

دار محمود الإعلام

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Summarized Transcription of Thursday Night Majlis
(September 4th, 2014)

THE LIFE OF ABU DHARR

(RADHI ALLAHU ANHU)

BY:

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HAFIDHAHULLAH

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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

Nabi kareem (sallahu alayhi wa sallam) has stated, my sahaba each and every one of them is like a guiding star, whichever sahabi you have to follow you will be guided.

If a person is trying to look for an example of a very committed, devoted, dedicated, loyal companion, he will find it in the life of Abu Bakr as-Siddeeq (radiyallahu ta'alah anhu).

If a person is looking for an example of a person who's got deep insight and foresight in issues, he will find it in the example of Umar ibn al-Khattab (radiyallahu ta'alah anhu).

If a person is looking for an example of a person with extraordinary haya and modesty, he will find it in the example of Hadrat Uthman (radiyallahu ta'alah anhu).

If a person is looking for an example of courage and bravery, he will find it in the life of Hadrat Ali (radiyallahu ta'alah anhu).

If a person is looking for an example of academics and intellectuality, he will find it in the life of Abdullah ibn Masu'd (radiyallahu ta'alah anhu).

If a person is looking for an example of an acute businessman, who in a short period of time is able to change things from dust to gold, it is in the example of Abdur Rahman bin Awf (radiyallahu ta'alah anhu).

If a youngster is looking for a model in his life he will find it in the example of Anas ibn Malik (radiyallahu ta'alah anhu) and Jabir bin Abdullah (radiyallahu ta'alah anhu).

And womenfolk if they are trying to look for an example of a very devoted, dedicated wife, a devoted daughter, then that would be in the life of Khadija (radiyallahu ta'alah anha), and in the life of Fatima (radiyallahu ta'alah anha).

One very great illustrious Sahabah of Nabi Kareem (salallahu alayhi wa sallam) was Abu Dharr al Ghifari (radiyallahu ta'alah anhu). His name was Jundub ibn Junada. He was brownish in color and very, very tall.

He was the 5th person to have accepted Islam. The incident of him accepting Islam is unique. He lived in the tribe of Ghifar, which was his own tribe. He heard of the advent of Rasulullah (salallahu alayhi wa sallam), so he sent his brother to go to Makkah Mukarramah and investigate, and find out who this person is that is claiming prophethood.

His brother went and came back and said: He (salallahu alayhi wa sallam) ordered us to conduct ourselves in the most beautiful way. Contrary to the claims of the people that he is a poet, he is not a poet.

Abu Dharr (radiyallahu ta'alah anhu) said, you have not given me a satisfactory answer. I need to go to Makkah and find out for myself, and get a personal experience about who this person is. I need to make an important decision in my life. So Abu Dharr (radiyallahu ta'alah anhu) went to Makkah with very little provisions.

The first day he goes into the Haram Shareef in Makkah and he comes across Ali (radiyallahu ta'alah anhu). Ali (radiyallahu ta'alah anhu) observes that this person is a foreigner and an outsider. He speaks to him and they talk to one another very briefly.

The second day Ali (radiyallahu ta'alah anhu) sees him again and asks him, you haven't found the person you are looking for. Abu Dharr al-Ghifari (radiyallahu ta'alah anhu) doesn't say anything.

The third day Ali (radiyallahu ta'alah anhu) asks him, it looks like you're in trouble, looks like you're stranded, you're looking for somebody, looks like you haven't found that person.

That's when Abu Dharr (radiyallahu ta'alah anhu) took the courage and told Ali (radiyallahu ta'alah anhu), if you give me a promise I will tell you the reason why I've come here. I've heard about a person called Muhammad (salallahu alayhi wa sallam). I've heard that people call him 'one who has moved away from the religion of his forefathers'. I'm looking for him. How do I meet him? If you give me a promise that you will keep my mission a secret then you can probably help me.

