

Bismillahir Rahmanir Rahim

Al-Rabi' bin Ziyad al-Harithy (ra)

(Translated)

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Umar ibn al-Khattab (ra) said, **وما صدقني أحد منذ استخلفت، كما صدقني الربيع بن زياد** “No one has spoken truthfully to me since I was given this responsibility as Rabi' bin Ziyad did.”

The city of the Messenger of Allah (saw) continues to soothe its sorrows over the loss of Abu Bakr al-Siddiq (ra). Every day, delegations from various regions arrive in the city to pledge allegiance to his successor, Umar ibn al-Khattab (ra), for obedience in times of ease and hardship. On one morning, a delegation from Bahrain arrived along with other delegations.

Al-Farooq (ra) was always keen to listen to what the visitors had to say, hoping to find in their words a profound lesson, a beneficial idea, or sincere advice for the sake of Allah (swt), His Book, and the Muslims in general. He called upon several attendees to speak, but they had nothing of significance to say. Then he turned to a man in whom he saw goodness, and he gestured to him and said, “Speak what you have.” The man praised Allah (swt) and said, “O Commander of the Faithful, you have been entrusted with the leadership of this Ummah as a test from Allah, the Almighty. So fear Allah in what you have been entrusted with, and know that if a sheep were to stray by the banks of

the Euphrates, you would be questioned about it on the Day of Judgment.”

At this, Umar (ra) wept loudly and said, “No one has spoken the truth to me since I was given this responsibility as you have. Who are you?” The man replied, “I am Rabi’ bin Ziyad al-Harithi.” Umar asked, “The brother of Muhajir bin Ziyad?” He replied, “Yes.” After the assembly dispersed, Umar called Abu Musa al-Ash’ari and said, “Investigate the matter of Rabi’ bin Ziyad, and if he is truthful, there is much good in him, and he will be of great assistance to us in this matter. Appoint him to a position and write to me with news of him.”

It was not long after that day when Abu Musa al-Ash’ari prepared an army to conquer ‘Manadhir’ in the land of Ahwaz by order of the Khaleefah. He included Rabi’ bin Ziyad and his brother Muhajir in the army. Abu Musa al-Ash’ari besieged ‘Manadhir’ and engaged in fierce battles with its people, the likes of which were rarely seen in warfare. The mushrikeen displayed an extraordinary level of strength and endurance, which no one could have anticipated, and the number of Muslims killed exceeded all expectations.

When Muhajir, the brother of Rabi’ bin Ziyad, saw that the killing had become extensive among the Muslims, he resolved to trade his life, seeking the pleasure of Allah (swt). He prepared himself for martyrdom by applying perfume, a custom before death. He wrapped himself in his shroud, and gave his last will to his brother. Then Rabi' went to Abu Musa and said, “Muhajir has decided to give his life while fasting. The Muslims have been worn down by the intensity of the battle and the harshness of fasting. They refuse to break their fast, so do what you think is best.”

Abu Musa al-Ash’ari stood and called out to the army, “O Muslims, I command every fasting person to break their fast or cease fighting.” He then drank from a jug he had with him so that others would follow his example. When Muhajir heard his command, he drank a sip of water

and said, "By Allah, I did not drink it out of thirst. Instead, I fulfilled the command of my leader." Then he drew his sword and began to cut through the enemy ranks, striking down men without fear or hesitation. When he penetrated deep into the enemy's army, they surrounded him from all sides, and their swords struck him from the front and behind until he fell.

They then severed his head and raised it on a tower overlooking the battlefield. When Rabi' saw it, he said, "Blessed are you and what a good return you have... By Allah, I will avenge you and the Muslim martyrs if Allah wills." When Abu Musa saw the grief that had overcome Rabi' over his brother, and sensed the resolve in his heart to take vengeance on the enemies of Allah, he relinquished the command of the army to him and went to conquer 'al-Sus.'

Rabi' and his soldiers charged at the mushrikeen like a storm, pouring down on their fortresses like rocks carried by a flood. They tore through their ranks and weakened their strength until Allah granted victory to Rabi' bin Ziyad over 'Manadhir.' He killed the fighters, took the women and children captive, and seized as much spoils as Allah (swt) willed.

Rabi' bin Ziyad's star shone brightly after the battle of 'Manadhir,' and his name spread far and wide. He became one of the esteemed commanders who were relied upon for great deeds. When the Muslims decided to conquer 'Sijistan,' they entrusted him with leading the army and hoped for victory at his hands.

