

أَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ الرَّجِيمِ

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

أَلْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ كَمَا هُوَ أَهْلُهُ وَالصَّلَاةُ وَالسَّلَامُ عَلَى سَيِّدِ وَدِدِ أَدَمَ كَمَا يُحِبُّ وَيَرْضَى بِأَنْ يُصَلَّى عَلَيْهِ

Allah Almighty, in Whose Name we begin, The Most Compassionate,  
The Most Merciful

All Praise is due to Allah Almighty, Countless Peace and Blessings be upon  
His Beloved Messenger – *may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him* – his family & his  
companions – *may Allah be pleased with them all*

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## A Lesson in Fufilling a Promise

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It is mentioned that once, when Imra'ul Qais went to visit the Emperor of Rome he left his armour in the care of Shamwaa'il. (His full name was Shanwaa'il bin Ghareed bin Aadiyah Azadi who was also a very famous poet in the days of ignorance). He was also a citizen of Khyber which was situated on the northern borders of Madina Shareef. In fact, his poems have actually being compiled into a complete book which is referred to as the "Diwaan". His loyalty to Imra'ul Qais is very famous in Arabia. (Al A'laam, 3/140)

When Imra'ul Qais died, the Ruler of Syria, Haarith bin Jabalah Ghasaani, actually came to capture the armour of Imra'ul Qais and surrounded the fort at Khyber. Shamwaa'il then secured the door of the fort and called everyone inside the fort. However, one of the sons of Shamwaa'il remained outside the fort and he was captured by Haarith. He then called out to Shamwaa'il, "Even though you have entered the fort, but I have captured your son. You are also aware that Imra'ul Qais was my cousin and I am entitled

for his inheritance more than anyone else. If you do not surrender his armour to me, I will have no choice but to kill your son.”

When Shamwaa'il heard this, he was obviously extremely worried and urgently called a meeting between everyone who was in the fort. Everyone also advised him to give this person the armour so that at least his son could be spared. After listening to everyone, he stood near the wall of the fort and shouted, “O leader of Syria! I can never hand over this armour to you under any circumstances. You may do whatever you wish.”

The King then had the young boy killed in front of his father. In spite of this, Shamwaa'il refused to hand over the armour.

The King returned empty handed to his area. After he had gone, Shamwaa'il then took this armour and personally handed it over the family of Imar'ul Qais. He then mentioned a few lines of poetry which was, “I handed over the armour of Imra'ul Qais to its rightful owners at that time when most people would have resorted to dishonesty. Even in this difficult moment, I continued to keep my promise.”

This incident is mentioned in many history books.

It is mentioned that Numan bin Manzar was the Governor of a placed called Herah. (This incident seemed to have taken place before Islam). His father was Manzir bin Imar'ul Qais. During earlier times, his father was removed from this position by Nusherwan's father. However, he was again given this position.

Numan bin Manzar then created a new rule in his territory based on Jahaalat. He nominated one day in a year will be “Yaumin Na'eem” or the day of happiness and the one day in the year as “Yaumul Bu'us” or the day of sadness. On the day of happiness, the first person to be seen by the Governor was given a hundred camels as a reward. However, the first person to be seen on the day of sadness was killed.

One day, Numan bin Manzar went out on some expedition and lost his way in the jungle. He was chasing a rabbit when this happened. Numan bin Manzar then came to a strange place where he did not know anyone. Suddenly, it began to rain quite heavily and he decided to look for some shelter for the evening. He then saw a house which

belonged to a person named Hanzalah who was from the Bani Tay. Hanzalah lived alone in this house with his wife. The Ruler knocked on the door and when Hanzalah opened the door, the stranger asked him for a place to save himself from the heavy rain and also to rest for the night. Hanzalah warmly greeted the stranger. However, at the same time, Hanzalah did not recognize who the stranger was. They only had one goat and the husband and wife survived on the milk of this goat. However, Hanzalah mentioned to his wife that this stranger did not seem like an ordinary person and that they should look after him. His wife mentioned that they should milk the goat and thereafter slaughter this goat and feed the stranger. She also made some bread while her husband cut and cleaned the goat. They then gave Numan some of the milk which they had and then fed him the meat from the goat.