So Ali (radiyallahu ta'alah anhu) tells him, I'll take you to Muhammad (salallahu alayhi wa sallam). He (salallahu alayhi wa sallam) is a true prophet. For your own personal experience I will take you personally to him. But it was a time of propaganda. Everybody was against Nabi Kareem (salallahu alayhi wa

sallam) making stories about Nabi Kareem (salallahu alayhi wa sallam), so it was a very, very sensitive time for the followers of Nabi Kareem (salallahu alayhi wa sallam).

Ali (radiyallahu ta'alah anhu) tells him, tomorrow morning you must join me, and I will take you to Nabi (salallahu alayhi wa sallam), but if I find something wrong or if I find there is some trouble on the way I will do as though I am relieving myself, and you must carry on walking.

In that way the following morning, Ali (radiyallahu ta'alah anhu) took Abu Dharr (radiyallahu ta'alah anhu) to Nabi Kareem (salallahu alayhi wa sallam). Nabi Kareem (salallahu alayhi wa sallam) then invited him to the deen and Islam and whatever questions Abu Dharr had, he presented them to Nabi (salallahu alayhi wa sallam) and Nabi Kareem (salallahu alayhi wa sallam) answered them. Thereafter he brought Iman on Nabi (salallahu alayhi wa sallam).

Nabi Kareem (salallahu alayhi wa sallam) advised him, O Abu Dharr, conceal your Imaan. By you exposing your Iman you will probably fall into trouble. He left Nabi Kareem (salallahu alayhi wa sallam) and went straight to the Haram and openly declared his Iman, and the moment he did that, things were so sensitive that everyone fell on Abu Dharr (radiyallahu ta'alah anhu) and started beating him and hitting him.

Abbas (radiyallahu ta'alah anhu) was there and he went and jumped over Abu Dharr. He told the people, Don't harm him. He is from the tribe of Ghifar. Your people's caravans going to Shaam go through the lands of Ghifar. If you're going to do anything to him, it will affect our economic relationships. It's going to make things hard and dangerous for us. Anyway Abu Dharr (radiyallahu ta'alah anhu) left and went back to Ghifar.

Now I want to mention to you just three hadiths of Abu Dharr al-Ghifari (radiyallahu ta'alah anhu) and thereafter I want to present to you an important moral. Something very important that each and everyone of us needs in our life.

The first hadith which is narrated by Abu Dharr al-Ghifari (radiyallahu ta'alah anhu) from Nabi Kareem (salallahu alayhi wa sallam). Nabi Kareem (salallahu alayhi wa sallam) said: Whosoever proclaims la ilaaha illa Allah will go to Jannah. When Abu Dharr heard this hadith he told Nabi: Even if the person committed adultery and stole? Again Nabi (salallahu alayhi wa sallam) mentioned even if he committed adultery and stole. Abu Dharr repeated it again, Even if he committed adultery and stole? The person will still go into Jannah

inspite of zina and stealing? Again Nabi (salallahu alayhi wa sallam) mentioned the same thing. The third time Nabi (salallahu alayhi wa sallam) told him with much emphasis, Whether Abu Dharr likes it or not, if the person just said la ilaaha illa Allah, proclaimed tawhid, the oneness of Allah, that person by virtue of this kalimah, believing in Allah and in tawhid, one day that person will go into Jannah and Paradise.

The fuqaha have explained that this hadith is not as general as mentioned. Obviously putting all the other ahadith as overarching principles to this hadith they explain that if a person has committed major sins he has to make tawbah. If Allah wants He will forgive him or if Allah wants He will punish him. But even if that person for some reason happened to go into the fire of Jahannam, by the Will and order of Allah, the person because of the barakah of this kalimah la ilaaha illa Allah, this person will definitely enter into Paradise one day.

