

# Faithful Love and Doubtless Belief

By  
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All Praise be to Allah; we praise Him and Thank Him and seek refuge with Him from the evils of ourselves and from our bad deeds. He whom Allah guides none can misguide and he whom Allah leaves to go stray, none can grant him guidance. May Allah's Peace and Blessings be upon the Last Messenger, upon His honorable family and wives; and upon his sincere Sahabah and their successors; and upon those who follow them righteously until the Day of Judgment!

The Best of speech is that of Allah, and the best Guidance is that brought by Muhammad ﷺ; and the worst of actions are religious innovations; and every innovation in religion is a form of misguidance; and misguidance leads to Hellfire. May Allah grant us salvation from it, amen!

Today we live with a brilliant example of faithful unfading love and doubtless belief in Allah and in His Messenger as revealed in the lives of Al-Ansar ؓ.

It is well known that the mere declaration of Islam is not sufficient to have perfect Iman i.e. faith, for true Iman requires firm belief, expressive declaration and practical adherence. Reflecting upon the life of Al-Ansar will fill us with deep love, admiration and respect to those great believers and soldiers of Allah. At the same time, it displays to us a very splendid example of true Iman when it changes human beings and then changes life.

## **The Ansar come to Islam**

Imam Ibn Ishaq ؓ said: `Asim b. `Umar b. Qatadah related to me from some men of his people that they said: Among the reasons underlying our acceptance of Islam - in addition to the mercy and guidance that Allah granted us - was what we used to hear from the Jewish men. We were polytheists who worshipped the idols and the Jews were endowed with the knowledge of the Book to which we had no contact. Fights were always there between the Jews and us, so when we overcame them, they would say: The time when a Prophet will be sent is approaching soon and we will kill you with him like `Ad and Iram were killed. Many times we heard this menace from them. When Allah's Messenger was sent, we soon accepted him upon inviting us, for we perceived their warning. We preceded them to him and believed in him but they disbelieved. In this regard, the following Ayah of Surat Al-Baqarah was revealed:

[ولما جاءهم كتاب من عند الله مصدق لما معهم وكانوا من قبل يستفتحون على الذين كفروا فلما جاءهم ما عرفوا كفروا به فلعنة الله على الكافرين] القرآن: 89:2

[And when there came to them (the Jews), a Book (i.e. the Qur'an) from Allah confirming what is with them [the Torah and the Gospel], although aforetime they had invoked Allah (for the coming of Muhammad) in order to gain victory over those who disbelieved, then when there came to them that which they had recognized, they disbelieved in it. So let the curse of Allah is on disbelievers.]

Do you not see how we follow in the footsteps of the Jews; they knew for sure that Muhammad was the true Messenger of Allah; however, they refused him and became too arrogant to accept Islam and follow the Prophet. Indeed, we know that Islam is the truth and Prophet Muhammad is the best human ideal but we refuse to follow him. May Allah save us from fruitless knowledge!

### **Al-`Aqabah Pledge of Jannah**

For several years, these splendid hearts entertained faith with aspiring soul and impatient expectancy of the coming Prophet and real zeal for victory and salvation. It was time to achieve hopes and pass the trench of darkness to the brilliant space of light, happiness and love. It was also time to break the suffocating blockade in which the message and Messenger were besieged.<sup>1</sup>

So, in the thirteenth year of Prophethood, June 622 A.D. during the pilgrimage season, over seventy persons of Madinah came in the trail of their polytheist people to perform the rituals of pilgrimage in Makkah. The oft-repeated question amongst them was "Is not it high time to protect Muhammad instead of leaving him forsaken, deserted and stumbling in the hillocks of Makkah?" The Ansar are now on their dreamy night and they drove the way impatiently to meet the Prophet and have the prophecy before the Jews.

