

Zayd bin Haritha (radhiAllahu anhu)

Zayd bin Haritha (radhiAllahu anhu) was originally a member of Banu Ma`n and was born to Haritha and his wife Su`daa bint Tha`laba. Once when Su`daa accompanied by her son Zayd bin Haritha were traveling to her ancestral home, the caravan was ambushed by robbers.

They looted the travelers and took the children as prisoners. Zayd too was taken as a slave and was brought to the market of Okaz in Makkah and sold to a rich tribal chieftain Hakim bin Hizam bin Khuwaylid for 400 Dirhams.

Hakim's aunt Khadijah bint Khuwaylid came to see him and was offered a slave as a gift. Khadijah selected Zayd as he looked intelligent as well as gentle.

Later when Khadijah married Muhammad the Messenger of Allah (may Allah bless him and grant him peace) who was 25 years old and was not a Prophet at that time, she presented young Zayd to her new husband as a gift.

But back at Zayd's home, the grief-stricken Su`daa and his father Haritha were restless. They searched all over the land for him, but all efforts were in vain.

A year later, a caravan of Hajj pilgrims who spotted Zayd bin Haritha in Makkah reported the matter to his parents. This came as a pleasant surprise for Haritha and Su`daa.

Hearing this good news, Haritha and his brother Ka`b immediately set out for Makkah and arrived at the house of the Messenger (sallallahu alayhi wa sallam). But by then, Zayd had become so attached to the Prophet that he wouldn't separate from the Prophet at any cost.

An Important Choice for Zayd

Haritha and Ka`b were ready to offer any amount of money to take Zayd back. But Zayd would not agree. Later the Prophet told the guests to themselves ask Zayd to go with them. If he agreed to go, he would not mind telling him to go with his father. But if he wants to stay with him (Prophet), he would not force him to go. At this, the Prophet called for Zayd and asked him to identify his father and uncle.

Zayd: This is my father Haritha and my uncle Ka`b.

Prophet: If you want to go with them, you are free to go. I will have no objection.

Zayd: I am here to stay on with you, none else.

Haritha: Zayd, you prefer slavery over freedom? How painful is your decision.

Zayd: Father, you don't know Muhammad. I have found in him a man whose like cannot be found. His love, affection and character are simply matchless.

Zayd the Son of Muhammad

When the Messenger of Allah (sallallahu alayhi wa sallam) found Zayd to be expressing his love for him in these words, he took him to Haram and declared before the Quraysh chieftains: "O, the people of Quraysh, be witness, Zayd is now my son. He will inherit from me, and from him."

Haritha and Ka`b were extremely pleased at this extreme show of love and affection that the Prophet showed. From that day onwards, Zayd bin Haritha became Zayd bin (son of) Muhammad. But later, the Qur'an revoked this Arab tradition and ordered the sons to be attributed to their biological fathers rather than adoptive ones.

Special Qualities of Zayd

Zayd did not know at that time whose company he had been blessed with. He realized this only after Muhammad became the Messenger of Allah (sallallahu alayhi wa sallam). Zayd was of the first people to join the fold of Islam. He became the Prophet's close adviser. The Prophet used to love him dearly. He would personally welcome him whenever he would return from a mission. He would even be known as the *Hibb*, or beloved of Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wa sallam).

Martyrdom of Zayd

Zayd bin Haritha was martyred in the battle of Mu'tah. When the Prophet came to know about the battle of Mu'tah and heard about the Zayd becoming martyred, he was very much saddened.

He personally went to Zayd's house and gave his condolences to the family. Zayd's little girl came out of the house crying to the Prophet and when the Prophet seen this, he started also crying until his voice could be heard and tears were rolling down his cheeks.

Sa`d bin Ubadah asked him "O Prophet of Allah, what is this?"

The Prophet replied: "This is the crying of a loved one for his loved one."

May Allah Ta`ala be pleased with him.