The second hadith of Abu Dharr (radiyallahu ta'alah anhu). Nabi Kareem (salallahu alayhi wa sallam) told him, Oh Abu Dharr, fear Allah wherever you are. When in public it's very easy to stay away from sins. But when no one is looking for you, that Being that created millions of eyes, He is also looking at you. In total privacy when we believe that no one is watching us Allah is watching you. Secondly, if you have done anything wrong, it's human nature we make mistakes, but don't just leave it like that, follow up the bad deed with a good deed so that with the barakat of the good deed, the effect of the bad deed gets wiped away.

And third when you interact with people do so with good akhlaaq, with humbleness, with humility, with harmony. This way you bring about love and muhabbat by practicing good akhlaaq and character with people.

And the third hadith Abu Dharr (radiyallahu ta'alah anhu) narrated from Rasulullah (salallahu alayhi wa sallam). He once told Rasulullah (salallahu alayhi wa sallam), O Prophet of Allah the rich and wealthy people have taken the high stages in Paradise. They get so much ajr and reward. One is that have got wealth so they give sadaqah and charity. They also perform Salah and they also fast. We don't have that wealth to give in charity. So Nabi kareem sallahu alayhi wa sallam told Abu Dharr (radiyallahu ta'alah anhu) that after every salah recite 33 times subhanallah, 33 times alhamdulillah, 33 times allahu akbar and the last time your recite la ilaaha illa Allah. These are the 3 ahadith that Abu Dharr (radiyallahu ta'alah anhu) narrated from Nabi Kareem (salallahu alayhi wa sallam).

Now in one hadith Nabi kareem (salallahu alayhi wa sallam) said about Abu

Dharr, Abu Dharr has zuhd, abstinence of the dunya, just like Isa (alayhi salaam). Isa (alayhi salaam) was a zahid having no contact with the dunya. He had nothing to do with materialism and if you were to look for such a person in my ummah it is Abu Dharr Ghifari (radiyallahu ta'alah anhu).

Now Abu Dharr Ghifari (radiyallahu ta'alah anhu) heard many ahadith from Nabi kareem (salallahu alayhi wa sallam) about abstinence from the dunya.

For example, in bukhari shareef there is a hadith that Nabi Kareem (salallahu alayhi wa sallam) asked him where Mount Uhud was. Abu Dharr thought that Nabi Kareem probably (salallahu alayhi wa sallam) wanted to send him for an errand. He thought to himself the day is coming to an end so if I go now I will probably return late at night or can you see Mount Uhud. That's what he thought. But Nabi Kareem (salallahu alayhi wa sallam) told him something which Abu Dharr didn't expect.

Nabi (salallahu alayhi wa sallam) told him, O Abu Dharr you see this Mount Uhud, if it is filled up with gold (and we know how big Mount Uhud is), if the whole mountain is filled up with gold and if it comes in my possession, I would not want to keep anything of it except two or three dirhams or two or three dinars to pay off my debt. Everything else I would give in sadaqah and charity.

Nabi kareem (salallahu alayhi wa sallam) was once sitting by the shade of the Kabah shareef. Abu Dharr entered and from far away he heard Nabi kareem (salallahu alayhi wa sallam) say, those people who have acquired a lot of wealth are in destruction and disaster. Abu Dharr came and sat there and asked: Who are these people?

He said they are those who accumulated a lot of wealth except those that give like this and like that, meaning they give a lot of wealth in the path of Allah. Abu Dharr heard all these ahadith, and this created such a zuhd in him that he had nothing to do with wealth. That is why there was an opinion of Abu Dharr, it was a personal opinion of Abu Dharr (radiyallahu ta'alah anhu) and no other sahabi had this opinion. It was the opinion of Abu Dharr (radiyallahu ta'alah anhu) alone that a person can have just sufficient wealth for the day, everything else would be wajib to give away in sadaqah. This was the opinion of Abu Dharr (radiyallahu ta'alah anhu) and he propagated this view very, very strongly.

One day he was living in a place called Rabadha, a few miles away from Madinah and this is where his grave is. So one person by the name of Zayd bin Wahb asked him, all the other sahabah are in Madinah, why are you here. In an urban area you can enjoy the comforts of life, but you are staying here in a rural area?

