

(Little about Hadhrat Abu Dharr al-Ghaffari (ra

<"xml encoding="UTF-8?>

Abu Dharr al-Ghaffari (ra)'s name was Jundab ibn Junadah. He was an inhabitant of ar-Rabadhah, a small village on the east side of Medina.

When he heard about the proclamation of the Prophet (saw), he came to Mecca and after making enquires saw the Prophet (saw) and accepted Islam whereupon the unbelievers of

Quraysh gave him all sorts of troubles and inflicted pain after pain, but he remained steadfast. He was among the first people to convert to Islam. In fact, he was the 4th or 5th person to become Muslim and because of this he is considered among the "most eminent in Islam." Along with this precedence in Islam his renunciation and piety was so high that the Prophet (saw) said:

"Among my people Abu Dharr is the like of `Isa (Jesus) son of Maryam (Mary) in renunciation and piety."

The Messenger of Allah (saw) praised Abu Dharr (ra) and said to him: "May Allah bless you, O Abu Dharr! Truly, you live alone, die alone, rise alone and enter heaven alone! Fortunate and amongst the delivered are those who will attend the ceremonial washing of your body after your death and your burial. The sky has cast no shadow and the earth received not one more truthful than you."

In the reign of Caliph `Umar, Abu Dharr left for Syria and during caliph `Uthman's reign also remained there. He spent his days in counseling, preaching, acquainting people with the greatness of the members of the Prophet (saw)'s family and guiding the people to the rightful path. The traces of Shi`ism now found in Syria and Jabal `Amil (north of Lebanon) are the result of his preaching and activity and the fruit of seeds sown by him.

He was first exiled to Medina on an unsaddled camel as a punishment for his truth-speaking tongue, and at last he was ordered to go to ar-Rabadhah. Marwan, son of the man (al-Hakam) exiled by the Prophet (saw), was deputed to turn Abu Dharr out of Medina. At the same time the inhuman order was issued that no one should speak to him nor see him off. But Amir al-Mu'minin Al-Imam Ali (as), Imam Hasan (as), Imam Husayn (as), `Aqil ibn Abi Talib (as), `Abdullah ibn Ja`far (as) and `Ammar ibn Yasir (ra) did not pay any heed to this order and accompanied him to see him off, and Amir al-Mu'minin uttered these sentences on that occasion:

"O' Abu Dharr! You showed anger in the name of Allah therefore have hope in Him for whom

you became angry. The people were afraid of you in the matter of their (pleasure of this) world while you feared them for your faith. Then leave to them that for which they are afraid of you and get away from them taking away what you fear them about. How needy are they for what you dissuade them from and how heedless are you towards what they are denying you. You will shortly know who is the gainer tomorrow (on the Day of Judgment) and who is more enviable.

Even if these skies and earth were closed to some individual and he feared Allah, then Allah would open them for him. Only rightfulness should attract you while wrongfulness should detract you. If you had accepted their worldly attractions they would have loved you and if you had shared in it they would have given you asylum."

In ar-Rabadhah, Abu Dharr (ra) had to put up with a very hard life. It was here that his son Dharr and his wife died and the sheep and goats that he was keeping for his livelihood also died. Of his children only one daughter remained, who equally shared his starvation and troubles.

When the means of subsistence were fully exhausted and day after day passed without food she said to Abu Dharr (ra): "Father, how long shall we go on like this. We should go somewhere in search of livelihood." Abu Dharr (ra) took her with him and set off for the wilderness. He could not find even any foliage.

At last he was tired and sat down at a certain place. Then he collected some sand and, putting his head on it, lay down. Soon he began gasping, his eyes rolled up and pangs of death gripped him. According to reports it was 5th of Dhul Qa'adah when this companion of Prophet (saw) .left this world