

## Chapter 14

Abu Dharr was a truthful man. He used to admonish others fearlessly to do lawful acts. Mu'awiyah was a worldly man. Abu Dharr very often used to direct him to do what is good till people began to feel ashamed of the residents of Syria. One day Mu'awiyah said to Abu Dharr, "You are not so virtuous as to direct me to do good deeds before the public. Hearing this Abu Dharr said, "Be quiet! Shame on you!"

In short, when Mu'awiyah could not mend his ways and could not suppress Abu Dharr's tongue, he decided to banish him from Syria. Consequently he resolved to send him to Jabal al-'Amul. Subaiti says that when Abu Dharr called the people there towards Ahlul Bayt they readily accepted the invitation! As the area was quite extensive his call did not remain confined only within the internal limits of Jabal al-'Amul but reached the adjoining areas as well.

It is obvious that Mu'awiyah had sent Abu Dharr from Syria to Jabal al-'Amul only because he thought that his preaching activities among those strangers would come to a stand-still, but when he came to know that Abu Dharr with his fiery speech had made the people in Jabal al-'Amul inclined towards the truth, (Allamah Subaiti writes that Abu Dharr made the people devotees of Ahlul Bayt through his preachings and laid the foundations of two masjids there one at Sirfand which is situated near the river bank between Sur and Sayda and the second in Mes situated at Haulah) [1](#) he called him back to Syria immediately.

Abu Dharr restarted his work on his arrival in Syria. He used to sit at Bab Damishq (Gate of Damascus), after the morning prayers, and when he saw the line of camels laden with the government owned goods he called in a loud voice: "People! This line of camels which is coming is not laden with goods but with fire. Accursed be the people, who direct others to do good but do not do good themselves, and woe be to those who prohibit others from evils but commit them themselves"[2](#)

Then he rose from there and went to the gate of Mu'awiyah's palace and made the same speech. This had become his routine and he used to do it regularly. At last, Mu'awiyah got him arrested.

Abu Dharr had in view the tradition, which has been quoted by Khatib al-Baghdadi and Ahmad bin Hanbal. According to this tradition the Holy Prophet said to his companions: "O my companions! Listen attentively. After me the rulers (of my ummah) will be like the aristocrats. To them there will be no difference between justice and injustice and between truth and falsehood. But, whosoever goes to them to justify their falsehood, and supports them in their injustice, will have no connection with me, and will not reach me at the Cistern of Kauthar and the man who has no connection with them, does not justify their falsity, and does not support them in their injustice, will be from me and I will be from him, and he will reach me at the Cistern of Kauthar"<sup>3</sup>.

Every sensible man can understand that under the circumstances Abu Dharr could not care about any power. His conduct; apart from being natural and innate, was the result of the Holy Prophet's teaching. There is not a single instance recorded in the authentic histories to show that in his lifetime Abu Dharr had ever hesitated to tell the truth.

Jalam bin Jandal Ghifari, the Governor of Qinsarin says: "Once, during the Caliphate of Uthman when I was the Governor of Qinsarin I, went to Mu'awiyah, the Governor of Syria on some business. Suddenly I heard that somebody was shouting at the gate of the palace and was saying loudly: The line of camels coming to you is laden with the Hell-fire. May Allah curse them who ask others to do good but do not do it themselves. May Allah curse those who prohibit others from evils but commit them themselves.

At that time I saw that the face of Mu'awiyah changed, colour on account of anger. He asked me if I recognized the man, who was crying. I answered in the negative. Then Mu'awiyah said, This is Jandab bin Janadah Ghifari. He comes to the gate of our palace daily and repeats the same words which you heard just now. Then he ordered him to be killed.

Suddenly I saw that Yaqudunah brought Abu Dharr dragging and made him stand in front. Mu'awiyah said to him, "O the enemy of Allah and His Prophet! You come daily to us and repeat such words. I would have surely got you killed if I could kill any companion of the Prophet without Uthman's permission. Now I will get his permission regarding you".

I wanted to see Abu Dharr because he was from our tribe. When I looked at him I saw he was tawny-coloured, lean and tall. His beard was not thick, and his back was bent on account of old age.