So Abu Dharr gave the reason for that and this is the point I want to mention to you.

Abu Dharr said, I was in Sham and Muawiyah (radiyallahu ta'alah anhu) was the governor of Sham and there was ikhtilaaf (difference of opinion) between him and I. I began propagating my view to all the people in Syria, whoever I came in contact with. Anyone who had extra wealth, I would fight with them and I would tell them, it is haram for you to keep this wealth, you must only have enough wealth that is sufficient for the day, anything else you have to give it away.

Then Muawiyah (radiyallahu ta'alah anhu) called him and said, what are you propagating? That is not the correct view. The whole thing centered around an ayah of the Quran. That is the ayah that speaks about those people who have hoarded their wealth and their wealth will burn them on the day of Qiyamah.

Muawiyah (radiyallahu ta'alah anhu) said this is regarding the non-Muslims. Abu Dharr's (radiyallahu ta'alah anhu) opinion was that it was regarding the Muslims and the non-Muslims. This ikhtilaf was between Muawiyah and Abu Dharr. Now he was a great prominent sahabi and Muawiyah was also a great, prominent sahabi. The khalifah at the time was Uthman (radiyallahu ta'alah anhu). So Muawiyah (radiyallahu ta'alah anhu) couldn't handle Abu Dharr (radiyallahu ta'alah anhu), so he wrote a letter to Uthman (radiyallahu ta'alah anhu) saying Abu Dharr's creating so much turbulence and he is so strong in his view there is nothing we can do about him.

So Uthman (radiyallahu ta'alah anhu) called for Abu Dharr (radiyallahu ta'alah anhu) to come to Madinah. In the hadith it is mentioned Abu Dharr (radiyallahu ta'alah anhu) says, when I came to Madinah all the Sahabah surrounded me as though it was the first time they saw me. Now everybody wanted to know that you were there in Syria so why are you here? So he had to tell them, I had a problem with Muawiyah there and I came here.

Obviously the same time of politics is going around in Madinah. The same problem that was present in Syria was also in Madinah. So for the reason Uthman called Abu Dharr look at the honesty and sincerity of Abu Dharr. He went back to Uthman and said you called me away from Syria to avoid a problem, now the same thing seems to be happening in Madinah. What should I do now? So Uthman (radiyallahu ta'alah anhu) told him, go a little bit away from here but not too far so you are close to us. That means you're not in Madinah, but not too far away so we don't miss you, but at the same time to avoid any problems you would not be in Madinah.

So he tells Zayd that is the reason why I'm here. The kuffar were keeping a close eye on the happenings of the Muslims. So at that time the people of Kufa sent a message to Abu Dharr, you got a problem with Uthman, you got a problem with Muawiyah, you come over here to us here in Iraq, we'll take care of you.

But there is a famous saying, the people of Kufa are not loyal and do not fulfill their promise.

Upon this Abu Dharr said that I have got a view, its an academic view and I strongly believe in this view. I'm trying to propagate it and I can't get my way out and Uthman is sending me to another place where I can't propagate my view and here is an invitation from someone who is prepared to even help me propagate my view but because it would lead to fitnah he refused that.

Abu Dharr then says, Now I've come to the point that I did whatever possible to propagate my view but now its leading to fitnah. Now if they had to appoint a dark-skinned person over me and tell me to keep quiet I will keep quiet. This is the point we have to learn.

Often in life many aspects of our life we have a view and we don't get our way out. Maybe its a matter between the husband and the wife.

The husband wants to have his way around the wife and the wife wants to have her way around the husband. You have explored every avenue to have your way but its not working out. The same way could happen in business between two businessman. But unfortunately what happens when we don't get our way we start adopting underhanded tactics and we start doing unprincipled things to achieve our objective.

Sometimes we even try to justify the wrong things we are doing for a principle. We say we are doing it for a principle issue. In terms of Shariah you can't do anything unprincipled for a principle issue. That means two wrongs can't make a right. Yes, there are exceptional situations where you refer to the Ulama and ask them this unprincipled situation I'm doing for a principle cause, is that permissible or not? For that you obtain a fatwa.

