Emperor asking him to surrender the migrants back to them. They sent two envoys with gifts to the Emperor pleading him to dismiss the migrants out of his country and send them back to Makkah. The envoys tried to deceive the Emperor. They told him that the migrants said bad things about Jesus Christ. The Emperor was very wise and just. He wanted the migrants to give their testimony. He knew that the religion of these migrants was close to his religion.

The leader of the migrants, Ja‘far bin Abi Tâlib ﷺ, and his fellow Muslims appeared before the Emperor. He advanced toward the Emperor and said:

“O Emperor! We were worshippers of hand carved idols. We treated each other unjustly. A man from amongst us told us that he had been sent by Allâh to take us out of the gloom of ignorance to the light of Islam. We accepted his call and believed in what he said. Our people treated us very badly. Therefore, we sought refuge in your land for we know you are just and treat your guests nicely.”

The Emperor was convinced that the




principles brought by Islam were a continuation of the message of previous Prophets to humanity. However, the two envoys told the Emperor that the Muslims had abandoned the religion of their forefathers. They did not follow Christianity or any other known religion and they even said bad things about Jesus Christ.

The Emperor ordered Ja'far ﷺ to tell him what they believed about Jesus. Ja'far ﷺ told the Emperor that they believed that Jesus was a messenger from and a servant of Allâh, that he was the son of Maryam the Virgin and that his birth was a miracle.

The Emperor listened to Ja'far ﷺ very carefully. As Ja'far was reciting *Âyât* (Verses) of the Qur'ân from *Sûrah Maryam*, the eyes of the Emperor were filled with tears. He told the men around him that the things Ja'far said about Jesus were the same as what Jesus said about himself.

He ordered the gifts brought by the delegation of the Quraish to be given back to them and dismissed them. He told them that he would never surrender the Muslims to them. He turned his face toward the Muslims and told them that they were free to live in



his land and to worship Allâh as they liked.

The chiefs of the Quraish were disappointed to know that the Emperor of Abyssinia took the side of the Muslims. However, they changed their plots. They spread rumours here and there that they had concluded an agreement with the Prophet ﷺ and that they would not challenge the Muslims. Some migrants believed the rumours and returned to Makkah. However, they found out that this news was false. Some of them were captured by the Quraish but others escaped again and returned to Abyssinia.



Migration to Al-Madinah

The Prophet ﷺ and the Muslims who stayed in Makkah received all kinds of oppression by the Quraish. However, the Prophet ﷺ kept proclaiming the message of Islam to members of tribes who came to Makkah as pilgrims. In the beginning, all attempts to have a tribe to support the Muslims and protect them against oppression failed. Most of the tribes living in the suburbs of Makkah were afraid to follow the teachings of the Prophet ﷺ or provide any help to the Muslims lest the Quraish wage war against them.

Al-Madinah people accept Islam

In his efforts of calling people to Islam, the Prophet ﷺ met some pilgrims from a town four hundred kilometers away from Makkah called Yathrib. These people had already heard of the close appearance of a new Prophet ﷺ in Arabia. The Jews who were living in the suburbs of Yathrib used to threaten them that a new Prophet ﷺ would appear, that they would follow and support him and that they would conquer

the Arabs. The pilgrims from Yathrib kept this threat in mind. When they heard of the Prophet ﷺ, they met him and listened to his preaching. They were finally convinced that the man was a real Messenger from Allâh and that it was better for them to accept Islam.

The few men accepted Islam and promised the Prophet ﷺ to announce it in Yathrib. They also agreed with the Prophet ﷺ to come next year to make a pledge of protection of Islam and Muslims. Some seventy men and women came to Makkah the following year and pledged to support the Prophet ﷺ and his Companions.

Secret migration

With the increase of hardships on the Muslims, the Prophet ﷺ and his Companions had no other option but to leave Makkah to Yathrib. The Prophet ﷺ instructed his companions to migrate to Yathrib secretly. When he was sure that no weak Muslims remained in Makkah, the Prophet ﷺ and his closest Companion, Abu Bakr ؓ, also left Makkah secretly.