Ka'b ibn Malik ρ said, "We set out for pilgrimage and planned to meet the Prophet in mid *Tashriq* Days i.e. the 11<sup>th</sup>, 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> days of Dhul-Hijjah. A notable and famous master called Abdullah ibn 'Amr ibn Haram, who was still a polytheist, was with us. We disclosed to him our intention of meeting Muhammad ρ and exhorted him to join our ranks and give up polytheism, lest he should fall to destruction in the Hereafter. He promptly embraced Islam and witnessed the serious meeting at Al-`Aqabah.

<sup>1</sup>

Imam Muhammad al-Ghazali, *Fiqh as-Sirah*.

That very night we slept with our people in our camps. After the passing of a third of the night, we began to leave stealthily and met in a hillock nearby. We were seventy three men and two women Nusaybah bint Ka'b from the Najjar clan and Asma' bint 'Amr from Banu Salamah clan. We waited for Allah's Messenger until he came in the company of his uncle al-'Abbās b. Abdul Muttalib, who though himself not a Muslim, adjured us not to draw his nephew away from the protection of his own kindred unless we were fully prepared to defend him even at the risk of our lives. He was the first to speak, he said:

*“O you people of Khazraj — the Arabs used to call the Ansar (Helpers) Khazraj, whether from Khazraj or Aws — you all know the position that Muhammad holds among us. We have protected him from our people as much as we could. He is honored and respected among his people. He refuses to join any party except you. Therefore, if you think you can carry out what you promise while inviting him to your town, and if you can defend him against the enemies, then assume the burden that you have taken. But if you are going to surrender him and betray him after having taken him away with you, you had better leave him now because he is respected and well defended in his own place.”*

Ka'b replied, “We have heard your words, and now O Allah's Messenger p it is for you to speak and take from us any pledge that you want regarding your Lord and yourself.”

The Prophet p began to speak. He recited some Ayahs of the Qur'an, invited people to Allah I, exhorted them to come to Islam, and concluded saying:

*“I call on you to protect me as you would protect your own women and children.”*

*Imam Ahmad related from Jabir the details of the Prophet's speech when the Ansar (Helpers) asked the Messenger of Allah about the principles over which they would take a pledge. The Prophet answered:*

- *To listen and obey in all circumstances.*
- *To spend at times of easiness and at times of hardship.*
- *To enjoin good and forbid evil.*
- *In Allah's service, you will fear the blame of no one.*

- *To defend me when I need your help and protect me from what you protect yourself, your spouses and children from. And if you observe those precepts, Paradise is in store for you<sup>2</sup>.*

Here al-Bara' b. Ma'rur, caught him by hand, and said,

*"O yes, we swear by Allah, Who sent you as a Prophet in Truth, that we will protect you from whatever we protect our women and children. Have trust in us, O Messenger of Allah ﷺ. By Allah I, we are genuine fighters and quite reliable in war, it is an old character passed down to us from our ancestors."*

'Abu al Haytham b. al-Tayhan interrupted and said:

*"O Prophet of Allah, we have ties and agreements with other men i.e. the Jews, which we will sever. If we do this and Allah grants you victory, will you not return to your own people and leave us?"*

The Prophet ﷺ smiled and replied,

*"Nay, this would never be; your blood will be my blood. I will be with you in life and death. I will fight whom you fight and I will make peace with those with whom you make peace."<sup>3</sup>*

In the wake of this firm pledge and several serious affirmations, two men of the early generation of converts who had earlier embraced Islam rose to their feet to apprise the others of the serious step they were about to take by giving their pledge to the Prophet to be fully aware of the whole affair and consequently be ready for the sacrifice expected.

Al 'Abbas b. `Ubada b. Nadlah remarked:

*"O you people of Khazraj! Do you know the significance of this agreement that you are entering into with this man? You are in fact avowing that you will fight against all people. If you fear that your wealth will be at risk or the lives of your nobles will be endangered, then leave him now, because if you do this after the pledge, it will be degrading for you both in this world and the world to come. But if you think that you can carry out what you are called upon to do in spite of the loss of lives and property, then undertake this heavy responsibility, and I swear by Allah, that herein lies the success of this life and of the Life to come."*

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<sup>2</sup> Recorded by Ahmad through a good chain of narrators.