After he had eaten, they then made sure that he was comfortable for the night. In the morning when Numan decided to leave, he revealed the truth to them about his identity and also mentioned to them that if they ever needed anything they were free to come and visit him.

A short while later, this area experienced a severe drought and the couple were going through appalling poverty. One day, he wife told him that perhaps this would be the right moment to visit the Numan bin Manzar so that perhaps he would be able to help them in this difficult moment.

After listening to the advice of his wife, the husband decided to travel to Hirah to see whether he could get some help. However, when he entered the court of the ruler, it so happened that this was the day of “Youmul Bu’us”, in other words, the day of sadness where someone was going to be killed. It also so happened that the first person that Numan bin Manzar saw in that morning was Hanzalah. The Ruler also recognized him as someone who had done a great favour a few months ago.

He was extremely saddened by the fact that of all the days, Hanzalah had decided to visit him on this day. Hanzalah saw that Numan bin Manzar was looking at him in a strange manner and thought that perhaps the Ruler had not recognized him. However, Numan mentioned that he had certainly recognized him and he was regretful that this person who had done such a great favour on him would visit him on the day of sadness. Hanzalah mentioned that he did not know which day it was.

Numan bin Manzar replied, “Whatever is the case, I am totally helpless. Even if today my own son had appeared, I would have to order that he be put to death. Therefore, if you have any need, please mention them quickly because I have to order your execution.”

Hanzalah mentioned that if he was killed, then there would be no value in whatever was given by Numan.

Numan replied, “Yes, you are right, however, according to the law which has been prescribed by me, you will have to be killed.”

Hanzalah then said, “If I have to be killed, then at least allow me to go home and give them my final advice and I can also make some alternative arrangements for them.”

Numan bin Manzar then asked his court whether anyone was prepared to stand guarantee for this.

Hanzalah then looked around and saw someone named Shuraik bin ‘Umar and asked him whether he would stand guarantee. However, this person refused. However, there was a person from the Bani Kalb named Qiraad bin Ajda’a who stood up and mentioned that he was prepared to stand guarantee on the return of Hanzalah.

Numan then gave Hanzalah five hundred camels loaded with various goods and also gave him one year to return to face the death penalty.

One day, before the end of the year, Numan looked at Qiraad and said, “That person has not returned, therefore, tomorrow, you will have to face the death penalty as a guarantee.”

The next day, which was the last day of the year, Numan ordered the executioner to be present at the same spot where he had first seen the person that would be killed and this is where he ordered that Qiraad be put to death. However, the subjects of Numan bin Manzar informed him that he should at least allow the sun to completely set before this person was killed. Numan bin Manzar then decided to wait and in his heart, he wanted Qiraad to be killed because he did not want Hanzalah to die after he and his wife had

shown such kindness to him. He also remembered that these people had shown him a favour on a night in which there was a great storm.

As the rays of the sun began to disappear, Numan was looking at the executioner and one eye was on the rays of the sun. The executioner was ready to drop the sword on the neck of Qiraad at any moment. Numan was also waiting for this sun to completely set so that he could quickly order the execution of Qiraad.

However, as they were about to carry out the execution, they could see a person appearing in the distance. The ruler was ever ready to carry out the execution but his subjects interjected and said that it would be better to wait and see who this person was.

When they saw who it was, they were all shocked. It was in fact Hanzalah himself. However, when Numan saw who it was, he looked angrily at Hanzalah and said, “When you had saved your life once by leaving this place, why did you have to return?” Hanzalah shouted the word, “Al Wafa (meaning that he had made a promise)”.

Numan bin Manzar asked him where he had learnt about this Wafa and he replied that he had learnt about this from his elders.

It is reported that this lesson had such an immense impact on Numan that from that day, he completely changed. Numan bin Manzar also changed the law of killing people without any valid reason and apologized to both Hanzalah and Qiraad. He also made a statement that he could not make out that from the both of them who was more honest and loyal. Hanzalah also mentioned, “I am that person within whom to fulfil a promise is part of my nature and I am prepared to even sacrifice myself for this as well.” (Seerat Khaatimun Nabiyeen, 29-31)