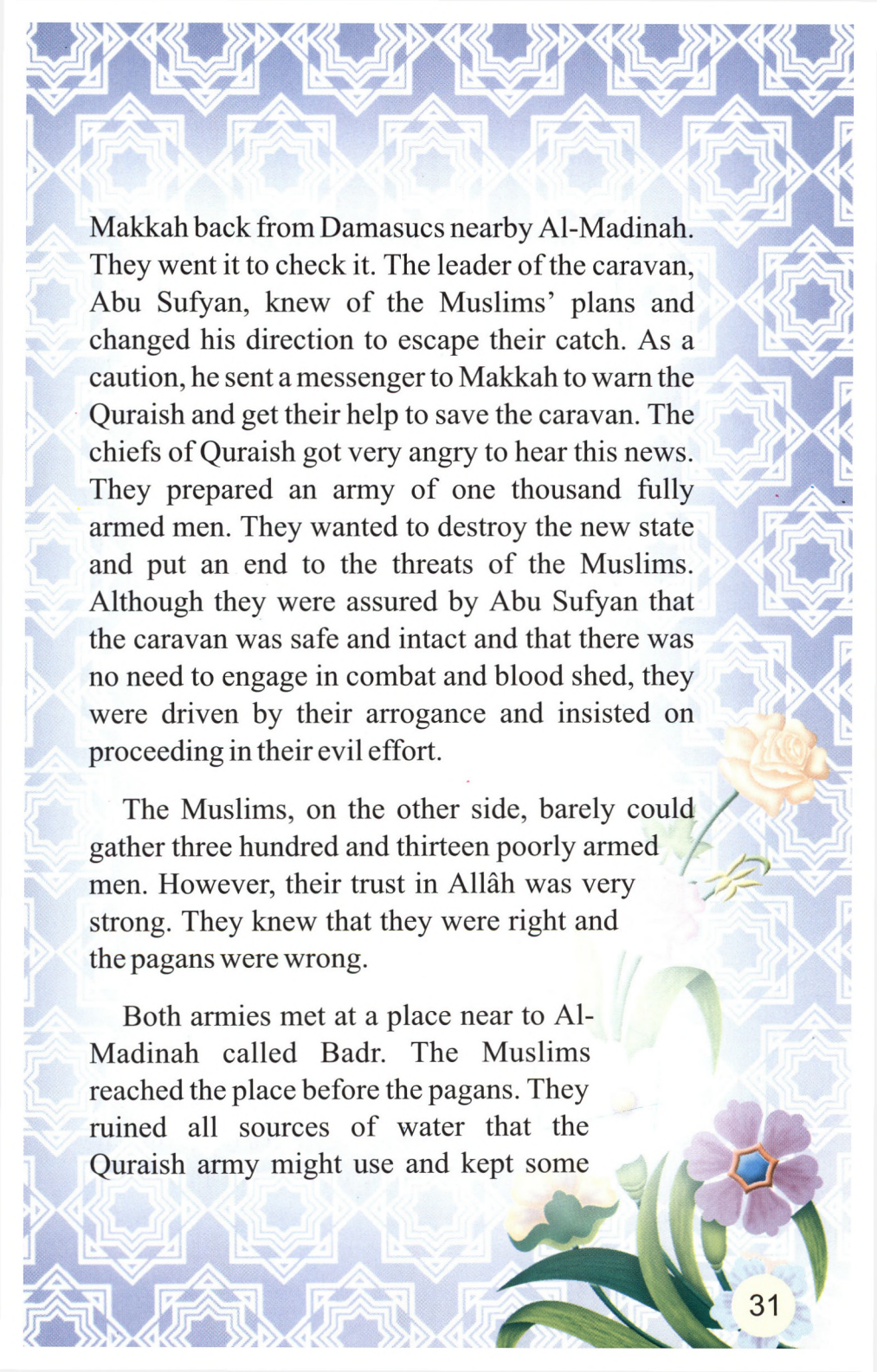
Az-Zubair joins his fellow Muslims

Az-Zubair ﷺ and his companions in Abyssinia received news that the Muslims had finally found refuge in Al-Madinah. Therefore, they left to Al-Madinah to join in building the new state of Islam. Upon arriving in Al-Madinah, Az-Zubair ﷺ discovered that his mother had already accepted Islam and migrated with the other Muslims. He was so happy to meet the Prophet ﷺ and his mother under the banner of Islam.

Az-Zubair ﷺ settled with his wife in Al-Madinah. They both shared with other Muslims, both Migrants and Supporters, in establishing foundations for the strong Islamic State.

