





Abu Talib Abdul Muttalib

by Kamal al-Syyed

Translated by
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Chapter 1

The Year of the Elephant

In 570 AD, the Abyssinian armies under the leadership of Abraha attacked Makkah to demolish the Ka'aba.

Abdul Muttalib, our Master Muhammad's [s] grandfather, the Master of Makkah, went round the Ka'aba praying to Allah, the Almighty, to prevent the invaders from demolishing the House which Ibrahim, al-Khalil, and his son Ismael built for people to worship Allah only.

Allah, the Almighty, accepted Abdul Muttalib's prayer. So, when the elephants and the soldiers advanced to demolish the Ka'aba, Ababil birds carrying stones in their beaks appeared in the horizon. They began dropping the stones. So, the invaders around the Ka'aba were defeated.

Consequently, Allah's power and Abdul Muttalib's importance appeared! That year was named the Year of the Elephant.

Our Master Muhammad [s] was born in that year. Abu-Talib was thirty years of age.

Allah, the Almighty, has mentioned this event in the Holy Qur'an:

In The Name of Allah, The Beneficent, The Merciful.

Have you not considered how your Lord dealt with the possessors of the elephant?

Did He not cause their war to end in confusion.

And send down (to prey) upon them birds in flocks, casting them against stones of baked clay.

So, he rendered them like straw eaten up?

Chapter 2

Abdul Muttalib

Abdul Muttalib, who dug Zam Zam well, had ten sons. Abdullah, the Prophet's father, was one of them. Abu Talib, Prophet's uncle, was one of them, too.

Our Master Muhammad [s], was an orphan. His father, Abdullah, died a short while before he was born. When his mother died, he was six years of age.

So, his grandfather Abdul Muttalib took care of him. He liked him very much. He thought that Muhammad [s] would be a Prophet.

Abdul Muttalib was righteous. He followed Ibrahim's and Ismael's religion. He advised his sons to follow good manners.

On his death bed, Abdul Muttalib said to his sons:

"A grandson of mine will be a Prophet. So, he who will be present at his time must believe in him."

Then he turned to his son, Abu Talib, and whispered in his ear:

"Abu Talib, Muhammad will be of great importance. So support him with your hand and tongue."

Chapter 3

The Guardian

Our Master Muhammad [s] was 8 years of age when his grandfather Abdul Muttalib died. So, his uncle, Abu Talib took care of him.

Abu Talib's name was Abdul Munaf. His mother's name was Fatima bint Amru. She belonged to the Bani Makhzum tribe. Abu Talib was named Shaikh al-Bat-ha.

Our Master Muhammad [s] lived with his uncle. His uncle treated him kindly. Fatima bint Asad, his uncle's wife, treated him kindly, too. She preferred him to all of her sons. So, our Master Muhammad [s] grew with a good family.

Abu Talib's love for his nephew increased day by day because of his good manners and great politeness.

For example, when the food was ready, the orphan boy reached it politely. He said:

In the Name of Allah!

When he finished, he said:

Thank Allah!

One day, Abu Talib missed his nephew Muhammad. So, he raised his hand from the food and said:

"Till my son comes!"

When Muhammad came, Abu Talib gave him a cup of yogurt. Muhammad drank out of the cup. Abu Talib's sons drank out of it one by one, too. They were all full. The uncle admired that. So, he said to his nephew:

"Muhammad you're blessed!"

Chapter 4

The Good News

Abu Talib had heard good news from the people of the Book (the Jews and the Christians). The good news was that a Prophet would appear very soon. So, he took care of his nephew very much. He thought that he would be a Prophet. So, he didn't leave him alone.

When Abu Talib wanted to go on a trade journey to Sham (Syria), he took our Master Muhammad [s] with him. Muhammad was nine years of age then.

In Busra, a city situated on the road of the trade caravans, there was an abbey. A monk lived in the abbey. The monk's name was Buhaira. He was always looking forward to the appearance of a new Prophet whose time approached.

When the monk looked at Muhammad, he realized that he would be the promised Prophet because he had the personality and expression of a Prophet.

The monk began looking at the Makkan boy's face very carefully. Meanwhile, the good news from Jesus Christ sounded in his mind. The monk asked Abu Talib about the boy's name. So, Abu-Talib said:

"His name's Muhammad."

