

Chapter – 20

Abu Zar Ghifari

(576 - 653 AD)

The real name of Abu Zar is Jundab. The Noble Prophet used to kindly call him "*Ya Jandeb*". Abu Zar is his Kunniya and he became famous with this Kunniya. Father's name is Hanada bin Ka'ab and mother's name is Ramallah Bint Rabeed. Both father and mother belonged to the Ghiffar tribe. Ghiffar, was a wayward nation and their profession used to be highway robbery. Thus in Abu Zar, habits and qualities were created according to those circumstances. The use of arrows and swords was a usual matter for him. Besides, his own natural personality made him even more brave. At times, he would solely attack on tribes in the night time and rob them of their possessions. For this, he would also receive compliments from his elders.

One day, all of a sudden, his heart took a turn that awakened his conscience. He became strongly saddened with his cruel activities. Then, after being regretted for his wrong doings, he became active in worshipping God day and night as an apology for his sins. But this worship was without any education or guidance. Rather, he would have worshipping in a way that was understandable to his own self. The people of the tribe did not like this change in Abu Zar Ghifari. At last, the opposition blown up so much so that he decided to migrate from his birth place.

So, Abu Zar along with his mother and brother Anis, left their home. First they stayed with his maternal uncle for a few days and then left for Makkah. They were just on the way that they learned that there is a person in Makkah who teaches good things and believes himself as the Messenger of Allah. So the desire to meet the Prophet was agitated and Abu Zar reached to Makkah. This was the period when Islam's initiation was restricted in a confidential state. Therefore, he had to face lot of trouble in finding the Noble Prophet. In this struggle, he was also beaten by the opponents of Quraish and also had to bear the affliction of the tribe. At last, when he met with the Noble Prophet, to him it seemed like he was the person to whom he was looking for. Therefore he immediately accepted Islam. At that time, the number of Muslims were five and the fifth was Abu Zar himself. Seeing the situation at that time, the Prophet ordered him to leave Makkah and return to his home and start preaching there.

Abu Zar's preaching campaign started successfully. First his brother Anis became Muslim. Then the mother also followed with her boys. During the stay at Makkah Abu Zar had to suffer by the Quraish tribe so much that in order to take revenge he came up with a unique way of his preaching. That he stayed in a valley of Ghasfan and made it his routine to rob the passing caravan of the Quraish nonbelievers and then he would put before them the condition that if they would bring their faith on Allah and His Messenger Muhammad, then he will return all their looted goods. Some of them believed, and on reaching back to Makkah they would join the Noble Prophet.

After a few days, Abu Zar reached in the town of Ghiffar and started preaching there. Upon arriving here, surprisingly the reaction of the people turned out to be different. Most of them agreed to convert to Islam. Not only this but the people of

Aslam and other nearby tribes also responded positively to the preaching of Abu Zar. In this way, Abu Zar met perfectly to the expectations of the Noble Prophet..

On the 5AH/627AD, this successful preacher of Islam reached Madinah in honor of the Noble Prophet along with the Ghiffar and Aslam tribes. According to Sahih Masnad, on this occasion the Noble Prophet prayed; "*May Allah forgive the tribe of Ghiffar and may God bless Aslam's tribe*". Then, Abu Zar's days and nights began to pass in the service of Islam and the Noble Prophet. Sitting in the company of the Prophet he not only got the knowledge of many kinds of subjects, but also learned the teachings of Allah's Messenger and executed them very strictly. Then there came a time as well when the love of Allah and the Messenger of Allah began to remain in abeyance or a state of emptiness. Although in this state, his sentiment were dominated by nothingness, but he never lost his consciousness.

Later, Abu Zar Ghifari departed from Madinah to Syria in response to the will of the Prophet. During the stay in Damascus, he executed the teachings of the Prophet and kept himself away from wealth and wealthy attitude, rather he urged the other people to follow him as well. Amir Mu'awiya did not like his stern approach, so he arranged to get a letter for him from Caliph 'Usman to come back to Madinah. Abu Zar stayed in Madinah for a few days obeying the orders, but then he started living in Ribda, a village approximately three miles away from Madinah. Here he died in the year 32AH/653AD.