Wars against the new Islamic State

No sooner did the Muslims settle in Al-Madinah than pagans started attempts to tumble the new state. At the same time, they were permitted by Allâh to fight the pagans and spread the light of Islam around Al-Madinah. The Muslims began patrolling outside Al-Madinah for security purposes. They received the news that a caravan belonging to the Quraish was bound to



Makkah back from Damasucs nearby Al-Madinah. They went it to check it. The leader of the caravan, Abu Sufyan, knew of the Muslims' plans and changed his direction to escape their catch. As a caution, he sent a messenger to Makkah to warn the Quraish and get their help to save the caravan. The chiefs of Quraish got very angry to hear this news. They prepared an army of one thousand fully armed men. They wanted to destroy the new state and put an end to the threats of the Muslims. Although they were assured by Abu Sufyan that the caravan was safe and intact and that there was no need to engage in combat and blood shed, they were driven by their arrogance and insisted on proceeding in their evil effort.

The Muslims, on the other side, barely could gather three hundred and thirteen poorly armed men. However, their trust in Allâh was very strong. They knew that they were right and the pagans were wrong.

Both armies met at a place near to Al-Madinah called Badr. The Muslims reached the place before the pagans. They ruined all sources of water that the Quraish army might use and kept some



basins under their protection for their own use.

Soon fighting started very fiercely. Although the Muslims were outnumbered by the pagans, they defeated them in no time. Seventy men from the Quraish were killed and a similar number caught as prisoners of war.

Az-Zubair رضي الله عنه shared in the first battle waged against Islam. He did his best to protect his faith and his state. He was young, strong and eager to put an end to the tyranny of the pagans.

A year later, the Quraish wanted to take revenge for the big blow they received at Badr. They gathered three thousand fighters and headed toward Al-Madinah with false hopes of putting an end to Islam and the Muslims.


Both the Muslim and pagan armies met at a place near to Al-Madinah called Uhud Mount. Hypocrites, led by Abdullah bin Ubay, played a major role in weakening the Muslim army. A third of the Muslim army had withdrawn from the battle scene before the battle started. However, the Muslims fought with zeal and steadfast faith. At the beginning of the battle they were defeating the pagan army. The archers, whom the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم

positioned over a small hill near the battle scene to protect the backs of the Muslim army, thought that it was a final defeat. As a result, they disobeyed the orders of their leader, went down the hill and began collecting war booty. The horsemen of the Quraish took the chance and attacked the Muslim army from behind. Hence, they turned the defeat to a virtual victory. They left the Muslim army in a mess.

The Brave Fighter

Az-Zubair ؓ and some other Companions of the Prophet ﷺ kept steadfast and protected the Prophet ﷺ against attempts to kill him. He stood in the middle of the battlefield shooting arrows at the pagan fighters until the battle was over. His uncle Hamza ؓ was killed in the battle and his body was mutilated. His mother came to see the body of her brother, but the Prophet ﷺ told him to stop her. She was a true Muslim and told her son that she knew that her brother's body was deformed by the pagans and that she would keep patient for she knew that her brother's soul would go to paradise.

As the Quraish could not achieve their intentions, they started preparing for another final battle. They held a pact against Islam and the



Muslims and gathered ten thousand soldiers from all over Arabia. They again headed toward Al-Madinah.

Courage in Times of Hardships

Muslims, on the other hand, felt the danger and discussed the best way to defend their town and people. Finally, a Muslim from Persia named Salman Al-Farsi ﷺ devised a plan that would provide protection for the town. He advised the Muslims to dig a trench around the town so as to prevent the pagans from entering the town. The Prophet ﷺ and his Companions welcomed the idea and began working on the trench.

Az-Zubair ﷺ joined hands with his fellow Muslims in digging the trench. He was working all the day long to complete the job before the pagan army arrived in Al-Madinah. Finally, he and his brothers completed the work and prepared themselves to fight the advancing army. The Jews, being jealous to see Islam spread so swiftly and gain power every day, promised the pagans to help them against the Muslims. Hence, the Muslims were stuck in the middle between the two forces.

The pagans arrived at the outskirts of Al-Madinah. To their utmost surprise, they were stopped by the trench and the Muslim archers were ready to shoot down any trespasser. The Prophet ﷺ sent an envoy to the Jews asking them help as they had already held a treaty with Muslims to help each other at the times of crisis. However, the Jews treated the envoy very rudely and told him that they had broken their covenants.

