

## Khabb**ؓ** ibn Aratt, the Youth Strong as Iron

The pseudonym of Khabb**ؓ** ibn Aratt was Ab**ؓ** Yahy**ؓ** or Ab**ؓ** ‘Abd All**ؓ**h. He was one of the Noble Prophet’s (S) companions [*sah**ؓ**bah*] and one of the earliest people to become a Muslim. Khabb**ؓ** ibn Aratt was a youth living in Mecca, in a state of servitude, in the house of a woman from the tribe of Khuz**ؓ**‘ah or Ban**ؓ** Zuhrah.

Khabb**ؓ**’s job was repairing and making swords. Allah’s Prophet (S) was acquainted with him and had great affection for him. Khabb**ؓ**, too, became a believer, right at the beginning of the prophetic mission, because of the serenity and purity of his soul.

Some historians say that Khabb**ؓ** was the sixth man to become a Muslim. His faith was so strong and firm that no matter how cruelly the infidels tortured him, he did not renounce his beliefs.

The polytheists of Mecca used to pick him up just like the other slaves, put a steel armor on his body, and make him lie on hot stones with the intention of forcing him to renounce his religion. When they noticed that this kind of torture was not having any effect on Khabb**ؓ**, they started branding his skin with burning pieces of wood.

Khabb**ؓ** narrates, “During one of these torture sessions, a man from the tribe of Quraysh came forward and put a piece of burning wood on my chest; then he put his foot on top of the fire and pressed his foot so hard that the fire of the burning wood was extinguished by my skin.” The mark of this burn was always visible on Khabb**ؓ**’s body until the end of his life.

When ‘Umar ascended to the caliphate, he met Khabb**ؓ** one day and asked him about the remaining marks of torture that he had sustained on his body during the early days of Islam. Khabb**ؓ** answered him, “Take a look at my back.” When ‘Umar saw those marks, he said, “I have never seen anything like this before.”

Sha‘b**ؓ** recounts, “Khabb**ؓ** was one of the people who bore the torture of the polytheists with patience and was never ready to renounce his faith. The polytheists, who had seen this, used to press hot stones on his body until his flesh became water.”

As has already been recounted, Khabb**ؓ** used to be a slave of one of the women by the name of Umm Anm**ؓ**r. When the news of his becoming a Muslim was narrated to her, she started torturing him daily. She used to heat a piece of iron and put it on Khabb**ؓ**'s head to force him to renounce the Noble Prophet (S) and his religion.

Khabb**ؓ** complained to the Noble Prophet about this kind of torture. Allah's Prophet (S) made a supplication in favor of Khabb**ؓ**. After this supplication, that woman became afflicted with a severe headache. The headache was so intense that the woman started wailing in a manner similar to that of dogs. They told her that in order for her to get relieved of this headache; someone had to hit her hard on the head with a very hot iron! The woman ordered Khabb**ؓ** to heat a piece of iron and hit her hard on the head.

Khabb**ؓ** was sick when 'Al**ؓ** ('a) went to fight the war of Siff**ؓ**n. This was why he did not participate in that war and why 'Al**ؓ** ibn Ab**ؓ** T**ؓ**lib ('a) was not present in K**ؓ**fah when Khabb**ؓ** died.

When Im**ؓ**m 'Al**ؓ** ('a) returned from the battle of Siff**ؓ**n and learnt that Khabb**ؓ** had died, he said, "May Allah reward Khabb**ؓ** ibn Aratt graciously because he accepted the divine call of Islam of his own inclination, and then obediently migrated. May Allah reward Khabb**ؓ** graciously because he was thankful with only what was enough for sustenance."

According to popular narratives, Khabb**ؓ** died in 37 AH and, according to his stated will and wish, he was buried outside the city of K**ؓ**fah.

It is said that he was the first person to be buried outside the city, because before then, every one of the Muslims who died used to be buried either in their houses or on the street next to their houses. After the death of Khabb**ؓ**, the other Muslims imitated his way and started burying their dead outside the city. [1](#)

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[1](#). Al-Is**ؓ**bah, vol. 1, p. 416; Hilyah al-Awliy**ؓ**, vol. 1, p. 143; Sifat al-Safwah, vol. 1, p. 168; Zarkul**ؓ**, Al-A'l**ؓ**m, vol. 2, p. 301; Al-Is**ؓ**bah, vol. 1, p. 423; Bih**ؓ**r al-Anw**ؓ**r, vol. 22, p. 325, 339; Al-Khis**ؓ**l, vol. 1, p. 150; Saf**ؓ**nah al-Bih**ؓ**r, vol. 1, p. 373.

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