

Kḥalīd ibn Sa‘ād, the Noble Youth

Kḥalīd ibn Sa‘ād ibn ‘Uṣ came from the Household of Banū Umayyah. In the Glorious Qur’an, this wicked family has been called ***‘the evil tree’***.¹ Sa‘ād ibn ‘Uṣ, one of the elders of this Household, was considered as one of most headstrong and influential enemies of Islam, and one of the most obstinate polytheists of Mecca.

Sa‘ād ibn ‘Uṣ did not respond positively to the call of Islam up to the end of his life. He died in a state of disbelief and infidelity.

Sa‘ād had three sons by the names of Abūn, Kḥalīd and ‘Amr. He did not at all imagine that one day his sons might convert to Islam, but contrary to his expectations, all his three children responded affirmatively to the divine call of Islam, and the first of them to become a Muslim was Kḥalīd.

Kḥalīd was one of the earliest people to convert to Islam. Some historians assert that he was the third person to become a Muslim, while others say he was the fourth, or perhaps the fifth. It is here that we have to say that a colocynth tree that bears very bitter fruit is sometimes capable of bearing sweet fruit.

Kḥalīd can be considered as an example of the above because such a worthy, wonderful and amazing son was born to an unbelieving and polytheistic father. It is for this reason that historians write, “Kḥalīd ibn Sa‘ād was a noble of Banū Umayyah and one of the earliest people to convert to Islam.”²

One fateful dream

Every person’s life consists of hidden hopes and aspirations which, if acted upon, will produce profitable and desirable results. Sometimes these motives get manifested in the form of a sincere dream or truthful intuition. At other occasions, they get manifested in the form of a physically apparent event. What is important is that man should not ignore and overlook these intuitive signs, because they play an important part in guiding and leading people to their destinies.

The dream that Kḥalīd ibn Sa‘ād saw was of this nature because it led him towards worldly and

everlasting prosperity. During the days when the Noble Prophet (S) was privately inviting people to Islam and not so many people had yet responded positively to the divine call, Khḥlid dreamt one night that he was standing at the edge of a very big and dangerous precipice. Flames of fire were rising from below, and his father Saʿd was trying to throw him in the fire. The Noble Prophet (S) was present, firmly holding Khḥlid and not letting him fall into the fire.

Khḥlid woke up with a start, frightened, and said, "I swear by Allah that this dream is true and correct." The following morning, Khḥlid ibn Saʿd met Abū Bakr and recounted the dream to him. Abū Bakr said, "Your dream foretells good news. The interpretation of your dream is that the Noble Prophet (S) was preventing you from falling into the fire because you are going to respond affirmatively to his divine call and follow him, while your father will remain in a state of unbelief and polytheism."

After this conversation, Khḥlid hurried up to meet Allah's Prophet (S), and after entering the Prophet's (S) house, said, "O Muhammad (S), what are you inviting people to, and what is your religion?" The Noble Prophet (S) answered, "I call people to the worship of the One God who has no partner. I invite people to accept my prophetic mission and prevent them from worshiping idols because they cannot hear or see, benefit or harm people."

Khḥlid was convinced and persuaded by the strong and firm logic of Allah's Prophet (S) because of the previous dream he had had and converted to Islam with his body, heart and soul. The Noble Prophet (S) was pleased that one of the elders of Banū Umayyah had entered into the fold of Islam.

When Khḥlid's father was informed about this, Saʿd called all his other children and his slave. Grinding his teeth with anger and spite, he ordered them to go out and find Khḥlid wherever he might be and bring him back home. They went out, found Khḥlid and brought him home.

The scene of confrontation between Khḥlid and his father was very interesting. When Khḥlid's father saw his son, he started reproaching him. He struck his head and face with a wooden stick, so much so that the wooden stick broke. Then, he shouted in anger, "Have you started following Muhammad, while you see that he has risen in opposition to his tribe, the Quraysh, with the new religion that he has brought and talks ill of their gods and forefathers?"

