

# DEVOTED COMPANIONS

## INTRODUCTION

The Holy Companions (May Allah be pleased with Him), that is, the followers of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) are those great personalities of the world, who are superior to and greater than anyone except the Prophets and Messengers of Allah (peace be upon him). By their achievements they earned the pleasure of Allah and His Holy Prophet (peace be upon him).

When we read the life histories of the Holy Companions, we feel a longing to follow their example. We feel an urge to be firm in our beliefs and to establish the faith of Islam. We believe that had not Allah created those wonderful people; our religion would not have come to us in its pristine form. Allah had caused those noble Companions of our Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) to safeguard our religion. Next to the lives of the Apostles of Allah (peace be upon him). It is the lives of these sages which serve as the best models for us.

The manner in which the Holy Companions went forward with the Islamic movement, the sacrifices which they made in support of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him), and the zeal and enthusiasm with which they worked for spreading the message of Islam, carry a good lesson for all human beings of the world, specially the Muslims. For a long time now there has been a feeling that the life-stories of those torch-bearers of Islam should be presented to our children and young persons, boys and girls, for correcting the ills of our present society. This book is intended to fulfill this need and it is hoped that it will be of benefit to our young generation and shall impart especially to them desirable training on the Islamic way of life. May Allah accept this work and reward us in the hereafter

**Mail Khairabadi**

## **HADRAT BILAL** (Allah be pleased with him)

Generally only that person is regarded as noble and great who is highly educated, who enjoys distinction of race and color, who is the richest in goods and property, holds the highest office, or possesses some authority, that is, he has the power to command the weak according to his own will, and can deal with his opponents severely. But, in Islam, education, wealth, family, race color, office and authority are not the proof of nobility and greatness. Islam was that the greatest and the noblest person is he who is the most pious. By piety we mean that a person should be afraid of disobeying Allah, should keep away the favor of Allah, and should do what is good. This claim of Islam is not merely theoretical, it is also very practical. Islam presented a society in which the great was he who was a model of piety in words and in deeds. There were persons who could neither read nor write, nor were they superior in race of clan, nor were they wealthy or hold any high office; they did not even possess any official authority, but they were pious. Because of their piety they were elevated to very high positions in Islam.

Hadrat Bilal (May Allah be please with him) is a glorious example of the above mentioned criterion for respect, honor and elevation to high positions in Islamic society. For those who have full faith in Allah and His Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) and who want to build an Islamic society to introduce the whole world to true Islam, the life of Hadrat Bilal (Allah be pleased with him) contains several lessons. Also, there is light for those people who are concerned with the welfare pf humanity, even to a small degree.

Hadrat Bilal was jet black in complexion. He was a Negro by birth. He has no wealth, no office and no authority. He was only slave. A salve did not have nay position in the society. He could be sold like vegetables. An animal could run away and thus save his life; but a slave could not even dare to run away; he was sure to be caught again and sent back to his master. Or he could be sold again and he had to do any work which his master order him to do.

Hadrat Bilal was passing his life as a slave when the streets of Mecca echoed with the message of **Tuhid** (belief in one Allah). The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) gave His call to liberate humanity from all sorts of slavery. He exhorted:

“Slavery is to Allah only. He has created us; He has favor us with food to eat; He has provided us with all the necessaries of life. Hence our real Master is Allah. All that conforms with the will of Allah is right. If our desires are subject to Allah’s commandments, they are worth implementation otherwise not. If our family customs and traditions are governed by the Will of Allah, they are agreeable otherwise they are worthless. If the orders of a human being to his fellow human beings to his fellow human beings are in conformity with the dictates of Allah, they are worth submission, otherwise not.”

This sermon of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) was so clear, simple and natural that everybody, young and old, understood it fully well. The black and the white, poor and rich, supporters and non-believers, the salve and the master all understood it clearly. But who da adopt it as creed? The persons who had the spark of humanity in them, heard the call of the oneness of God, their hearts were inspire of faith of Islam and their cried out:

"Muhammad (peace be upon him) speaks the truth, and whatever he says is the message of Allah."

But those persons who were proud of themselves; who had the mentality of capitalists, whose hands were stained with the power of authority over their people, could not tolerate this voice. They realized that in case a new society was created, they could no longer retain the privilege of ruling over the others. They tried with all the means at their command-wealth, family pressure, power and authority- to crush that voice. If anybody came forward to listen to that voice he was threatened, beaten, imprisoned, kept hungry, or persuaded to keep himself away from the call of truth. The father dissuaded his son, the brother restrained his brother, the uncle forbade his nephew, the master coerced his slave-in shirt the infidels stopped the believing persons from listening to what the Holy Prophet said. Ordinary, a father could be sympathetic towards his son; a brother could sympathies his brother; and uncle could be kind to his nephew, but a master could not be sympathetic to his slave. His only consideration was that his slave did not dare disobey him. Hence the slaves were specially the target of horrifying tortures and torment.