<sup>3</sup> Ibn Hishām, Sirah.

They replied, "We have already considered the loss of wealth and the murder of our notables, yet we pay him allegiance. But what is our reward when we fulfill this agreement?" The Prophet replied: "Paradise!"

As'ad b. Zurarah also stood up and gave the following short address:

*"Have a moment of deep thought, people of Yathrib (Madinah)! We have not covered that long distance except because we have had deep belief that he (Muhammad ﷺ) is the Messenger of Allah. We are also certain that following him entails departure from all pagan Arabs and incurs the loss lives and wealth. Should you preserve in this course, holdfast to it, and your great reward is placed with Allah, but if you are caught in fear, I admonish you to give it up just now, and then you would be more excusable with Allah I.<sup>4</sup>*

Then, they asked him to stretch out his hand and they all stretched out their hands and took the pledge. That is the account of the Second 'Aqabah Pledge known as the Great 'Aqabah Pledge, conducted in an atmosphere of love, allegiance and mutual support between the Madinah believers and weak Makkah Muslims. This new spirit of affection, sacrifice, and cooperation could never be attributable to a temporal feeling. It is rather totally derived from a deeply-established Belief in Allah, His Messenger, and His Book. It was a Belief so rooted in the selves that it managed to stand immune to all powers of injustice and aggression and could be translated into miracles in the practical aspects of action and ideology pursuit.

This Belief was the real ground from which the Muslims began to record in the annals of history unprecedented breakthroughs. It is also true that the future will always remain wanting as regards those great achievements carried out by those great men.

Then, Muslims rose to take the oath of obedience. The Prophet ﷺ asked them to appoint twelve deputies to be the masters and the teachers of their people in Madinah. The deputies elected were nine from Al-Khazraj and three from Al-Aws.

Here, the firm belief is manifested in overlooking every form of hardship expected. This is the canon of creation and the system of Allah on earth; no belief without a test, Allah I says:

أَحْسِبُ أَنَّكُمْ لَا يُفْتَنُونَ. وَلَقَدْ فَتَنَّا الَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِهِمْ فَلَيَعْلَمَنَّ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ صَدَقُوا وَلَيَعْلَمَنَّ الْكٰذِبِينَ" القرآن: 2:29

*"Do people think that they will be left to say: "We do believe" without being tried. We did try those before them and Allah will*

*make evident those who are sincerely truthful [in faith] and those who are liars." The Qur'an, 29: 2-3.*

The duties of belief are not that light and the burdens of belief always entails bold souls and fearless hearts, since the translation of beliefs and declarations into actions are usually accompanied by struggle and strife against the emperor of evil. That is why all these several interruption took place at this very crucial moment in order to measure the temperature of Iman and the zeal of sacrificing in its cause.

The Ansar proved true enthusiasts and advocates of Islam when they accepted these troubling conditions as expressed in the very statement of al-`Abbas b. Nadlah:

*"You are in fact avowing that you will fight against all people; the white and the black. If you fear that when your property is lost or the lives of your nobles are endangered, you will hand him over, then leave him now, because if you do this after the pledge, it will be the shameful disgrace for you both in this world and in the Hereafter. But if you think that you can undertake in full what you have solemnly promised in spite of the loss of precious lives and property, then undertake this heavy responsibility, and I swear by Allah, that it is the sheer good of this world and the Hereafter."*

## **Practical and Dynamic Iman**

### **"O People, Give Me Your Counsel!!"**

The Prophet ρ and Muslims set out for this campaign while they were poorly prepared, for they did not expect an actual confrontation. On account of the new serious developments, the Prophet ρ wanted to review the ongoing situation and exchange viewpoints with the Sahabah. He ρ said: "O people, give me your counsel". Abu Bakr τ was the first to speak and then 'Umar τ affirmed his view of resistance and defense. Then, al-Miqdad ibn `Amr τ stood up and said,