The pagan army kept surrounding Al-Madinah for about one month. The Muslim children, women and elderly were kept inside a fenced place lest the Jews or pagans cause harm to them. Safiya رضي الله عنها, Az-Zubair's mother, was at that place. She saw a Jew roaming around the place. She was afraid that he might come in and attack any of them. She took a long stick, surprised the Jew and killed him.

The pagan army lost all hope of penetrating the trench. Their leader, Abu Sufyan, ordered them to leave. Az-Zubair رضي الله عنها and his fellow Muslims were very happy to see the high wind blow through the pagan army's tents. He knew it was a help from Allâh to the Muslims.

Only Az-Zubair ﷺ can do it

The Prophet ﷺ wanted to get news about the enemy. He inquired who would be the man to go to their tents in the night and come back with news. Az-Zubair ﷺ expressed his wish to be the man. The Prophet ﷺ repeated his request and Az-Zubair ﷺ was the man who volunteered himself for the mission. The third time the Prophet ﷺ permitted him to perform the task and said:

“Every Prophet ﷺ has a disciple. My disciple is Az-Zubair.”

Now the Muslims had to settle their case with the deceiving Jews (Bani Quraithah). They besieged their homes and forced them to surrender. Az-Zubair ﷺ and ‘Ali bin Abi Tâlib climbed the walls of their fortress and opened the gates for the Muslims to capture it. The Bani Quraithah men were sentenced to death and their women and children were taken as slaves. That was the just reward for their deception and breaking of promises.

Az-Zubair’s wife added to Az-Zubair’s happiness when she gave birth to

a child whom they named Abdullah. Abdullah was to become one of the great Companions of the Prophet ﷺ and sacrifice his life for the cause of Islam. He was the first boy born to the Muslims in Al-Madinah.



The Brave Soldier

Day after day, Az-Zubair ؓ and his brothers in Islam established a fairly strong state in Al-Madinah with the help of Allâh and under the leadership of the Prophet ﷺ. They started inviting other tribes to Islam and deterring any tribe that tried to assault them.

Visit to the Holy Land

Az-Zubair ؓ and his fellow Muslims were informed by the Prophet ﷺ that they should perform pilgrimage. The Prophet ﷺ and many of his companions marched to Makkah barely armed. The Quraish received news of the Muslims' march. They asked some of their horsemen to prevent the Muslims from entering Makkah.

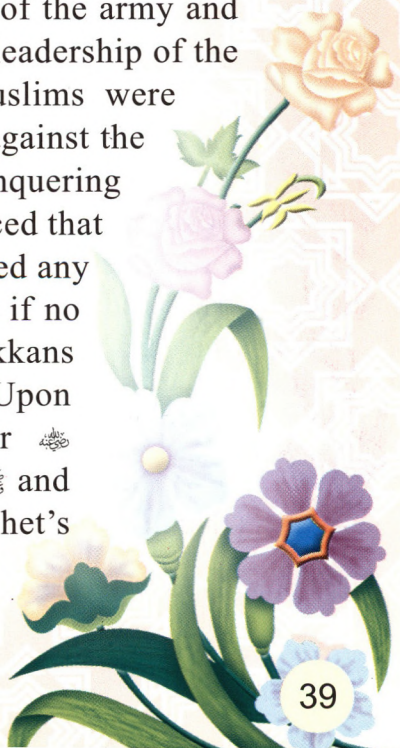
The Muslims camped at a place called Hdaybiya. The chiefs of the Quraish sent their envoys to the Prophet ﷺ to inquire about the reason they came to Makkah. They knew that the Muslims wanted to perform pilgrimage peacefully. The pagans denied the Muslims this chance. They negotiated

an agreement with the Prophet ﷺ to stop war for ten years and to permit the Muslims to perform pilgrimage the coming year.

However, the Quraish failed to respect their word. They attacked some of the Muslims's allies and killed as many as forty of them. The Prophet ﷺ knew of the Quraish's breach of the agreement and decided to conquer Makkah. It was a big stride forward. The Muslims prepared themselves to conquer the city and put an end to idolatry.

The Conqueror

Az-Zubair led the left wing of the army and marched to Makkah under the leadership of the Prophet ﷺ. Ten thousand Muslims were ready to fight their last battle against the idolaters in Arabia. Before conquering the city, the Prophet ﷺ announced that the Muslims did not wish to shed any blood. Hence, he declared that if no resistance was made, all Makkans would be safe and secure. Upon entering Makkah, Az-Zubair ﷺ advanced toward the Prophet ﷺ and cleaned dust from the Prophet's blessed face.