The monk became very humble at his holy name. So, he said to Abu Talib:

"Go back to Makkah. Protect your nephew from the Jews because he'll be of great importance!"

Abu Talib came back to Makkah. He adored Muhammad. He was very careful of his safety.

Chapter 5

The Blessed Boy

The years passed. Makkah and its villages dried up because there was no rain.

The people came to Shaikh al-Bat-ha. They asked him to pray to Allah for rain. They said: "Abu-Talib, the valley's become rainless. Our families are without food. So come on and pray to Allah for rain."

Abu Talib went out. He had great confidence in Allah. He took his nephew, Muhammad with him.

Abu Talib and Muhammad stood beside the Ka'aba. The boy's heart took a pity on the people. Abu Talib asked Ibrahim's and Ismael's Lord to send down heavy rain.

Muhammad looked at the sky.

Only a little time passed. The sky was full of clouds. Lightening flashed. Thunder sounded. The rain came down heavily.

The rain water flowed in the villages. The people came back pleased thanking Allah for the blessing of the rain. Abu Talib also came back. His love for his nephew increased very much.

The years passed. Muhammad became a young man. He was extremely polite. So, people called him the Truthful, the Trustworthy One.

Chapter 6

The Supporter of the Persecuted

Abu Talib disliked persecution very much. In the meantime, he liked the persecuted a lot. So, our Master Muhammad [s] liked Abu Talib very much.

One day, a battle took place between the tribe of Kinana and the tribe of Qais. The tribe of Qais was the aggressor.

A man from the tribe of Kinana came to Abu Talib and said:

"Son of the bird feeder and pilgrim water-giver; don't be absent from us. We get victory in your presence."

Abu Talib answered:

"I will not be absent from you when you avoid persecution, enmity, rudeness and falsehood."

So, they promised him to do that.

Our Master Muhammad [s] stood by his uncle, against Kinana.

Chapter 7

The Alliance of Fodhool

Some people from Makkah attacked the pilgrims of Allah's House.

A man and his daughter, belonged to the tribe of Khathaam, came to visit Allah's House. A young man from Makkah took the young girl by force.

The Khathaamian man shouted:

"Help! Help! Help!"

A passer-by said to him:

"Go to The Alliance of Fodhool."

The man went to Abu Talib.

Abu Talib founded the Alliance of Fodhool. It was an agreement signed by the Makkan leaders. According to the agreement they decided to help the persecuted and to punish the unjust.

When the Khathaamian man got there and asked them for help, some men took their swords and went to the young man's house. They threatened him and brought back the girl to her father.

Our Master Muhammad [s] was a member of the Alliance of Fodhool.

The Happy Marriage

Abu Talib had a big family. He spent a lot of his money on the poor. In time, he too became poor. Our Master Muhammad [s] felt that he had to help his uncle. So, he decided to take Khadijah's goods to Sham.

The task was successful. Our Master Muhammad [s] gave the trusts to their owners. This made Khadijah think of him. So, she asked him to marry her.

Abu Talib was very pleased with that suggestion. So, he, a group of Bani Hashim, and Hamza bin Abdul Muttalib, our Master Muhammad's uncle, went to ask for Khadijah's hand from her family. Abu-Talib said:

"Praise be to Allah who has made us of Ibrahim's and Ismael's sons, made a protected house and a safe sanctuary for us, and made our country blessed."

Then he added:

"My nephew Muhammad bin Abdullah is the best and greatest man of all the Quraish. Besides, he's better than money because money's perishable. He likes Khadijah and she likes him. By Allah, he'll be of great importance. Khadijah's dowry is of my money."

Muhammad [s] and Khadijah got married.

The years passed. Allah gave Abu Talib a new baby. The baby's name was Ali.

Our Master Muhammad [s] wanted to relieve his uncle's worries. So, he went to his uncle's house to take Ali to his house.

Chapter 9

Jibreel

The years passed. Abu Talib became seventy years of age. Our Master Muhammad [s] was forty years of age. Muhammad went to Hira Cave every day. In that year, Jibreel came down from the sky. Our Master Muhammad [s] heard him saying:

Read! Read! In the name of your Lord who created.

He created man from a clot.

Read and your Lord is most Honorable, who taught (to write) with the pen, taught man what he knew not.

Then Jibreel said:

Muhammad, you're Allah's Messenger and I'm Jibreel.

Muhammad came back from Hira Cave holding the Mission of the Heavens.

