



(Sayyiduna Hakeem bin Hizaam [radhiyallahu ‘anhu] – Part One)

Sayyiduna Hakeem bin Hizaam (radhiyallahu ‘anhu) is a Sahaabi of Rasulullah (sallallahu ‘alaihi wasallam) who was blessed with an extraordinarily long life – he passed away at the age of one hundred and twenty! Another unique aspect of his life is that he was born inside the Ka’bah Shareef!

He was among the leaders of the Quraish and was regarded to be wise and intelligent. When the leaders of the Quraish would enter Daarun Nadwah (the place of council) in order to hold meetings and discuss the affairs of Makkah Mukarramah and its people, then only those people who were forty years of age or older were allowed to participate in the discussion and give their suggestions. However, Sayyiduna Hakeem (radhiyallahu ‘anhu) was an exception to this rule. On account of his wisdom and intelligence, he was admitted into Daarun Nadwah at the age of fifteen.

Sayyiduna Hakeem (radhiyallahu ‘anhu) was the nephew of Sayyidah Khadeejah (radhiyallahu ‘anha). He was also a friend to Rasulullah (sallallahu ‘alaihi wasallam) even before nubuwwah (prophethood), though he only accepted Islam much later on, on the occasion of the Conquest of Makkah Mukarramah.

Among his many good qualities, one quality that stood out was his generosity and willingness to spend his wealth on others – especially his family and relatives. He was a merchant who would conduct business in Yemen and Shaam. On these business ventures, he would accrue substantial profits and spend them on the poor ones from his people.

During the period of the boycott, when the Banu Haashim were banished to the valley of Abu Taalib, and they had to resort to eating the leaves on the trees to survive, the heart of

Sayyiduna Hakeem (radhiyallahu ‘anhu) was filled with sympathy and concern. However, he could not offer them direct assistance, for this would cause the entire Quraish to turn against him. Hence, when his caravan of wheat would arrive, he would face the animals in the direction of the valley and urge them to go in that direction. In this way, the animals would enter the valley and the grain on their backs would bring some relief to the Banu Haashim.

Similarly, on the occasion when his cousin, Sayyiduna Zubair bin ‘Awwaam (radhiyallahu ‘anhu) passed away, leaving unsettled debts, Sayyiduna Hakeem (radhiyallahu ‘anhu) approached his son, Sayyiduna ‘Abdullah bin Zubair (radhiyallahu ‘anhuma), and offered to assist him in settling his father’s debts.

The land on which Daarun Nadwah stood belonged to Sayyiduna Hakeem (radhiyallahu ‘anhu), and he sold it to Sayyiduna Mu’aawiyah (radhiyallahu ‘anhu) for one hundred thousand dirhams (silver coins). Observing this, someone remarked, “You have sold that which was a source of honour for the Quraish!” He replied, “The only source of honour is taqwa. Through selling Daarun Nadwah, I have purchased a palace in Jannah.” He then gave the entire amount of one hundred thousand dirhams in sadaqah.

On one occasion, he went to the well-known market of ‘Ukaaz where he purchased a slave for six hundred dirhams (silver coins) and gave him to his aunt, Sayyidah Khadeejah (radhiyallahu ‘anha) as a gift. This slave was none other than Sayyiduna Zaid bin Haarithah (radhiyallahu ‘anhu). After Sayyidah Khadeejah (radhiyallahu ‘anha) married Rasulullah (sallallahu ‘alaihi wasallam), she gifted Sayyiduna Zaid (radhiyallahu ‘anhu) to him. Rasulullah (sallallahu ‘alaihi wasallam) then set him free.

Sayyiduna Hakeem (radhiyallahu ‘anhu), even in the pre-Islamic era, when ignorance and immorality was rife, would purchase slaves in order to emancipate them and liberate them from the shackles of slavery. Hence, it is reported that he freed as many as one hundred slaves prior to accepting Islam, and after bringing imaan, he set a further one hundred slaves free!

(Siyaru Aa’laamin Nubalaa vol. 3, pgs. 44 – 50 and Al-Isaabah vol. 2, pg. 98)

Lessons:

1. Generosity is among the salient qualities of a believer. Hence, we find that many Muslims are generous and spend liberally in bringing relief to disaster-stricken areas. While this is very important and rewarding, we should not forget that 'charity begins at home'. In other words, we should not forget our own family members, whether they are closely or distantly related, and should help them if they are undergoing difficulty. At times, a person spends hundreds of thousands in various avenues of charity while his own brother, sister, uncle, aunt, cousin, etc. are struggling to make ends meet. If we spend on our family members, we will receive two rewards – the reward of charity as well as the reward of maintaining family ties.

2. For a Muslim, honour lies in Islam. The Quraan Majeed informs us that the person who has the greatest honour is the one who has the most taqwa.