Rabi' bin Ziyad set out with his army on the path of Allah to 'Sijistan,' crossing a vast desert 75 farsakhs long, a distance that even the wild beasts of the desert would find challenging. The first obstacle he encountered was 'Rustaq Zallq' on the borders of Sijistan, a thriving region surrounded by towering fortresses, rich in resources, and abundant in fruits.

The astute commander sent his spies to 'Rustaq Zaliq' before he reached it. He learned that the people were preparing for an upcoming festival. He waited until the night of the festival and surprised them, catching them off guard. He then unleashed his sword upon them and took them by force, capturing 20,000 of them. Among them was their Dihqan, a title for the local ruler in the Persian Empire, who fell into his hands as a prisoner. They also found among the captives a servant of the Dihqan who had collected 300,000 to bring to his master. Rabi' asked him, "Where did this money come from?" The servant replied, "From one of my master's villages." Rabi' asked, "Does one village provide this much wealth each year?" The servant said, "Yes." Rabi' asked, "How?" The servant replied, "With our axes, sickles, and sweat."

After the battle ended, the Dihqan approached Rabi' offering to ransom himself and his family. Rabi' said to him, "I will agree to your ransom if you offer a substantial amount for the Muslims." The Dihqan asked, "How much do you want?" Rabi' replied, "I will plant this spear in the ground, and you must pour gold and silver over it until it is fully covered." The Dihqan agreed and began pouring out his treasures of gold and silver until the spear was completely covered.

Rabi' bin Ziyad continued to advance with his victorious army into the land of Sijistan, and the fortresses fell beneath the hooves of his horses like leaves falling in the autumn wind. The people of the cities and villages rushed to meet him, seeking safety and surrendering before he could unsheathe his sword against them, until he reached the city of 'Zaranj,' the capital of Sijistan. There, he found that the enemy had prepared for battle, organized their troops, and brought reinforcements to repel him from the great city, and stop his advance into Sijistan at any cost.

A fierce and intense battle ensued between Rabi' and his enemies, with both sides sparing no effort in sacrificing for victory. When the first signs of victory for the Muslims appeared, the Marzban, another title

for a local ruler in the Persian Empire, of the people, named 'Parwez,' saw fit to seek peace with Rabi' while he still had some strength left, hoping to secure better terms for himself and his people. He sent a messenger to Rabi' asking for an appointment to meet and negotiate a settlement, and Rabi' agreed to his request.

Rabi' ordered his men to prepare the place to receive 'Parwez' and instructed them to stack piles of the Persian dead around the meeting area and to scatter other bodies along the path 'Parwez' would take. Rabi' was tall, with a large stature, dark skin, and a large-body that instilled fear in those who saw him. When 'Parwez' entered and saw him, he trembled in fear and was terrified by the sight of the dead bodies. He did not dare to approach or shake hands with Rabi' and spoke to him with a stammering, trembling voice. He offered peace on the condition that he would provide Rabi' with a thousand young slaves, each bearing a cup of gold. Rabi' accepted the offer and made peace with 'Parwez' on these terms. The next day, Rabi' bin Ziyad entered the city, surrounded by this procession of slaves, amid the Muslims' chants of 'Allahu Akbar' and 'La ilaha illallah.' It was a day that would be remembered as one of Allah's days.

Rabi' bin Ziyad remained a drawn sword in the hands of the Muslims, with which they struck the enemies of Allah. He conquered cities for them and governed territories until the rule passed to the Umayyads. Mu'awiya ibn Abi Sufyan appointed him as the governor of Khurasan. However, Rabi' was not content with this position, and his discontent and aversion grew when Ziyad ibn Abi Sufyan, one of the senior governors of the Umayyads, sent him a letter saying, "The Commander of the Faithful, Mu'awiya ibn Abi Sufyan, orders you to reserve the yellow and white (gold and silver) from the spoils of war for the bayt ul maal treasury and to divide the rest among the warriors."

Rabi' wrote back to him saying, "I have found the Book of Allah, the Almighty, commanding something different from what you have

ordered me through the Commander of the Faithful." He then announced to the people, "Come and take your spoils." And he sent the fifth as according to the Quran, one-fifth of war spoils are allocated to the Muslim treasury, and the remaining four-fifths are divided among the fighters, to the Khilafah in Damascus.

When the following Friday came, after the arrival of this letter, Rabi' bin Ziyad went out to perform the Friday prayer dressed in white garments. He delivered the Friday sermon and then said, "O people, I have grown weary of life, and I am going to make a supplication, so say 'Ameen' to my prayer." He then said, "O Allah, if You intend good for me, then take me to You soon, without delay." The people said "Ameen" to his prayer, and before the sun set on that day, Rabi' bin Ziyad had departed to be in the company of his Lord.