Abu Dharr said in answer to Mu'awiyah: "I am not an enemy of Allah and His Prophet but you are the enemy of Allah and His Prophet and your father was also an enemy of Allah and His Prophet. You people professed Islam for self interest but remained infidels at heart. The Prophet of Islam cursed you twice and damned you so that you may never be satiated. I have heard from the Prophet of Allah that his ummah should remain on guard against the mischief of the man with big eyes and wide gullet, who is

never satiated with food although he eats too much, when he becomes the ruler of his ummah.

Hearing this Mu'awiyah said, "I am not that man spoken of by the Messenger of Allah". Abu Dharr said, "O Mu'awiyah! It is no use denying that you are definitely the same man and listen! The Prophet has informed me that by that man he meant you and you alone. O Mu'awiyah! One day when you were passing in front of the Prophet, I heard him say: O Allah! Damn him, and do not fill his stomach except with dust. O Mu'awiyah! I have heard him also say that Mu'awiyah's flank is in Hell-fire". Hearing this Mu'awiyah laughed shamefully, ordered him to be arrested, sent him to prison and wrote to Uthman about the whole affair"[4](#).

Having sent Abu Dharr to prison Mu'awiyah in his letter to Uthman complained against Abu Dharr which meant that he should be called back from Syria. Accordingly Uthman called him from Syria to Medina. The contents of the letter according to the translation of Tarikh A'tham Kufi Shafi'i [5](#) are as follows:

"After due respect Mu'awiyah ibn Sakhr humbly states that Abu Dharr has provoked the Syrians against you. He is removing love for you from the hearts of the people. He remembers Umar and Abu Bakr all the time, and reminds their good conduct and virtues. He mentions you with bad words and calls your words and deeds faulty and mistaken. It is inexpedient to keep him in Syria, Egypt and Iraq-Arab because the people of these places are mischief-mongers, and join the seditious people soon and create disturbance. I have informed you of what has come to light. Now whatever the Caliph decides will be better. Wassalam".

A camel rider started with the Mu'awiyah's letter and presented it before Uthman at Medina. As soon as Uthman received the letter he at once wrote back to Mu'awiyah: "Your letter to hand; I came to know what you wrote about Abu Dharr. As soon as you receive this letter send Abu Dharr to Medina on the back of a rash camel with a hard-hearted rider who keeps the camel running day and night in order to send Abu Dharr to sleep so that he forgets to speak of you and me both".

On receipt of this letter Mu'awiyah sent for Abu Dharr and made him ride on the bare back of a mischievous camel with a cruel rider. He told the rider to keep the camel running day and night and not to let him stop at any place till he reaches Medina. Abu Dharr was tall and lean and by that time had become so old that all the hair of his head and beard had grown grey. Besides this he had grown very weak. There was no cloth or saddle on the back of the camel. The guide gave him merciless treatment. On account of all these troubles and injuries Abu Dharr's thighs were wounded and ruptured, and he felt great pain and exhaustion.

Historians agree that Abu Dharr was sent from Syria all alone. His family was not with him. Most probably he was not allowed to go home and take his family with him. He must have been called from the prison and directly despatched to Medina.

According to Allamah Majlisi and Allamah Subaiti when Abu Dharr was to leave for Medina and the Muslims got the news of his departure they came to him and asked him where he was going. Abu Dharr replied, "Uthman has called me to Medina. I am going from here at his call. O Muslims! Uthman being offended with me had sent me here towards you. Now I am again called to Medina. I know that this time I have been called for torture. But it is essential for me to go, anyhow. Listen! Relations between me and Uthman will remain like this. You should not feel sorry and worried in this respect".

[1.](#) Abu Dharr al-Ghifari, p. 139

[2.](#) Tarikh Ya'qubi, vol. 2 p. 148 and al-Ghadir, vol. 8, p. 299

[3.](#) Tarikh al-Khatib al-Baghdadi, vol. 2, and vol. 5, Musnad Ahmad bin Hanbal vol. 1

[4.](#) Hayat al-Qulub, vol. 2, p. 1043, al-Ghadir, vol. 8, p. 299, as quoted from Tarikh Ya'qubi

[5.](#) Majalisul Mu'minin p. 119

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