

THE **F1RST**S

A Lecture Series

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Abu Hudhaifa Ibn Utbah

Seeking Another Status

His name was Hashim, he did not have a son named Hudhaifa, or perhaps he had passed away at a young age. He was known for being very tall, handsome and having impeccable manners, being gentle, generous, and kind. One of his mannerisms was that he was quiet, despite his position.

Utbah

Abu Hudhaifa was from the tribe of Abu Shams, son of Utbah, one of the most influential leaders of this tribe from Quraish. Utbah tried to negotiate with Prophet Muhammad ﷺ and offered him great wealth, fame, prominence, or kingship of Mecca to stop spreading Islam's message. Utbah offered to pay for Prophet Muhammad's ﷺ healing expenses if all this was a result of a psychological condition. After politely listening to his offers, Prophet Muhammad ﷺ replied by reciting the Quran, starting with Sura Al Fussilat until he reached Sura Al Sajida. Utbah was stunned by the recitation, and Prophet Muhammad ﷺ told him that now it was time for Utbah to decide whether or not to accept the message and that he would not leave his message for anything that he was offered.

When Utbah returned to Quraish, his face was changed after hearing the Quranic recitation. His heart, however, had not changed. He said that his advice was to leave Prophet Muhammad ﷺ alone because he no longer believed it was witchcraft, sorcery, or poetry. They did not accept that approach, and they kept fighting the Prophet ﷺ and his companions.

Family Ties & Status

Abu Hudhaifa's mother was divorced from Utbah, accepted Islam, and later made the hijrah to Abyssinia. His sister was Hind bint Utbah, wife of Abu Sufyan, who ordered the murder of Hamza at the Battle of Badr. His father-in-law was Sohaib ibn Amr. His wife was Sahla bint Sohaib.

He accepted Islam with his wife among the firsts. The psychological pressure of accepting Islam made it too difficult to stay in Mecca, and they left with their adopted son, Salim, to Abyssinia. They had a son named Muhammad ﷺ. He was famous for making three hijras,

two to Abyssinia and one to Medina. Had he stayed in Mecca, he could have eventually become one of the most powerful figures because of his family status.

Choosing Sides

Abu Hudhaifa broke with his social / family class and, during battles, was on the opposite side of his tribe. He fought in all the battles alongside the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ and was one of the Badriyoon (veterans of the Battle of Badr). During the Battle of Badr, the enemy's front line was his father, brother, and uncle. He did not want family members fighting each other, but when the battle started, he was on the frontlines and proved his loyalty to the Prophet ﷺ and Islam.

He broke down in tears as his three family members were killed before his eyes as the Battle of Badr commenced and told Prophet Muhammad ﷺ that he wished his father had accepted Islam before he died.

Clarification of Adoption

When the prohibition of Islam's adoption came down, it affected him and his adopted son, Salim. He lived with Abu Hudhaifa and Sahla as their son. Prophet Muhammad ﷺ made an exception for him, and since Sahla breastfed him, she would not need to wear hijab in front of him. Salim would be now be named Salim Mawla Abu Hudhaifa, instead of the son of Abu Hudhaifa, showing the importance of clarity of lineage in Islam.

Character of a Muslim Before Being Muslim

Abu Hudhaifa's character qualities were very compatible with Islam. As Prophet Muhammad ﷺ state, 'the best of you in the times of ignorance are the best of you in the times of Islam.'

Legacy of Abu Hudhaifa

- He relinquished power, wealth, and social status for the sake of accepting the message of Islam and to side with the truth.
- He was willing to break with tradition when Islam required it and made three hijrahs live in peace as a Muslim.
- He wanted to die as a martyr. He was granted that in the Battle of Yamama. He was among 500 Muslims who were martyred on that day.
- His legacy was not his children or grandchildren, yet his story is a legacy in itself.

***imer:** Notes for The Firsts are brought to you by dedicated students for your personal reference.
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