His wife, Khadijah, believed in him. His cousin Ali bin Abu Talib believed in him, too.

One day, while our Master Muhammad [s] was praying and Ali was behind him, Abu Talib came and said kindly:

My nephew, what are you doing?

The Prophet [s] said:

We're praying to Allah according to the religion of Islam.

Abu Talib said happily:

There's no harm in what you're doing.

Then he said to his son Ali:

Ali, support your cousin. He does nothing but good.

Chapter 10

In the Prophet's House

After a while, Jibreel came down holding Allah's Order:

And warn your nearest relations, and be kind to him who follows you of the believers.

Allah's Messenger ordered Ali aged ten to invite his tribe, namely Bani Hashim. Abu Talib, Abu Lahab and others came to the Prophet's house.

When they all had the food, our Master Muhammad [s] said:

No Arab young man had brought his people like what I've brought you. I've brought you the good of here and of the hereafter.

Then, he asked them to believe in Islam. Abu Lahab stood up and said with spite:

Muhammad's put a spell on you.

Abu Talib said angrily:

Shut up! It's none of your business!

Abu Talib turned to our Master Muhammad [s] and said:

Get up and say whatever you like. Spread Your Lord's Mission, for you're the Truthful, the Trusted one.

So, our Master Muhammad [s] got up and said:

My Lord has ordered me to ask you to believe in Him. So, who will support me in this matter? Who wants to be my brother; my regent, and my successor after me?

They kept silent.

So, Ali said eagerly:

Allah's Apostle, I.

The Prophet rejoiced and embraced his young cousin while he was weeping.

Bani Hashim stood up. Abu Lahab was laughing and saying sarcastically to Abu Talib:

Muhammad's ordered you to hear and obey your son.

But Abu Talib did not pay attention to him. Rather, he looked angrily at him.

Abu Talib kindly said to his nephew:

Go on what Allah's ordered you. By Allah, I'll support and protect you.

Our Master Muhammad [s] looked at his uncle respectfully. He felt strong as long as the Master of Makkah was with him.

Chapter 1

The Supporter

Although Abu Talib was an old man, he strongly stood by Muhammad's Mission. He was always protecting him from the Quraishi polytheists.

A big number of the Makkans believed in Allah's religion paying no attention to the worship of the idols and to the threats of the Quraishi tyrants.

One day, the Quraishi leaders came to Abu Talib though he was confined to bed. They said angrily:

Abu Talib! Keep your nephew from us because he's weakened our thoughts and insulted our gods.

Abu Talib became sad because his people did not want to listen to the sound of truth. So, he said to them:

Give me time to speak to him.

Abu Talib told our Master Muhammad [s] the words of the Quraishi leaders.

The Prophet [s] said respectfully:

Uncle! I can't disobey my Lord's Order.

Abu Jahal, the most spiteful man, said:

We'll give him whatever he wants of our money. Rather, we'll make him king over us if he wants.

The Prophet [s] said:

I want nothing but one word.

Abu Jahal said:

What's the word? We'll give you as ten times as it!

Our Master Muhammad [s] said:

Say there's no god but Allah.

So, Abu Jahal was filled with anger:

Ask another word instead!

Allah's Apostle [s] said:

If you brought me the sun and put it in my hand, I'd not ask a word instead.

There was tension. The polytheists stood up. They were threatening our Master Muhammad [s].

Abu Talib said to our Master Muhammad:

Save your soul and don't overburden me.

The Prophets' eyes shed tears when he answered:

Uncle, by Allah, if they put the sun in my right hand and the moon in my left hand to leave this matter, I'd not leave it till Allah supports it or I perish for it.

The Prophet [s] stood up rubbing his tears. So, Abu Talib called him kindly and said:

Nephew draw near.

Our Master Muhammad [s] drew near. His uncle kissed him and said:

Nephew, go and say whatever you like. By Allah, I'll never leave you alone.

Then, he began chanting to confront the Quraishi might:

By Allah, they all won't reach you.

Till a pillow of dust will be put under my head.

And till I'll be buried.

Chapter 12

The Light of Islam

Our Master Muhammad [s] went on preaching the new religion to bring out people from darkness into light.

Again the Quraishi tyrants came to Abu Talib. They used another style:

Abu Talib, this is Amarah bin al-Waleed (Khalid bin al-Waleed's brother). He's the strongest and the most handsome young man of all the Quraish. So, take him and give us Muhammad to kill.

