

Chapter – 12

Abu Hurairah

(601 - 679 AD)

عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ قَالَ ، قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ

The above quoted Arabic special phrase has been read by billions of Muslims in the books of hadith since the time of the early Islam to the present day, and thus they are very well acquainted with the name of Abu Hurairah.

Abu Hurairah belonged to the Tehama coast of Arabia. Tehama is a beach of the Red Sea. He was from the Daaz or Daas tribe. Once the chief of this tribe, At-Tufail Ibn Amar, went to visit the Noble Prophet and became a Muslim. When he returned to his area, he invited his entire tribe to Islam. The first faction that pledged allegiance to Ibn Amar and embraced Islam, Abu Hurairah was included in that group.

The second time when At-Tufail Ibn Amar went to meet the Noble Prophet, Abu Hurairah was also with him. An appointment was made for him with the Prophet. In the meeting the Prophet asked, "What is your name"? Abu Hurairah replied, 'Abdus Shams (*Slave of the Sun*). The Prophet said, "Your name is Abdur Rahman". Abu Hurairah said, "O Messenger of Allah! Yes! It will be so." Thus he became Abdur Rahman. However, later on he got the fame with the name of "Abu Hurairah". In

Arabic Hurairah is the cat. He was actually fond of raising cats in his childhood, so he was called "Abu Hurairah".

After converting to Islam, Abu Hurairah stayed in his hometown of Tehama. But in 7AH/629AD, he moved to Madinah. Despite of all his efforts, his mother did not agree to accept Islam. Abu Hurairah approached to the Noble Prophet and requested to pray for his mother. The Messenger of Allah prayed. When Abu Hurairah came to see his mother, he was fallen in a big surprise and happiness that his mother was saying to him the following words:

أَشْهَدُ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَأَشْهَدُ أَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا عَبْدُهُ وَرَسُولُهُ

{I bear witness that there is no god except Allah and I bear witness that Muhammad is his slave and his Messenger}

Abu Hurairah started his life in Madinah with a permanent residence in the Prophet's Mosque. He was fallen in extreme love with the Noble Prophet. Whenever the Prophet used to come in front of him it was his routine to just keep him watching. And whenever the Prophet spoke he always used to hear him so eagerly that he could remember it word by word. So receiving benevolence from the Noble Prophet and acquiring knowledge in the company of other Companions became the pursuit of his life. One day, he was sitting in the Mosque sitting with Zaid ibn Thabit and other Companions and he was invoking, and at that time Prophet arrived and sat down with them. Abu Hurairah invoked, "O Allah, give us knowledge that can never be forgotten." The Noble Prophet said: "O Allah! Accept the prayer of Abu Hurairah".

The Almighty had given Abu Hurairah an extraordinary memory. He made full use of this ability given by nature. And in those four years which he spent in the company of Allah's Prophet he has done a great service to Islam by preserving in his magnificent memory each and every word that came out of

the tongue of the Noble Prophet. He has narrated so many hadiths that people do not believe that anyone can do so. Once Marwan Bin Hakam decided to test his memory. They arranged to hear some hadiths spoken by Abu Hurairah and behind the scene those hadith were recorded by a copyist word to word. After a year he was asked to recite the same hadiths and he repeated everything exactly in the same way.

There was a time when the courtyard of Suffa was the residential place of Abu Hurairah. At that time he spend his time in extreme poverty. In that period, due to his hunger he had to even put the rock on his stomach, but in front of love and dedication with the Prophet he never find anything hard. After victories in various battles and when the state of Bait-ul-Mall became stable, Abu Hurairah also got his due share, then finally his difficult days were over. He owned his home. He got wife, children, and all kinds of blessings. There was even a time when he was made the Governor of Madinah. 'Umar sent him as Governor of Bahrain as well.

Abu Hurairah's method of teaching was unique. He used to teach each of his students different hadiths and make them compile their own set. As such all those thousands of hadiths, which were in his memory, with the help of his students those were saved forever in the written form. In this way, Abu Hurairah has provided to all Muslims a great wealth by transferring the Prophet's sayings and for this no one could be compared with him.