*"O Prophet of Allah, go forward toward that which Allah has shown you. We are with you; by Allah, we shall never say to you, as the Jews had said to Moses, 'Go alone with your Lord and fight with Him for us, while we stay behind here.' Rather, we say, 'Go forth, you and your Lord to fight, and we are fighting with you.' By Allah I, If you were to take us to Bark al-Ghimad i.e. a very remote location, we will still follow you with firm determination and unflinching spirit until you reach it."*<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Ibn Hisham, Sirah; Imam Ahmad also related a small piece of this account, on the authority of Anas but the narration mentions that the one who said this statement was from Al-Ansar.

The Prophet ﷺ then said, “O people give me your counsel! He only sought the views of the **Ansar**. These leaders who spoke were from the Emigrants, who only constituted a minor section of the army. The Prophet ﷺ wanted to hear the Helpers’ view, for they were the majority of the soldiers and they were expected to shoulder the brunt of the war activities. Moreover, the clauses of al-‘Aqabah Pledge did not commit them to fighting beyond their territories.”

They pledged to protect him as they would protect their children and women inside their city, not outside it. When they realized that he was waiting for them to speak, Sa’d b. Mu’adh, their leader, rose and addressed the Prophet: “O Prophet of Allah, it seems that you are seeking to hear our view?” The Prophet ﷺ answered, “Of course.” Sa’d said,

*“Indeed, we have believed in you and witnessed that what you have brought to us is the truth. We have covenanted with you to hear and to obey. Go ahead with whatever you decide, for we are with you. By Him who sent you as a prophet, if you lead us toward the sea, we shall enter into it with you and no one of us will stay behind. We do not fear that you cause us to face our enemy tomorrow; we are resolute to hold fast to our ground and stand firm or press forward toward the enemy in solid ranks. We hope that Allah will show you such of our deeds as you may not be disappointed therein but may be proud of. Go ahead, Leading us forth under the blessing Providence of Allah.”<sup>6</sup>*

Sa’d had hardly finished his words when Muhammad's face radiated with joy and his eyes shone with energy. He said, “Go forward and be optimistic; for Allah had promised me one of the two; either the caravan or the Makkahn army. By Allah, it is as though I see the enemy lying prostrate in the field. Having now missed the booty, the Muslims decided to stand firm if the enemy engage them.

**Are you not pleased that people return with sheep and camels while you come back with the Messenger of Allah to your dwellings?**

### **On the Day of Hunayn**

On the day of Hunayn, he ﷺ said his uncle al-‘Abbas: Call, O People of Surat al-Baqarah. Upon hearing the call, they came so fast like strong camels or cows when hurrying to their kids, saying:

*“We are at your service, We are at your service!”*

When they reached the Prophet ﷺ, he commanded them to strive sincerely against the disbelievers and said: It is now when war’s flame is burning! Allah then sent his tranquility upon his Messengers and upon the believers

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<sup>6</sup> Imam Muslim also related that Abu Bakr and ‘Umar gave their speech at first before Sa’d (Sahih Muslim, Jihad Book, Battle of Badr); Ibn Hisham, *al-Sirah al-Nabawiyah*.

sending unrecognized soldiers, although many Muslims were killed. Defeat was decisive and their wealth, women and children fell to the hands of Muslims.<sup>7</sup>

According to the narration of Anas as reported by Imam Muslim, "... on that day the Prophet ﷺ called twice without interruption between these two announcements; he turned towards his right and said: O people of Ansar! They said:

*We are at your beck and call, Messenger of Allah. Be glad we are with You. He then turned towards his left and said: O people of Ansar. They said: We are at your beck and call! Be glad we are with you.*<sup>8</sup>