Abu Talib was sorry to hear that idea. He answered them angrily:

Do you give me your son to feed him for you, while I give you my son to kill him? Have you ever seen a she-camel take pity on other than its young?

The polytheists harm became intense. They began torturing them. Abu Talib thought that their harm would include our Master Muhammad [s]. So, he sent for Bani Hashim. He asked them to protect and save the Prophet [s]. They accepted but Abu Lahab.

Abu Talib heard that Abu Jahal and other polytheists tried to kill our Master Muhammad [s].

So, he and his son Ja'far went to the hills of Makkah to look for him. They looked for him here and there.

Finally, they found him praying to Allah. In the meantime, Ali was praying on his right-hand side. They were sad to see that there was no one with our Master Muhammad [s] but Ali. Thus Abu Talib wanted to encourage his nephew. He turned to his son Ja'far and said:

Complete your cousin's wing.

Namely, pray on his left hand to feel determination, strength, and confidence. Ja'far stood with our Master Muhammad [s] and his brother Ali to pray to Allah, the Creator of the skies and the earth, the Lord of the Worlds.

Again, Abu Talib missed our Master Muhammad [s]. He waited for his return. But he did not come back. So, he went to look for him. He went to

the place where our Master Muhammad [s] went frequently. But he did not find him.

So, Abu Talib came back, gathered Bani Hashim together and said to them:

Each one of you must take a strong iron bar. Now follow me. When I enter the mosque, each one of you must sit beside a Quraishi leader. He must kill him if we knew that Muhammad had been killed.

The young men of Bani Hashim obeyed Abu Talib. Each one of them sat beside a polytheist.

Abu Talib sat waiting for our Master Muhammad [s]. Meanwhile Zaid bin Harith came and told him that the Prophet [s] was safe.

Then, Abu Talib announced his plan to punish those who tried to hurt the Prophet [s].

The polytheists were abase. Abu Jahal kept silent. His face became yellow with fear.

Some of the polytheists urged their boys and slaves to hurt our Master Muhammad [s].

One day, the Prophet [s] was praying. A young man came and threw the wastes at him. The polytheists began laughing loudly. Our Master Muhammad [s] was very unhappy. So, he went to his uncle and told him about the young man's bad behaviour

Abu Talib became very angry. He took out his sword and came to the polytheists. He ordered his boy to throw the wastes at their faces.

They said:

Abu Talib, that's enough!.

Chapter 13

The Ban

When the polytheists knew that Abu Talib would not leave our Master Muhammad [s] alone and that he was ready to die for him, they decided to announce an economic and social ban on Bani Hashim. At the same time, they cut off all relations with them.

In the month of Muharram, the seventh year after the Prophetic Mission, forty Quraishi leaders signed the ban and fixed it to the wall in the Ka'aba.

The Quraish expected Abu Talib to surrender. But Shaikh al-Bat-ha had another plan.

Abu Talib took his tribe to a valley between two mountains to protect our Master Muhammad [s] from assassination. He was always visiting the valley to close the openings where the enemies might pass through to kill our Master Muhammad [s] at night.

Abu Talib, though old man, his brother Hamza, and some men of Bani Hashim were always guarding the Prophet [s] one by one at night. Abu Talib was always moving the Prophet's bed from one place to another to keep it a secret.

Days and months passed. The besieged were in perfect isolation. They suffered from the pains of hunger and deprivation. When the time of pilgrimage came, they got out to buy some food and clothes.

The richest Quraishi tyrants in Makkah were always buying all kinds of food to prevent the besieged from buying it.

During that bitter period of time, Abu Talib was as solid as the mountain. He was always standing by our Master Muhammad [s]. He was a fearless, resolute believer.

Abu Talib loved our Master Muhammad [s] more than his sons. He was sometimes looking at him, weeping and saying:

When I look at him, I remember my brother Abdullah.

One night, Abu Talib came and woke our Master Muhammad [s]. He said to his son Ali aged eighteen:

My son, sleep in his bed.

To know his father's loyalty to Muhammad, Ali said:

But, I'll be killed.

His father said:

Be patient!

Eagerly Ali said:

I'm not afraid of death. But I want you to know my support.

Abu Talib patted Ali's back. He took our Master Muhammad [s] to a safe place to sleep in.

