

Rabi` ah ibn Ka` b (radhiAllahu anhu) A Special "Khadim" of the Prophet

Rabi` ah Tells His Story

Listen to the young companion: Rabi` ah ibn Ka` b, as he tells his story of service for the Prophet (sallallahu alayhi wa sallam)... "I was a young boy when faith entered my heart. And from the moment that I first glanced at the blessed face of Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wa sallam) his love entered the depths of my heart. I didn't want to do anything but spend all my time with him.

So one day I said to myself, "O Rabi` ah what is wrong with you that you do not completely devote yourself to the service of Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wa sallam)? Go and present yourself to him. And if he accepts you, then you will have gained all the goodness of this world and the hereafter."

Then I went to the Messenger (sallallahu alayhi wa sallam) and asked if he would permit me to be in his service. So the Messenger (sallallahu alayhi wa sallam) did not turn me down and accepted me to be his Khadim. So from that day on, I did not leave his side and stayed at his side like a shade. Any time he would look at me with one glance, I would be standing in front of him ready to fulfill his orders. All day I would be with him in his service until isha salah, after which he would return home. When he would go home, I would also think about resting but then I would say to myself, "Where are you going O Rabi` ah? What if the Messenger needs something in the night?"

So then I would sit at the Messenger's doorstep all night and would not move from my place. I would hear the Messenger of Allah (sallallahu alayhi wa sallam) praying tahajjud and would hear him repeating the verses of the Qur'an in salah all night. Like this, I would fall asleep on his doorstep while he would be in his prayers.

An Important Choice to Make

It was the noble habit of Rasulallah (sallallahu alayhi wa sallam) that he loved to reward any kindness or service that was done for him. So he asked me one day, "O Rabi` ah ibn Ka` b! Ask me of something that I may give you."

So I told the Messenger of Allah, "Give me some time O Messenger of Allah, so that I may think over this."

I was poor and very young at that time. I had no home, no wealth, no property, no family, no nothing. My home was the *suffah*, the porch near the house of Rasulallah, where all the other poor companions would spend their days. People would call us *Dhuyuful Islam*, the guests of Islam. Whenever some charity would be given to the Messenger of Allah, it would first be distributed among us.

So I thought to myself to ask the Messenger of Allah for some worldly wealth. It might be that I could come out of my poverty and hard life, become rich and eventually get married. But then I thought to myself, "O Rabi` ah! This world is going to come to an end one day. If there is any worldly necessity, then Allah Ta` ala will fulfill my needs. Through the du` as of the Messenger (sallallahu alayhi wa sallam) I could get anything that I wanted because Allah Ta` ala will not reject his du` as. So why should I not get something which will benefit me in the everlasting life of the hereafter which has no end?"

So then I finally made my decision of what I wanted from the Messenger (sallallahu alayhi wa sallam) and presented myself before him. So he asked me, "What do you wish for O Rabi` ah?" So I said my wish to him... "O Messenger of Allah, make du` a to Allah that I become your companion in Paradise." So the Messenger of Allah was surprised by this and asked him as to who told him to say this? So I said, "No one told me to say this. I just thought to myself that I should ask you for some worldly wealth, then I decided that the everlasting is better than the temporary. So then I knew that there can be nothing better than to be with you in Paradise."

So the Messenger of Allah (sallallahu alayhi wa sallam) stayed silent for a while and then said, "Do you want anything else?"

I answered, "I can never ask for something better than that."

So he said, "Then help me in this by making a lot of nafl prayers."

From that day on, I began to perform abundant nafl prayers so that I may attain the companionship of Rasulullah (sallallahu alayhi wa sallam) in Paradise, just as I had the opportunity of serving him and being in his company in this life.