

# THE **F1RST**S

A Lecture Series

**YAQREEN**<sup>™</sup>  
INSTITUTE FOR ISLAMIC RESEARCH

# Khabbab Ibn Al Aratt

## Under Burning Hot Coals - the first person to make his Islam public, and be tortured for it.

He was a special and significant companion of the Prophet Mohammad ﷺ, but it's easy to lose sight of his story among the others.

### An Enslaved Young Boy

He was enslaved as a young boy and was sold in the slave market in Mecca. A woman named Um Ammar Al Khuzaieea was looking for someone to help her out with her chores, as well as to put to work and be a source of income to her. He was barely a teenager and was distinguished in his appearance. Um Ammar bought Khabbab and assumed he was Abyssinian like many others sold in that market. However, he told her that he was a black Arab from Banu Tamim.

As a child, two Arab tribes fought together and his tribe lost. The men were killed and the children were taken as slaves by the victorious tribe and later sold into slavery at the markets.

### An Excellent Blacksmith

Um Ammar had Khabbab train under a blacksmith in Mecca. In time, he became an expert blacksmith who showed great talent. He was very well known for his craft and she profited well from him.

Along with his beautiful swords, he was also known for his high character and integrity.

### Immediate Submission

Around the age of 16-18, as soon as he heard about Islam, it made sense to him and he accepted it right away. He went to Prophet Mohammad ﷺ, declared his submission and pledged to him. When Um Ammar found out she told her brother Sibaa' to take care of it. Her brother and a group of young men approached Khabbab and asked him if indeed he was following 'the man from Bani Hashim', and left their religion. He replied to them, that he never worshipped or believed in the idols that they believe in and that he was indeed a Muslim and believed in Allah.

As soon as he said that they beat him so severely that he became unconscious, bleeding from his wounds. They used the same iron that he used for his craft that had been so profitable for Um Ammar.

When he regained consciousness, they asked him again and he replied the same way, refusing to deny his Islam. They continued to beat him relentlessly, starved him and experimented with many different forms of torture on him. They threw burning hot coals on his back and with the sizzling of his flesh, it melted off his body. He screamed in pain and anguish but there was no one to come to protect him or defend him. Upon seeing him speaking with Prophet Mohammad ﷺ, Um Ammar tortured him herself by running a red hot iron comb through his scalp and burning his skin.

He endured all this torture by himself, all for the sake of Allah. Eventually Abu Bakr (ra) offered to purchase him from Um Ammar and he became a free man.

## A Faithful Companion

Khabbab became a companion of Prophet Mohammad ﷺ and he continued to be harassed, along with Prophet Mohammad ﷺ and the other companions. He accompanied Prophet Mohammad ﷺ in every battle.

One time in his frustration, he asked “O, Messenger of Allah, aren’t you going to ask Allah to help us ?” The Prophet Mohammad ﷺ sat up, noticeably angered and replied, “people before us were tortured even more than you yet they didn’t abandon their religion, Allah will surely give victory to this deen, but you are hasty.”

This was a reminder by Prophet Mohammad ﷺ that the believer must always be patient, hopeful and confident in Allah’s plan and help. He told him that we may not live to see the victory of this deen, but it will surely come.

Khabbab was a notable companion, teaching others about Islam, including Fatima ibn Khattab, her husband Saeed, and Umar ibn Khattab himself. Later, when Umar became the calipha, he, Bilal and Khabbab would remember all the hardships and torture. Umar praised Khabbab and Bilal for all they did for Islam. Umar had seen many tortured in his lifetime, but none as much as Khabbab when he saw the flesh still raw on his back and unhealed.

The promise of the victory of Islam that Prophet Mohammad ﷺ had made to him years before was fulfilled as he saw Islam spread across the world and the strength of the caliphate of Umar (ra). Allah had surely made Islam victorious, and Allah allowed Khabbab to witness it.

## A Life of Trials

Khabbab's life was full of tests and trials. Later, as he became wealthy, he was very generous with the wealth and remained humble. He was always worried that since he was granted a bounty in this world, he may not be rewarded in the Hereafter too. He never felt entitled to anything or to enter Paradise and continued to strive for it.

Upon passing his grave Ali (ra) once said “ May Allah have mercy on Khabbab. He embraced Islam wholeheartedly, he performed the Hijra in full obedience, and he spent his whole life striving in the way of Allah. He suffered in ways no one else had suffered and surely his reward is with Allah.”

## Lessons Learned

- Even though Khabbab had no formal religious knowledge, his natural, innate instinct led him to deny idol worship all his life and he accepted Islam immediately upon hearing about it.
- Even people that seem to have no one to protect them have the protection of Allah and Allah has a plan for each of us. We may become impatient with the plan, but we must have full confidence that Allah is always with the believers and will always make them victorious and reward them.
- Don't under-estimate people. Even a defenseless, unknown, young slave boy grew to be a significant companion, is remembered and praised centuries after his death, and is loved by Allah.

**Disclaimer:** Notes for The Firsts are brought to you by dedicated students for your personal reference. Please refer to the original lecture for source material.