When our Master Muhammad [s] went to bed, Abu Talib went to bed, too.

Months after months passed. The patience and hunger of the besieged increased. They ate the leaves of the trees. The Prophet [s] took pity on the hungry children.

Chapter 14

The Good News

One day, our Master Muhammad [s] came to his uncle. He was filled with happiness. He said to him:

Uncle, my Lord ordered the white ant to eat the Ban Page. So, it's eaten it all but Allah's Name.

Abu Talib said happily:

Has your Lord told you about that?

Muhammad [s] answered:

Yes, Uncle.

Abu Talib's heart was filled with belief. So, Abu Talib stood up and went to Darul-Nadwa, at the Kaaba, where the Quraishi leaders sat.

Abu-Talib addressed the sitting persons:

Quraish!

They got up for the respectful, old man. They listened to his words. They expected his surrender and defeat because of the ban.

But Shaikh al-Bat-ha said:

Quraish, my nephew Muhammad has told me that Allah ordered the white ant to eat your Ban Page. So it has eaten it all but His Name. if he is right, the end the ban.

Abu-Jahal said:

And, if he was a liar?

Abu Talib answered with confidence and belief:

I'll hand you my nephew.

The Quraishi leaders said:

Okay.

They opened the door of the Ka'aba. They found that the white ant had eaten every thing but Allah's Name.

The besieged got out of Abu Talib valley. Our Master Muhammad [s] and his companions began preaching Islam to the pilgrims of Allah's Holy House.

Chapter 15

The Demise

Abu Talib was over eighty years of age. He became very invalid. So, he was confined to the bed. He thought about nothing but our Master Muhammad [s]. He knew that if he died, the Quraish would fear no one and they would kill his nephew.

The Quraishi leaders came to visit Shaikh al-Bat-ha. They said:

Abu Talib, you're our Shaikh and Master.

You're about to die. So, put an end to the enmity between your nephew and us. Tell him to stop hurting us. We'll stop hurting him. Tell him to leave us with our religion. We'll leave him with his religion.

Abu Talib looked at Abu Jahal, Abu Sufyan, and other Quraishi leaders. He said to them faintly:

If you hear Muhammad's words and obey his orders, you'll be happy. So, obey him and get happiness here and in the hereafter.

The atheists stood up. Abu Jahal said with spite:

Do you want us to make the gods one god?

Abu Talib was sad at the Quraishi stand. He was very anxious about our Master Muhammad's safety. So, he invited Bani Hashim and asked them to support our Master Muhammad [s] at any cost. They all obeyed him. Then Abu Talib closed his eyes to die soundly.

Shaikh al-Bat-ha kept silent. He became a motionless body.

His son Ali wept bitter tears. Sad cries spread all over Makkah. The atheists rejoiced at his death.

Abu Jahal angrily said:

It's time to get my revenge on Muhammad.

Our Master Muhammad [s] came to say farewell. He kissed Abu Talib's bright forehead and murmured sadly:

Uncle, may Allah have mercy on you.

You educated me when I was small, looked after me when I became an orphan, and supported me when I became a grown-up.

So, may Allah reward you a lot.

Then he burst into tears. He began recalling the days of his childhood with his kind uncle. He embraced his cousin Ali. They began weeping together.

Chapter 16

The Year of Sadness

Only a few weeks passed. Khadijah, Muhammad's wife died, too. So, our Master Muhammad [s] named that year the Year of Sadness.

The Quraish increased their harm against Muhammad and those who believed in him.

One day, a foolish person threw some dust at him. His head was covered with dust. So, he went home.

While Fatima, Muhammad's daughter, was washing his head, she began weeping. So, he patted her head and said:

Daughter, don't weep. Allah will save your father. He'll protect your father from the enemies of His religion and Mission.

Jibreel came down from the sky holding Allah's Order. He said:

Muhammad, go out of Makkah. Your supporter has died.

When the Quraish plotted to kill our Master Muhammad [s], Ali, Abu Talib's young son, came to sleep in his bed. He was ready to die for him.

Our Master Muhammad [s] went towards Yathrib (al-Madina al-Munawarah). From there the light of Islam started to illuminate the world.

When the Muslims go to visit Allah's Holy House every year, they remember the life of Shaikh al-Bat-ha when he was always defending Allah's religion.

Muhammad is Allah's Apostle, and those with him are firm of heart against the unbelievers, compassionate, among each other.

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