But in general you can't do anything haram, anything wrong or anything unprincipled to do a principle thing to get your aim and objective, and this is a great lesson we learn from the life of Abu Dharr (radiyallahu ta'alah anhu). He had a strong view all the time but when he came to a point when he could not go any further he did not adopt underhanded tactics to promote and propagate

his view so that whatever happens his view must prevail. He did whatever possible but when he couldn't help it, he had to go by what the Amirul Moimeen had to say.

And then this is what Nabi Kareem (salallahu alayhi wa sallam) has told to us. We must always be careful of our nafs. O Allah, you reform all conditions of my life and Allah never ever hand me over to my nafs for a twinkle of an eye. We can never ever trust our nafs. And then the dua goes on further to say: If you hand me over to my nafs you hand me to over someone that is weak and you will hand me over to committing sins, wrongs and mistakes.

This is when we follow our nafs and most definitely we will be making mistakes because we cannot trust our nafs. And just in conclusion I'd like to mention how Abu Dharr (radiyallahu ta'alah anhu) passed away.

When Nabi Kareem (salallahu alayhi wa sallam) was going to Tabuk, it was a long arduous journey for a fight with the Roman Empire. All the Sahabah were moving together. From far away they saw someone riding on an animal. The Sahabah told Nabi Kareem (salallahu alayhi wa sallam), somebody is coming from behind. They probably thought it was an enemy. They didn't know who it was.

Nabi Kareem (salallahu alayhi wa sallam) said if its a good person may Allah join him with us. If he is not a good person may Allah keep him away from us.

Then they saw he is no longer riding an animal, rather he is on his foot.

When Nabi Kareem (salallahu alayhi wa sallam) saw him closely, he said this is Abu Dharr. The Sahabah saw closely and they were excited, oh this is Abu Dharr. When Abu Dharr (radiyallahu ta'alah anhu) came closer Nabi Kareem (salallahu alayhi wa sallam) then made dua. May Allah have rahmah upon Abu Dharr. Abu Dharr will live alone. Abu Dharr will die alone and Abu Dharr will also be resurrected on the day of Qiyamah alone.

It so happened that he was in this place Rabadha completely isolated from Madinah. When he was in the last moments of his life he told to his wife that when I pass away a group of Sahabah will be passing by. He didn't know but he said a group of Sahabah will be passing by. Make sure that you are generous to them and you feed them. Then Abu Dharr passed away and nobody was there. He passed away alone, only his wife there. She goes out on the road to see who is going to take care of the burial proceedings of Abu Dharr.

When she goes on the road she sees from far that there is a caravan coming with dust. They see a woman who is in hijab and in purdah there. She is probably in some need. They stop by her and then she introduces herself.

I'm the wife and I'm the widow of Abu Dharr (radiyallahu ta'alah anhu). My husband Abu Dharr just passed away and he told me that a group of Sahabah will be passing by and to request them to offer my salah al-janazah and I must also host them.

In that caravan was Abdullah ibn Masud (radiyallahu ta'alah anhu). And he is the narrator of the hadith where Nabi Kareem (salallahu alayhi wa sallam) has mentioned, May Allah have rahmah upon Abu Dharr. Abu Dharr will live alone. Abu Dharr will die alone and Abu Dharr will also be resurrected on the day of Qiyamah alone.

Abdullah ibn Masud (radiyallahu ta'alah anhu) then performed the janazah of Abu Dharr (radiyallahu ta'alah anhu).

So we make dua that Allah give us tawfiq and hidayah to make qadr, to value the lives of the Sahabah and how with their ikhlaas and sincerity they always guided themselves against the nafs. Whatever pleased Allah and his Rasul (salallahu alayhi wa sallam) they did that. Anything that was against that, they stayed away from it. May Allah give us tawfiq and hidayah to make 'amal.