Mercy of Islam


Az-Zubair ﷺ longed much to revenge himself on those who oppressed him and his brothers in Islam. However, he had no choice but to obey the orders of the Prophet ﷺ. He was witness to the merciful position of the Prophet ﷺ toward the pagans. As Muslims cleaned the vicinity of the Ka'bah from idols, the Prophet ﷺ stood on a high place and inquired how the Quraish expected he would treat them. They all replied that they knew he would be merciful to them. He assured them and told them that they were free and no harm would befall them.

Expansion over Arabia

As the Muslims finished with their job in Makkah, they received news that Hawazen tribe in Tâ'if were preparing to fight against them. The Prophet ﷺ commanded his Companions to march to Tâ'if and conquer Hawazen. The Muslims felt that they had become very strong. Some of them said:

“No one on earth can defeat us from now on.”

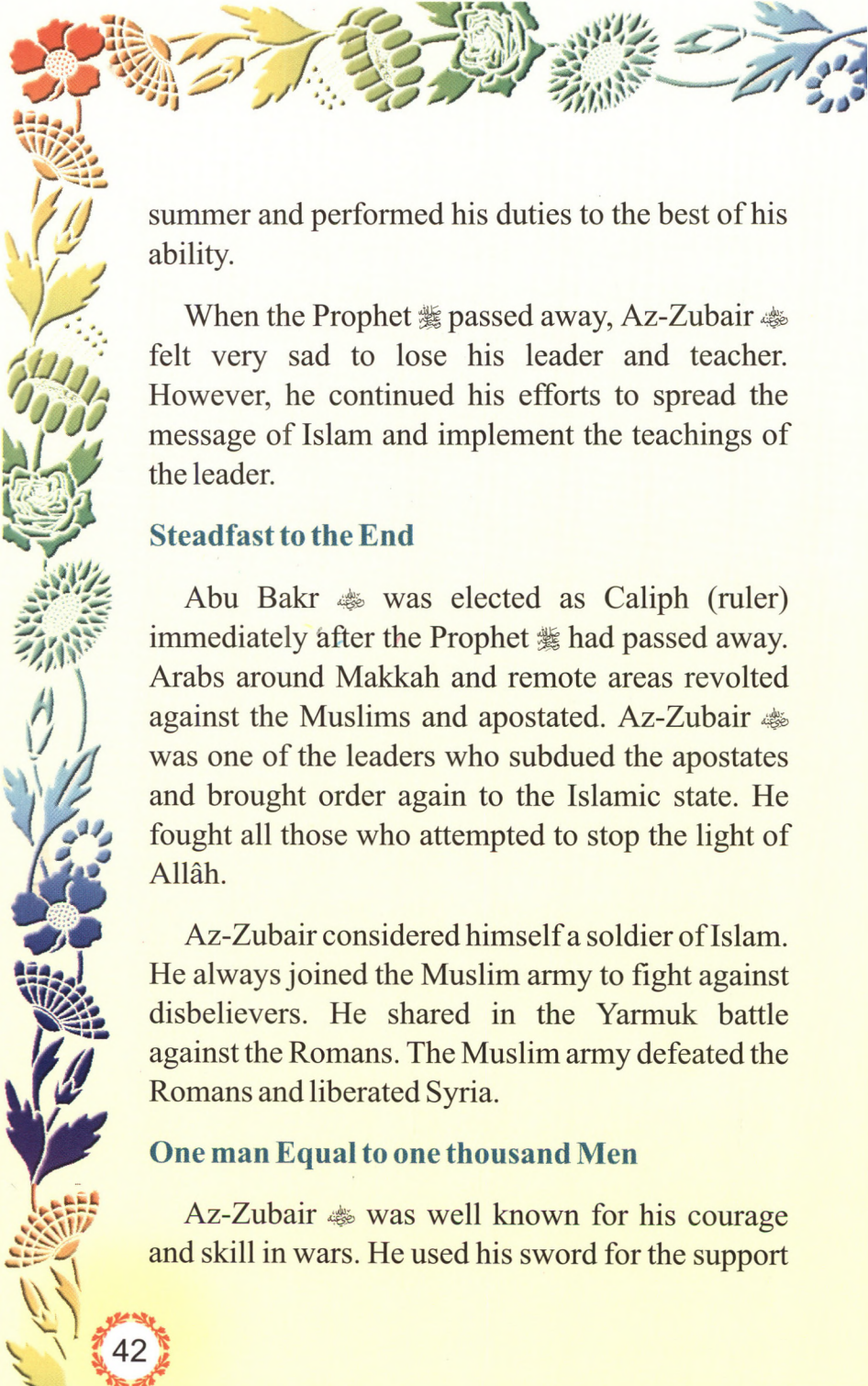
As they met the army of Hawazen, many of them fled from the battle scene. Only the Prophet ﷺ, Az-