After the end of the battle, the Prophet waited for eleven days for the people of Hawazin to come as Muslims before the distribution of spoils but they did not come.<sup>9</sup> He ﷺ – as reported by Muslim from Rafi' b. Khadij - gave to Abu Sufyan b. Harb, Safwan. b. Umayya, 'Uyaynah b. Hisn and Aqra' b. Habis, i.e. to every one of them one hundred camels. 'Abbas b. Mirdas also had the same number after negotiation with the Prophet.<sup>10</sup>

When the Messenger of Allah ﷺ had given Quraysh and Arab tribes those gifts and allotted nothing to the Helpers, a group of the Helpers felt frustration and statements of objection against the Prophet ﷺ spread. These ill-statements went on spreading, so then Sa'd b. 'Ubadah met the Messenger of Allah ﷺ and said:

"O Messenger of Allah, the people of **Ansar** are angry with you because of the distribution of the spoils. You have allotted shares to your own kinsmen and forwarded lots of gifts to the Arab tribes. However, they had given nothing."

The Prophet ﷺ asked Sa'd exclaiming: "Sa'd, what do you think of all that?"

Sa'd replied: "O Messenger of Allah, you know that I am nothing but a member of this group."

"Convene your people and bring them forth to me into this tent." Said the Prophet ﷺ.

Sa'd went out and summoned the **Ansar** and when some Emigrants came, he let some of them in and forbade others. When they were all gathered together, the Prophet ﷺ addressed them inquiring,

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<sup>7</sup> Malik from Abu Qatadah, *al-Muwatta'*, Kihad Book; Ahmad, on the authority of Anas, Musnad.

<sup>8</sup> *Sahih Muslim, Kitab al-Zakah.*

<sup>9</sup> Al-Mubarkafuri, *al-Rahiq al-Makhtum.*

<sup>10</sup> *Sahih Muslim, Kitab al-Zakah*

*"I have been told that you are angry with me. Did not I come to you when you were astray and Allah guided you?"*

*Were not you poor and Allah gave you wealth?"*

*Were not you foes and Allah made you love one another?"*

*"Yes," they said, "To Allah and His Messenger belong the greatest grace and benevolence"*

*Then he said:*

*"What prevents you from replying to the Messenger of Allah, O People of Al-Ansar?"*

*They said, "What should be the reply, O Messenger of Allah, while to the Lord and to his Messenger belong all benevolence and grace"*

The Prophet ﷺ again said:

***"But by Allah, you might have answered and answered truly, for I would have testified to its truth myself:***

***'You came to us belied and rejected and we accepted you;***

***You came to us as helpless and we helped you;***

***You came to us as a fugitive, and we took you in;***

***You came to us as poor and we comforted you'!!!!***

*O Ansar, do you feel anxious for the trivial gains of this world, wherewith I have sought to bring these people unto Islam and left you to your Islam.*

*Are you not satisfied, O People of Ansar, that people go with female sheep and with camels while you go along with the Messenger of Allah ﷺ to your dwellings?"*

*By Him in Whose Hand is my life, had there been no migration, I would have been one of the Ansar. If the people would go through a valley and passage, and the Ansar go through another valley and passage, I would go through the valley and passage of the Ansar. O Allah, have mercy on the Ansar, on the children of the Ansar and their children's children. They wept until tears rolled down their beards and said: "Yes, we are satisfied with you, O Prophet of Allah, as our lot and share."<sup>11</sup>*

They kept faithful to the first pledge when they gave their word to obey the Messenger at times of adversity and at times of prosperity, and to protect him from what they protect their lives, women, and children. In return, there is Paradise but before Paradise, there is Muhammad, the Prophet of Allah. He is their lot and he is their best share.

*O Allah, have mercy on the Ansar, on the children of the Ansar and their children's children.*

*The last of our supplications is all praise and thanks are due to Allah.*