Hadrat Bilal was the slave of the most cruel person of Mecca, Umaayya bin Khalaf. The call for belief in one Allah and the teaching of the Holy Prophet had such a deep effect on him that he could not restrain himself for even a moment and he at once cried out:

(Ash hado An La Illal-lahowa-Ash hado Anna Muhammad-dar Rassol ullah) **Meaning:**

I stand witness to the fact that there is no God except Allah and I stand witness that Muhammad (Peace be upon him) is the Prophet of Allah.

How could Umaayya bin Khalaf tolerate that his slave bow to one God. Bilal (Allah be pleased with him) had to pay heavily for it. Umaayya bin Khalaf inflicted so much torment and torture upon him that its details make us shudder even today. Would lay Bilal on the burning sand of the Arabian Desert, or on hot pub hot bed of burning coal. He would tie a bless and cord round his neck and would hand over the end of it to ruffians of the city to drag him all around. Bilal (Allah be pleased with him) utter the words 'Ahad! Ahad!', even in that unbearable torture to the utter disgust of his master, who now laid him down on burning sand, face downwards, and put a heavy stone upon his back. At about noon when Bilal (Allah be pleased with him) fainted, the master said, "Bilal! It is still time that you leave Allah of Muhammad (Peace be upon him)! "

Bilal (Allah be pleased with him) unmindful of the torments, still utter the words 'Ahad! Ahad! ', his master invented some heinous torments. He would sometimes pack him in a cow's shin; sometime he would put on his person an iron armour and would lay him down in sever heat of the sun, and not satisfied even with that he would beat him severely and force him to admit that **Laat** and **Uzza** were his Gods.

But the devotee of Allah could say nothing but 'Ahad! Ahad! ' (Allah is one). The injuries inflicted upon his person could even melt the stones; and even the nonbelievers of Mecca felt sympathy for him and said, "Bilal! If you only repeat the words we say, we will press your master to stop torturing you". But Bilal said, "My tongue is unable to repeat those words". As a result the sympathizers were it and left him alone; but neither was Umaayya it of tormenting Bilal, not Bilal of suffering the torments.

When Hadrat Bilal (Allah be pleased with him) bore the burnt of the tortures and torments with courage and perseverance and proved his mental, Allah, the almighty took him out of

the great ordeal. Hadrat Abu Bakr (Allah be pleased with him) was a very kind hearted person of Mecca. Though wealthy, he did not possess the mentality of a capitalist. He had already embraced Islam. He was passing by when he heard the call, 'Ahad! Ahad! ". He saw the painful condition of Bilal and was grieved; and purchased him from his master, after paying a heavy price and set him free. When the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) came to know about it, he said.

"O! Abu Bakr! Let me share this sacred deal."

Hadrat Abu Bakr said, "O Prophet of Allah, I have already set him free."

But freedom from slavery did not save Bilal (Allah be pleased with him) from tortures and torments. In his individual capacity he was free from the brutalities of Umaayya bin Khalaf; but as a member of the community of Islam he was still the target of the persecutors of Mecca. However he got rid of all sorts of torments and tortures when the Muslims were ordered to migrate to Medina and the devotees of Islam, left their houses, their belongings and their place of birth, for the sake of Allah, and migrated to Medina.

In Medina, the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) tied Hadrat Bilal and Hadrat Abu Ravaiba Abdullah in bonds of brotherhood. They were so deeply attached to each other. During the Caliphate of Hadrat Umar Farooq when Bilal (Allah be pleased with him) was proceeding on an expedition to Syria someone asked him, 'Who will receive your stipend in your absence.'

Hadrat Bilal (Allah be pleased with him) said, "Abu Ravaiba will do it. The ties of brotherhood established between us by the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) will never break."

In Medina, the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) constructed the Holy Mosque. Hadrat Bilal was entrusted with the duty of announcing the adhan five times a day. And, thus, the tongue which had refused to move for uttering words of respect to the idols came into action now. Allah had been bountiful in giving Bilal a voice very loud and melodious. Persons, intoxicated with the love of Islam, were enchanted on hearing it. Men left their business, women came out of their houses, and children stopped playing, to gather in the mosque, and then all of them, young or old, stood shoulder to shoulder to bow before Allah.

Hadrat Bilal (Allah be pleased with him) was not only a Muadhhdhin for the Holy Prophet (Peace be upon him), he was also his confidant. He was always with the Holy Prophet (Peace be upon him) to every place and walked a few paces ahead of him with a spear in his hand. When the Holy Prophet (Peace be upon him) entered the Ka'aba after the conquest of the city, Hadrat Bilal had the honor of accompanying him. Hadrat Bilal looked after the management of the Holy Prophet's (Peace be upon him) household affairs. He was with him in all the military campaigns. He killed the greatest enemy of Islam Umaayya bin Khalaf, in the battle of Badr. He followed the footsteps of the Prophet of Allah (Peace be upon him) throughout his life. In course of time he was elevated to a position of great esteem in the society and the high and respectable families wished him to marry in their families. Thus he married in the families of Ban Zahra and Hadrat Abu Darda (Allah be pleased with him). The Holy Prophet (Peace be upon him) himself performed his Nikah ceremony with the daughter of Hadrat Abu Bukair. All of them were proud of their relationship with Bilal (Allah be pleased with him) who was a Negro by birth and color, a slave by position and a poor man by worldly standards.

