

Time with the ten companions promised paradise (1)

DISCLAIMER: This reminder was originally delivered in Arabic. Any meanings lost in translation are not to be attributed to the speaker as reminders are translated by volunteers. The mosque has no official translator and volunteers often have no formal qualifications to translate on the day. Please forgive any errors as they are from our human weakness and any right guidance is from God.

As we promised in the previous reminder we will pause today to spend some time with some bright personalities among the companions of the Prophet peace be upon him (pbuh) whom were promised paradise. Those distinctive characters had earned the highest of levels of honour in Islam with their diligence, hard work, strong faith and sincerity. A look at these personalities should be the key for you to change your self and improve your situation.

The first one of those honoured companions is Abu Bakr Alsidiq, the most beloved companion to the prophet (pbuh)

He was the first man to accept Islam among the men of this Community/Ummah. The Prophet (pbuh) said "I called people to Islam. Everybody thought over it, at least for a while. But this was not the case with Abu Bakr. The moment I put Islam before him, he accepted it without any hesitation." As soon as the prophet (pbuh) called him for Islam he accepted it because he used to know the prophet (pbuh) as a friend should know his friend; knowing what is apparent and hidden. This was the result of spending a long time with the prophet (pbuh). There was much similarity between them in appearance and good behaviour. The prophet (pbuh) was among the most beloved youth in Mecca and Abu Bakr was as well. The prophet (pbuh) was a trader and so was Abu Bakr. They were also close in age. This closeness in age, honour, occupation and lineage were factors that helped to strengthen the relation between him and the prophet (pbuh). That is perhaps why Abu Bakr had the advantage over all other people to become the first to accept the call of prophet (pbuh). This, oh Muslims, is one of the secrets behind the greatness of Abu Bakr Alsidiq. He was (may God be pleased with him) a high ranked man with noble status, leadership and wealth; he was also an expert in the lineages of Arabs.

He was the companion and the most beloved to the prophet (pbuh).

In a hadith narrated by Abu Said the prophet (pbuh) said: "If I were to take a close friend (Khalil) other than my Lord, I would have taken Abu Bakr as such, but the Islamic brotherhood suffices." [Muslim]

Said ibn Almussayeb said: 'Abu Bakr Alsidiq was the second one to the prophet (pbuh) in Islam; he was his second in the cave, his second in the tent in the day of Badr, his second in both leaderships - the small one (leading the prayers) and the big one (the khilafah) - and he was his second next to his grave, indeed the prophet (pbuh) has never put anyone before Abu Baker Alsidiq.'

When the number of Muslims reached 39, Abu Bakr insisted that the prophet (pbuh) call publicly for Islam but the prophet replied "oh Abu Bakr, we are still few." Abu Bakr kept insisting until the prophet agreed so they went to the mosque and Abu Bakr started preaching (he was the first caller for Islam) while the prophet (pbuh) was sitting. This ruffled the feathers of the non believers so they began to attack the Muslims severely. Abu-Bakr was brutally injured by Otbah bin Rabiah who kept hitting him with his shoes. The people of Taym (Abu Bakr's tribe) came to rescue him and he was carried home senseless. They thought he was dead and they swore (by God that if he were die they would avenge his death by killing Otbah). He remained unconscious until the end of the day. When he came back to senses, he - with eyes filled with tears and a voice blurred with pain - had nothing to say but "How is the prophet?"

Oh Muslims, Abu Bakr has acquired the best of characters and the highest level of belief until it was said "the belief of Abu Baker will out weigh the belief of the rest of the Ummah if they were to be measured." It was for this that he became the master of all Muslims after the prophet (pbuh) - because of the strength of his belief and the adversity of his sincerity. There were some companions who were stronger, braver and more knowledgeable than him, but Abu Bakr had the quality of strong belief, sincerity and love for God almighty, his messenger and the message of Islam more than any other companion. So, oh Muslims, reflect on these faithful characters, and upon the personality of Abu Bakr and correct attitude, which are recorded in his great history.

Second reminder - As we are currently living the days of the month of Rajab we will mention some issues related to this sacred month.

God the most high says "Your Lord does create and choose as He pleases" [Al-Qasas 28:68]. It is the will of God to choose and to prefer some months and days. He almighty choose four months and made them sacred "Surely the number of months with God is twelve months in God's ordinance since the day when He created the heavens and the earth, of these four being sacred; that is the right reckoning; therefore be not unjust to yourselves regarding them" [Al-Tawba 9:36] . The prophet (pbuh) said in his farewell sermon "indeed the year evolves as it was the day God (SWT) created the heavens and the earth. The year has 12 months, among them four are sacred, three of which are successive, Dhul Qi'dah, Dhul Hijjah, Muharram and Rajab Modar which is between Jumada and Shabaan" [Al-Bukhari]

It was called Rajab Modar because the tribe of (Modar) was the only tribe among Arabs who honoured the month of Rajab in its exact time without delaying this time for the sake of war. This practice which became prevalent amongst the other tribes of that time is called (alnaseei/ postponing) as mentioned in the verse "Postponing (of the sacred month) is only an addition in unbelief, with which those who disbelieve are led astray, violating it one year and keeping it sacred another, that they may agree in the number (of months) that God has made sacred, and so violate what God has made sacred" [Al-Tawba 9:36]

A sacred month has a great status in Islam and Rajab is one of those months "O you who believe! Do not violate the signs appointed by God nor the sacred month" [Al-Maeda 5:2] which means (Do not make lawful for yourselves any of the forbidden deeds during those sacred months as they must be respected). God says "therefore be not unjust to yourselves regarding them" [Al-Tawba 9:36] "them" here is referring to the four sacred months as Al-Tabari said in his commentary on this verse.

We must be aware of the sanctity of these months as they were given a high status by God almighty. Extra caution is necessary to avoid committing any sins as the sins are greater in sacred times than any other time. That is why God warned us not to be unjust to ourselves during sacred months when being unjust to ourselves is prohibited in all months anyway.

There is no evidence from the practice and advice/sunnah of the prophet (pbuh) or the saying of his companions preferring Rajab with special or extra fasting from other months where he fasted the middle 3 days of the month and Mon/Thurs each week. [According to Imam Ibn Alqayim], the prophet (pbuh) did not fast all of the three months together (Rajab, Shaban and Ramadan) as some people do and he did not fast all of Rajab or prefer fasting it. Ibn Hajr said: 'there is no specific evidence for fasting the whole of Rajab or some of it or even night praying in special nights in Rajab.'

We ask God to make us from those who glorify the sacred and abide by the sunnah of the prophet in both our insides and outsides.