Khḥlid, who was overflowing with faith, answered without fear or doubt, "I swear by Allah that Muhammad (S) is right in his invitation and that is why I followed him." Khḥlid's father, in a fit of rage, cursed Khḥlid and said, "You can go wherever you want, I disown you from today onwards. You will not receive anything from me." Khḥlid said, "I will not be harmed if you withhold your food and water because Allah will give me sustenance and subsistence."

After this conversation, his father ordered his brothers to imprison him. He was held in prison for three days, in the hot weather of Mecca without food or water until he escaped. His father warned his other children, "Whoever dares to speak to Khḥlid will be treated likewise." It was for this reason that Khḥlid broke ties with his family and attached himself to Allah's Prophet (S). Henceforth, he was always seen in

the company of the Noble Prophet (S).

After the news of Khḥlid's conversion to Islam spread around Mecca, it was not only his father who threatened him and behaved ruthlessly toward him, but the leaders of the tribe of Quraysh also intimidated him with retribution. But Khḥlid firmly withstood all pressure and resisted the enemies of Islam.

One day Abū Sufyān saw Khḥlid and said, "O Khḥlid! By becoming a Muslim, you have made your family lose their honor and prestige." Khḥlid answered him, "You are wrong. By becoming a Muslim, I have strengthened and completed the foundations of my family's dignity." Abū Sufyān, who was not expecting such a sharp and witty answer, threatened Khḥlid, "You are a young and unripe youth. I know that if you are made to undergo a small amount of physical and mental torture, you will renounce your new beliefs."³

Khḥlid's presence in different scenes and various events

From the time of his conversion, he played an active role in all the events that came to pass. We will mention some of those events.

Emigration to Ethiopia

When the polytheists and the idol-worshippers increased their oppression of the Muslims, Allah's Prophet (S) gave orders that the Muslims should migrate to Ethiopia⁴ in order to seek refuge there under Negus, the just king of Ethiopia.

Following this order, a group of Muslims migrated to Ethiopia. After a short period of time a false rumor was spread among the immigrants in Ethiopia; a rumor that caused them to return to Mecca immaturely. But when they entered Mecca, they found out that there was no truth in it. They immediately returned to Ethiopia.

This emigration is called the Second Migration in the history of Islam. Together with his wife and his brother, he went to Habashah (Ethiopia). They stayed in Habashah for ten years and returned after the conquest of Khaybar.⁵

The Noble Prophet's (S) scribe and secretary

Khḥlid ibn Sa'īd was one of the Noble Prophet's (S) scribes and secretaries. A lot of the Noble Prophet's (S) letters, sent to the different tribes and clans and to the distinguished personalities of that time, were dictated by the Noble Prophet (S) himself to Khḥlid, who wrote them in his own handwriting. This, in itself, is enough to assess the greatness of Khḥlid's personality.

Numerous accounts have been recorded in history to the effect that a lot of tribes converted to Islam as

a result of the letters sent to them in Khulid's handwriting. One tribe that might serve as an example was the tribe of Thaqif.⁶

Responsibility in Yemen

Khulid was appointed as the tax-collector of Yemen by the Noble Prophet (S). When he sent him to Yemen, the Noble Prophet (S) ordered him, "Whenever you come across a group of Arabs and hear them reciting the *adhān* (Islamic call to prayer), do not oppress them. On the contrary, whenever you come across a group of people that do not recite the *adhān*, invite them to Islam (and teach them to recite the *adhān*)."

Khulid held this responsibility up to the time of the Noble Prophet's (S) sad demise.⁷

Alongside 'Alī ibn Abī Tālib ('a)

Because Khulid ibn Sa'ūd was one of the lovers of the Noble Prophet (S) and his honorable Household, he did not at all compromise with 'Alī's ('a) opponents. On the contrary, he always supported 'Alī ('a). A lot of effective sayings attributed to Khulid ibn Sa'ūd in support of 'Alī ('a) and the *Ahlul Bayt* ('a)⁸ have been recorded in books of history.⁹

A worthy conclusion

Khulid ibn Sa'ūd was one of those people who could not be content with staying or being confined at home. On the contrary, he was always actively striving for the progress of Islam. He was active with his heart and soul in all the scenes of war and always ready to sacrifice his life, which he finally did in the one, fought at a place called, "Marj al-Suffar".