Hadrat Bilal (Allah be pleased with him) felt great pleasure in devoting himself to Allah and in submission to the Holy Prophet (Peace be upon him). The Prophet of Allah (Peace be upon him) also had a great regard for him. He would not refuse him any favor. Once during journey night fell. Bilal (Allah will be pleased with him) liked that place. He said, "it is if the Prophet of Allah (Peace be upon him) allows us to encamp here." The Holy Prophet (Peace be upon him) said, "I am afraid a sound sleep may not let you get up in the small hours of the night."

Hadrat Bilal had full confidence in himself for getting up any time in the night. He took the responsibility of awakening all the fellow travelers. As a precautionary measure he made up his mind to keep himself awake the whole night; and engaged himself in prayers. But suddenly he feel asleep. He awoke when the Holy Prophet (Peace be upon him) awakened him.

The Holy Prophet (Peace be upon him) said, "Well Bilal! What about your duty? "

He said, "o prophet of Allah! I was never negligent before.'

The Holy Prophet (Peace be upon him) said, "No doubts, Allah takes possession of your souls whenever He wills, and returns them to you according to His will. Get up now, and call for prayers, so that people may come for prayers!"

This shows the position of Hadrat Bilal in the life of the Holy Prophet (Peace be upon him). Now something about his relationship with the Caliphs after the demise of the Holy Prophet (Peace be upon him):

The first Caliph Hadrat Abu Bakr (Allah be pleased with him) never kept Hadrat Bilal away from himself. One day Hadrat Bilal said to him, "I have heard the Prophet of Allah (Peace be upon him)" say that the best work for a good Muslim is to go for **Jehad** in the way of Allah. So I wish that I should engage myself in this sac work till the end of my life, I request that I may be allowed to go on some expedition"

Hadrat Abu Bakr (Allah be pleased with him) said, "O Bilal! In the name of Allah and my right over you, do you leave me alone in this old age? When Hadrat Bilal (Allah be pleased with him) heard theses affectionate words he did to insist".

During the reign of Hadrat Umar Farooq (Allah be pleased with him), Hadrat Bilal Again sought permission for **Jehad**. He also wanted to stop Bilal but did not succeed in persuading him to stay in Medina. So Bilal (Allah be pleased with him) joined the expedition to Syria. Hadrat Umar (Allah be pleased with him) used to say, "Abu Bakr (Allah be pleased with him) was our leader, and he has set our leader Bilal (Allah be pleased with him) free.

Once the second caliph, Hadrat Umar Farooq (Allah be pleased with him) was sitting with some friends. In the course of their talk they decided that every one present should express his choicest desire. So one of them said, "I wish Allah may bestow upon me gold worth the mountain of Uhud in weight, so that I may spend it name of Allah to seek His pleasure." another person said, "My desire is that Allah may favor me with a number of slave girls, so that I may set them free to seek His pleasure". Some other person dies for martyrdom to win an abode in the Eternal Gardens; another person wished to go on **Jehad**, and still another person dies to perform a faultless Hajj. But, when to was the turn of Hadrat Umar Farooq (Allah be pleased with him), he said, "May Allah fill this house with saints like Bilal,

Salman Farsi, Khubaib and Suhaib (Allah be pleased with him) and I may sit amongst them." This shows what esteem Hadrat Bilal enjoyed in Hadrat Umar's (Allah be pleased with him) eyes.

All of Hadrat Bilal's counsels which he offer to the Holy Prophet (Peace be upon him) or to the First Caliph, or the Second Caliph, were accepted. On the occasion of the conquest of Syria, the whole army officers or troops were served the same food. On the recommendation of Hadrat Bilal (Allah be pleased with him). He spoke for the marriage of a poor devotee of Islam to the members of a very high Medinite family and the request was accepted. He was never tried of spreading the teaching of Islam. He used to say, "I am only a negro, who was till lately an ordinary slave. Oh my people! Put faith in Allah and His Holy Prophet (Peace be upon him), then take part in **Jehad** and then perform a fault less Hajj".

Before the death, he saw the Holy Prophet (Peace be upon him) in his dream, saying, "O Bilal! How long this uninteresting life! Has not the time come that we meet again?" when he got up, he was in highly excited state of mind. He was living permanently at that time in a town, kholan, in Syria. He left the town and came to Medina. He saw the relations of companions of the Holy Prophet (Peace be upon him) and returned home. He died in Damascus and was buried there. May Allah shower his choicest blessings upon him for his piety and nobility of character? And, may Allah bless all those who love and follow the Holy Prophet (Peace be upon him) as did the devoted companies of the Holy Prophet (Peace be upon him).