Zubair ﷺ and a few other Companions of the Prophet ﷺ kept their positions and bravely fought a big battle. The leader of Hawazen saw a tall man penetrating their rows. He inquired who was that man. They told him that the man was Az-Zubair ﷺ. He praised him and asked his men to show bravery. Finally, the Muslims, thanks to the steadfast position taken by the Prophet ﷺ and his sincere Companions, returned to the battlefield and defeated their enemy.

Az-Zubair ﷺ continued his struggle for the cause of Islam. The Prophet ﷺ received news that the Romans in Syria were angry to know that Muslims conquered all of Arabia. They were intent to invade the Islamic State. The Prophet ﷺ ordered his Companions to march to Jordan before the Romans entered Arabia. Three thousand soldiers marched to Muta, a place on the northern borders of Arabia. Az-Zubair ﷺ fought a big battle and with his fellow Muslims showed the Romans how strong the Muslims had become.

He was also in the front lines when the Prophet ﷺ commanded his Companions to march to the north borders of Arabia to deter the Romans again. He shared in Tabuk excursion in the hot season of



summer and performed his duties to the best of his ability.

When the Prophet ﷺ passed away, Az-Zubair ؓ felt very sad to lose his leader and teacher. However, he continued his efforts to spread the message of Islam and implement the teachings of the leader.


Steadfast to the End

Abu Bakr ؓ was elected as Caliph (ruler) immediately after the Prophet ﷺ had passed away. Arabs around Makkah and remote areas revolted against the Muslims and apostated. Az-Zubair ؓ was one of the leaders who subdued the apostates and brought order again to the Islamic state. He fought all those who attempted to stop the light of Allâh.

Az-Zubair considered himself a soldier of Islam. He always joined the Muslim army to fight against disbelievers. He shared in the Yarmuk battle against the Romans. The Muslim army defeated the Romans and liberated Syria.

One man Equal to one thousand Men

Az-Zubair ؓ was well known for his courage and skill in wars. He used his sword for the support



of Islam in case there had been any aggression against Islam or the Muslims. After the death of Abu Bakr ﷺ, ‘Umar bin Al-Khattab ﷺ was selected as Caliph. He gave his orders to ‘Amr bin Al-‘Aas ﷺ to conquer Egypt. The Romans in Egypt were oppressing the people. He was told by the Caliph that his mission was to liberate it from their unjust rule. After conquering most part of Egypt, ‘Amr bin Al-‘Aas ﷺ asked the Caliph to send him supplies and support. ‘Umar ﷺ sent four men to him, one of whom was Az-Zubair ﷺ. He told him that these four men were equal to four thousand soldiers.

‘Umar bin Al-Khattab ﷺ chose Az-Zubair ﷺ as one of the six persons who would possibly be the next Caliph after him. This selection shows the rank that Az-Zubair ﷺ had among the Companions of the Prophet ﷺ. All the senior Companions of the Prophet ﷺ consulted among themselves and finally selected ‘Uthman bin ‘Affan ﷺ to be the Caliph. Az-Zubair ﷺ continued his endeavours under the rule of ‘Uthman ﷺ in spreading the light of Islam. He joined the Muslim army wherever it was dispatched to liberate human beings from the worship of false deities and turn them to the worship of the One Allâh.

The True Disciple

Az-Zubair bin Al-Awwam ؓ was distinct among the Companions of the Prophet ﷺ for his good character and true loyalty to the Prophet ﷺ and Islam. He was one of the early Muslims in Makkah. He was also one of the Companions whom the Prophet ﷺ foretold would be in Paradise on the Day of Judgment. Foremost, he was the disciple of the Prophet ﷺ.

Defending his Leader and Teacher

Az-Zubair ؓ was very loyal to the Prophet ﷺ. Once he heard rumors that the pagans had killed the Prophet ﷺ. He took his sword and wanted to fight them. However, when he saw the Prophet ﷺ alive, he hugged him and was extremely happy. The Prophet ﷺ, in return, took off his cloak and gave it to Az-Zubair ؓ. The angel Gabriel, told the Prophet ﷺ that Allâh was pleased to see Az-Zubair ؓ act with zeal in defending the Prophet ﷺ.

