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Chapter 52: Rabi bin Sabagh Fuzari

Narrated to us Ahmad bin Yahya Mukattib that: Abu Tayyab Ahmad bin Muhammad Warraq from Muhammad bin Hasan bin Duraid Azdi Omani in his narrations and books that we have found in other sources that:

"Rabi bin Zaba Fazari was also present in the delegation that went to Abdul Malik bin Marwan. He was one of the most aged persons. He was accompanied by his grandson, Wahab bin Abdullah bin Rabi who was very weak. His eyebrows hung in front of his eyes and he used to tie them on his forehead. When the chamberlain saw him, he thought that he was the weakest person and said, "First you please come inside."

He came in with the support of his staff and stood with its support. His beard was so long that it reached his knees. When Abdul Malik saw him, he said, "O elderly person! Please sit down." He said, "How can I sit when my grandfather is standing at the door." Abdul Malik said, "Okay, so you are the grandson of Rabi bin Zaba."

He said, "Yes, I am Wahab bin Abdullah bin Rabi." Abdul Malik ordered his chamberlain to call Rabi. The chamberlain called out: "Who is Rabi?" Rabi came forward and said, "I am Rabi." Then, he quickly entered the court and saluted. Abdul Malik told his courtiers, "Fie on you, he is younger than the two men. O Rabi! How did you pass your age and what all did you see?" Rabi said, "I am the one who said:

Know that I am one who hopes to live forever and eternally

My life and birth has seen many ages and understood them

I am Amr al-Qais, you certainly would have heard about it

Alas, alas, his life was prolonged.

Abdul Malik said, "I noticed words 'and I was a child' in your verses. He said, "And I had said:

When a person lives for two hundred years

His desires and youth disappears.

Abdul Malik said, "I also noticed words 'when I was a boy' in your verses. O Rabi! You have got best luck and now tell me about your life." Then he said, "I spent two hundred years of my life in Fatara, between Prophet Muhammad (S) and Prophet Isa (a.s.). Then I spent one hundred and twenty years during the time of ignorance and then I lived for sixty years during the time of Islam."

Abdul Malik said: Tell me about the persons of Quraish who have similar names. He said, "Ask me about anyone." Abdul Malik said, "What kind of person was Abdullah bin Abbas?" He answered, "He possessed knowledge, understanding and benevolence and was serene and forbearing."

He then asked, "Tell me about Abdullah bin Umar." He replied, "He was possessor of knowledge and serenity. He was kind and controlled his anger and kept away from injustice."

He asked, "Abdullah bin Ja'far?" He said, "He was like light and mild scent and softhearted and Muslims were not hurt by him."

He was asked about Abdullah bin Zubair. He said, "He was such a mountain, from which rocks used to fall." Abdul Malik said, "By God, how did you gain so much information?" He said, "Some of it was gained while staying close to them and most from reports I received about them."

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