

******* LEFT ON A JOURNEY *******

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******* In the name of Allah *******

Medina burned in the unbearable afternoon heat, heat that rained down from the sky. At this Particular time of day, not very many people ventured out into the streets from the coolness of their homes. The Streets were empty of people from the intense heat of the day, however every so often a few people would scurry from here to there.

In Spite of this, Medina was the last hope an old man had to hold on to. When he stepped foot into the city, he breathed a sigh of relief and happiness as he stood at the side of a house. He wiped the sweat off his brow with a dirty sleeve and muttered to himself:

“Praise God! I have reached Medina, the Medina of the Prophet, and once I have set eyes on him it will have been worth all the effort it took. For he is the Holy Messenger to who people can take shelter in. No one has ever heard him say ‘no’ to a request nor refuse anyone.

All I have to do is reach the Masjed and all of my tiredness, hunger-ness, thirstiness and wondering will be over. So, why are you standing still old man? There shouldn’t be much left to the Masjed...”

The old man who had been to Medina before more or less knew the streets and back alleys of the city.

The infected blisters on the soles of his feet bothered the old man the most. For he had sold his shoes to buy some bread to eat and therefore had to continue on his long journey without the aid of his shoes. He had no choice but to go on until he reached Medina. So he tore off pieces of his clothes and wrapped them around his feet and continued walking, hungry, thirsty, tired and hot.

“Here is the Masjed. It has not been long since the afternoon Prayers have been said; surely the Prophet must still be there.”

He then drew his hands over his sunburned face and white unkept beard and entered the Masjed. The afternoon Prayers were over and the Holy Prophet was sitting among his followers talking.

The old man exclaimed to himself: “Oh! How beautiful and calm this face of Muhammad looks! Just to see him but takes the exhaustion out of oneself. I must go to him.”

The minute the Prophet saw the strange, tired face of the old man, he stood

up to embrace and exchange greetings with him. The Messenger bid the old man to sit next to him.

Ammar Yasser, Jaber Ansari, Bilal Habashi and the rest of the group welcomed the old man warmly. The old man who had gone through so much hardship, could not contain himself any longer, and poured out his story.

“Oh, God! May you never again leave a person among strangers in need of money.” He then turned toward the Prophet and began.

“I am a respected person in my own city with a decent means of support, however on this long journey I have suffered much and lost everything I own, and now I am hungry! I am left without any clothes, shoes or money. I have come to you with much hardship, so that you may save me from these sufferings.”

The Prophet himself was hungry. The clothes on his back were all that he owned, and nothing could be found in his house to give to the old man in order to help him. However he could not say ‘no’ to the old man.

“At the moment I have nothing to give you, but I will send you somewhere where you will not be refused, and you will not be sent away empty-handed. My daughter’s Fatima’s house is close by. Fatima is a part of me. God and his Prophet love her and she loves God and his Prophet too. She is one who places God’s and his Prophet preference before her own. Her house is filled with love, Truthfulness and goodness. Stand up and go! Go to Fatima’s house so that your Problems will be eased. Bilal, guide him and show him the way to Fatima’s house.”

Both the old man and Bilal stood up and left, it was not far to Fatima’s house. Her house was directly across from the Prophet’s house. The old man stood to one side of the entrance and loudly saluted the dwellers of the house.

“Greetings to you, oh family of the Prophet!”

The Prophet’s beloved daughter answered from inside her house.

“May God bless you, who are you and from where do you come?”

The old man quietly replied: “I am an old Arab man, hungry, without clothing and a place to live. I went to your great father, the Holy Prophet, and pleaded for help, he sent me here.”

Fatima was not one to send a poor-man away empty-handed; Fatima was the most beloved of God and his Prophet. But what could she do? For her and her family had had nothing to eat for the past three days! For three days the pangs of hunger had hit her household! For three days water had been their only food. She looked around and saw a small sheep skin rug Under Hossein and Hassan’s feet. She could give that to the old man. The piece of sheepskin had acted as both a rug and bedding for them! She gathered the sheep skin and gave it to the old man, asking for his forgiveness.

The old man did not accept it from her, and said instead:

“Dear Prophet’s daughter! What am I to do with this? For I am hungry and thirsty, I do not have money for my journey home.”

Fatima stood motionless looking around her small house for something else to give the old man. She suddenly remembered the necklace her cousin, Hamzeh's daughter, had given her. She took it off her own neck and gave it to him.

"Old man, sell it! I pray that the money you get from it is enough to help you through your hardships."

The old man accepted it and offered a prayer of thanks before returning to the Holy Prophet. Upon hearing the old man's account of what had happened, tears began to flow from the Prophet's eyes, and he said:

"Surely your hardships will be made much easier, for this necklace has been given to you by one of the noblest of women."

Up until now, Ammar Yasser had been but an observer to the event. But now he placed himself close to the Holy Prophet. The Prophet's own daughter had given her only possession... No! He couldn't just stand by doing nothing, so he said:

"Oh Messenger of God! Will you allow me to buy this necklace?"

The Prophet's face lit up as he smiled through his tears.

"Oh, yes Ammar! Whoever buys this necklace will be saved from the fire of hell."

Ammar then faced the old man and asked:

"How much will you sell this necklace for?"

"I need enough money to buy some clothes and food, also enough to get me through my journey home. I will sell it for that much." replied the old man.

Ammar looked at the old man's tired face and said:

"Not only will I pay you that amount, but I will also add 20 gold Dinars and 200 silver Dirhams for the necklace."

The old man's eyes sparkled with happiness as he replied:

"You are a kind and generous Person."

Ammar looked down and said: "This necklace that the Holy Prophet's daughter, Fatima, has touched is worth much more than this, but alas I do not have anymore money to offer."

The old man raised his hands in thanks, and prayed aloud:

"Dear God! Bless the Prophet's daughter with such blessings that she has never seen nor heard of before."

Ammar Yasser took the old man to his house and paid him the amount he had promised in return for the necklace. He then bid him good bye.

Afterwards, Ammar immersed the necklace in rosewater to make it sweet smelling, and then wrapped it in a beautiful, precious cloth and called his slave, 'Sahm'. Sahm was a trustworthy slave whom Ammar had acquired in the 'Khaibar' war.

"Go! And take this necklace to the Messenger!"

Sahm proceeded onto the Prophet, with the necklace in his hands. The Prophet praised Ammar but did not take the necklace, instead he said:

“Send my regards to my daughter Fatima, and give her the necklace, then place yourself at her disposal”

Fatima Zahra accepted the necklace with surprise and turned to Sahm, Saying; “you are free to go in God’s way! You may go wherever you wish!”

Sahm laughed and said: “But how this necklace was blessed! It fed the hungry, clothed the needy, helped the poor, freed a slave and finally was returned back to its owner! Surely this house-hold is a blessed one!”

THE END