‘Umar bin Al-Khattab ؓ described Az-Zubair ؓ as one of the pillars of Islam. He was sincerely devoted to the cause of

Islam. A friend of Az-Zubair told that once he saw the body of Az-Zubair ؓ with many scars; all due to cuts made by swords as a result of fighting in the way of Allâh.

Az-Zubair ؓ always kept close to the Prophet ﷺ. Even when the Prophet ﷺ was sleeping, he kept beside him to protect him against enemies. The Prophet ﷺ once slept and Az-Zubair ؓ sat beside him to keep flies away from his blessed face. The Prophet ﷺ woke up and saw Az-Zubair ؓ using a fan to expel flies from his face. He told Az-Zubair ؓ that he would be with Az-Zubair ؓ on the Day of Judgment to protect him against the sparks of Hellfire.

Fear from Hellfire

It is known that many of the Prophet's sayings were reported to us by his Companions. They have memorized nearly every word he preached to them in various fields of life and *Shari'ah* (Islamic law). Az-Zubair always kept close to the Prophet ﷺ and memorized many of *Ahadith* (Prophet's sayings). However, he only reported a very few number of the Prophet's sayings. As he was very close to the Prophet ﷺ, his son

Abdullah exclaimed why should his father not report the Prophet's sayings. Az-Zubair ؓ told his son that he was afraid he might tell something wrong. He always recalled the Prophet ﷺ warning:

“Anyone who tells lies when he reports my sayings, his position will be in hellfire.”

Az-Zubair ؓ never feared to become indebted for he knew that Allâh would be on his side. He told his son that whenever he felt the burden of debts, he should pray to the Lord to pay his debt.

The Martyr

Immediately after ‘Uthman bin ‘Affan ؓ was killed by the rebels, Az-Zubair and Talha رضي الله عنهما felt that the Islamic state would be disrupted if no Caliph is selected to control the conditions of the state. They, with many other senior Companions of the Prophet ﷺ came to ‘Ali bin Abi Talib ؓ and insisted on him to take over. After several attempts, ‘Ali ؓ accepted their proposal. Az-Zubair ؓ came back to Makkah. He met ‘Âishah, the Prophet's wife. She told him that the murderers of ‘Uthman ؓ should be killed. Az-Zubair ؓ was convinced that a murderer should, according to Islamic Law, be killed. He agreed with her and both

wanted ‘Ali ﷺ to accept their proposal.


However, ‘Ali ﷺ did not like to establish feuding among the Muslims in such a critical situation. He did not accept their proposal. Az-Zubair ﷺ and many others insisted on having ‘Uthman’s killers killed. A war broke out behind this dispute between ‘Ali and Muawiyah رضي الله عنهما.

Accepting Truth when it is Clear

A war was about to break between ‘Ali and Az-Zubair because ‘Ali did not agree to his point of view that the rebels should be brought to justice. ‘Ali ﷺ wanted Az-Zubair ﷺ and others to wait until the turmoil was over in order that he could distinguish the murderers.

A war was about to break and both men met face to face again. ‘Ali ﷺ asked Az-Zubair to meet together to discuss the situation and find out a solution instead of fighting. ‘Ali ﷺ met Az-Zubair ﷺ and reminded him of past days when the Prophet ﷺ was alive. He said:

“Don’t you remember when the Prophet ﷺ was walking with you and I met you? Didn’t he tell you that you will unjustly fight against me?”



Az-Zubair ؓ immediately left the battle scene and went back to Makkah. He did not like to fight against ‘Ali ؓ because he remembered those words told to him by the Prophet ﷺ. However, the traitors did not like such an act. They followed him on the way to Makkah and killed him while he was praying.

The killers thought that they had done something good. They came to ‘Ali ؓ with the something good. They came to ‘Ali with the news of Az-Zubair’s death. ‘Ali ؓ felt very sad for the death of Az-Zubair ؓ and prayed to Allâh to punish those who killed him. Az-Zubair ؓ was buried on the way from Iraq to Makkah. He said:

“May Allâh gather us together on Doomsday in Paradise.”

This was the end of the noble man who spent all his life fighting for the cause of Allâh. May Allâh bestow his mercy on Az-Zubair ؓ for his services to Islam and the Muslims.