The night before this war, Khulid saw a dream in which it was foretold that he was going to be martyred. He narrated the dream to the others. True to the prediction in the dream, Khulid was the second man to be martyred in the battlefield. This war took place between the Romans and the Muslims.¹⁰

^{1.} *Sūrat Ibrāhīm* 14:26.

^{2.} *Tabaqāt*, vol. 4, p. 95; *Usd al-Ghābah* vol. 2, p. 82; *Al-Ist'āb*, vol. 1, p. 398; *Tārīkh-e Tabarī*, vol. 3, p. 168; *Ibn Athar*, *Al-Kāmil*, vol. 2, p. 60; *Al-Isbah*, vol. 1, p. 406; *Safīnah al-Bihar*, vol. 1, p. 405; *Tanqīh al-Maqāl*, vol. 1, p. 391.

^{3.} *Tabaqāt*, vol. 4, p. 94; *Usd al-Ghābah*, vol. 2, p. 82; *Al-Ist'āb*, vol. 1, p. 402; *Al-Bid'iyah wa al-Nihāyah*, vol. 3, p. 32; *Hay'at al-Sahābah*, vol. 1, p. 91; *Al-Isbah*, vol. 1, p. 406; *Al-Darajāt al-Rafī'ah*, p. 392; *Insāb al-Ashraf*, vol. 4, p. 25; *Ibn Hishām*, *Al-Sūrat al-Nabawiyah*, vol. 1, p. 175.

^{4.} Ethiopia was anciently called Habashah. [trans.]

^{5.} *Tabaqāt*, vol. 4, p. 99; *Hay'at al-Sahābah*, vol. 1, p. 530; *Safīnah al-Bihar*, vol. 1, p. 204; *Tārīkh-e Tabarī*, vol. 3, p. 570; *Al-Bid'iyah wa al-Nihāyah*, vol. 4, p. 143; *Ibn Hishām*, *Al-Sūrat al-Nabawiyah*, vol. 1, p. 238.

^{6.} *Tārīkh-e Tabarī*, vol. 2, p. 218; *Ibn Athar*, *Al-Kāmil*, vol. 2, p. 313; *Tabaqāt*, vol. 4, p. 94; *Hay'at al-Sahābah*, vol. 1, p. 272; *Al-Bid'iyah wa al-Nihāyah*, vol. 5, p. 29.

^{7.} *Ibn Athar*, *Al-Kāmil*, vol. 1, p. 336; *Tabaqāt*, vol. 4, p. 296; *Tārīkh-e Tabarī*, vol. 4, p. 173; *Hay'at al-Sahābah*, vol. 1, p. 166.

8. The Ahlul Bayt (‘a) are the Noble Prophet’s (S) Household, comprising the Noble Prophet (S), ‘Alī (‘a), Fātimah (‘a), and their children and grandchildren. [trans.]
9. Irshād, Mufīd, p. 84; Qimīs al-Rijāl, vol. 3, p. 480; Al-Darajāt al-Rafī‘ah, p. 393; Usd al-Ghābah, vol. 2, p. 73; Al-Istī‘āb, vol. 1, p. 400; Hayāt al-Sahābah, vol. 2, p. 157; Tanqīh al-Maqāl, vol. 1, p. 391; Al-Ihtijāj, Tabarsī, vol. 1, p. 47; Bihār al-Anwār, vol. 28, p. 202; Sharh Nahj al-Balāghah, vol. 2, p. 58.
10. Tārīkh-e Tabarī, vol. 4, p. 1880; Ibn Athīr, Al-Kāmil, vol. 2, p. 402; Al-Istī‘āb, vol. 1 p. 400; Tabaqāt, vol. 4, p. 99.

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