

SALMAN THE PERSIAN, ZOROASTRIAN, PERSIA (PART 2 OF 2): FROM CHRISTIANITY TO ISLAM

Rating: 4.6

Description: The long search finally ends with Salman meeting the promised Prophet, and earning his freedom become one of his closest companions.

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The man died, and Salman stayed in Amuria. One day, “Some merchants from the tribe of Kalb^[1] passed by me,” Salman said, “I told them, ‘Take me to Arabia and I will give you my cows and the only sheep I have.’” They said, “Yes.” Salman gave them what he offered, and they took him with them. When they reached Waadi al-Quraa [close to Medinah], they sold him as a slave to a Jewish man. Salman stayed with the Jew, and he saw the Palm trees [his previous companion had described].

“I hoped that this would be the same place described by my companion.”

One day, a man who was a first cousin to Salman's master from the Jewish tribe of Bani Quraidha in Medinah came visiting. He bought Salman from his Jewish master.

“He took me with him to Medina. By God! When I saw it, I knew it was the place my companion described.

Then God sent^[2] His Messenger [i.e., Muhammad, may the mercy and blessings of God be upon him]. He stayed in Mecca as long as he did.^[3] I did not hear anything about him because I was very busy with the work of slavery, and then he migrated to Medina.

[One day,] I was on a palm-tree on top of one of its date-clusters doing some work for my master. A first cousin of his came and stood in front of him [his master was sitting] and said, “Woe to Bani Qeelah [people of the tribe Qeelah], they are gathered in Qibaa”^[4] around a man who came today from Mecca claiming to be a Prophet!”

I trembled so fiercely when I heard him that I feared that I would fall on my master. I descended and said, ‘What are you saying!? What are you saying!?’

My master became angry and punched me hard saying, “What business do you have in this [matter]? Go and mind your business.”

I said, "Nothing! I just wanted to be sure of what he was saying."

On that evening, I went to see the Messenger of God while he was in Qibaa. I took something with me which I had saved. I went in and said, "I was told that you are a righteous man and that your company [who] are strangers [here] are in need. I want to offer you something I saved as charity. I found that you deserve it more than anyone else."

I offered it to him; he said to his companions, "Eat," but he himself kept his hand away [i.e., did not eat]. I said to myself, "This is one [i.e., one of the signs of his Prophethood]."

Following this encounter with the Prophet, may the mercy and blessings of God be upon him, Salman left to prepare for another test! This time he brought a gift to the Prophet in Medina.

"I saw that you do not eat from that given as charity, so here is a gift with which I wish to honor you." The Prophet ate from it and ordered his companions to do the same, which they did. I said to myself, "Now there are two [i.e., two of the signs of Prophethood]."

On the third encounter, Salman came to Baqee-ul-Gharqad [a grave yard in Medina] where the Prophet, may the mercy and blessings of God be upon him, was attending the funeral of one of his companions. Salman said:

"I greeted him [with the greeting of Islam: 'Peace be upon you'], and then moved towards his back attempting to see the seal [of Prophethood] which was described to me by my companion. When he saw me [doing so], he knew that I was trying to confirm something described to me. He took the garment off his back and I looked at the seal. I recognized it. I fell down upon it, kissing it and crying. The Messenger of God, may the mercy and blessings of God be upon him, told me to move around [i.e., to talk to him]. I told him my story as I did with you, Ibn 'Abbaas [remember that Salman is telling his story to Ibn 'Abbaas]. He [the Prophet] liked it so much he wanted me to tell my story to his companions.

He was still a slave owned by his master. The Prophet said to him, "Make a contract [with your master] for your freedom, O Salman." Salman obeyed and made a contract [with his master] for his freedom. He reached an agreement with his master in which he would pay him forty ounces of gold and would plant and successfully raise three hundred new palm trees. The Prophet then said to his companions, "Help your brother."

They helped him with the trees and gathered for him the specified quantity. The Prophet ordered Salman to dig the proper holes to plant the saplings, and then he planted each one with his own hands. Salman said, "By Him in Whose hands is my soul [i.e., God], not a single tree died."

Salman gave the trees to his master. The Prophet gave Salman a piece of gold that was the size of a chicken egg and said, "Take this, O Salman, and pay [i.e., your master] what you owe."

Salman said, "How much is this in regards to how much I owe!"

The Prophet said, "Take it! God will [make it] equal to what you owe."^[5]

I took it and I weighed a part of it and it was forty ounces. Salman gave the gold to his master. He fulfilled the agreement and he was released.

From then on, Salman became one of the closest of companions to the Prophet.

The Search for the Truth

One of the great companions of the Prophet by the name of Abu Hurairah reported:

"We were sitting in the company of God's Messenger when Surah al-Jumuah (Surah 62) was revealed. He recited these words:

"And [God has sent Muhammad also to] others who have not yet joined them (but they will come)..." (Quran 62:3)

A person amongst them said, 'O God's Messenger! Who are those who have not joined us?'

God's Messenger made no reply. Salman the Persian was amongst us. The Messenger of God placed his hand on Salman and then said, 'By the One in Whose Hands is my soul, even if faith were near Pleiades (the seven stars), men from amongst these [i.e. Salman's folk] would surely attain it.' (At-Tirmidhi)

Many in this world are like Salman, searching for the truth about the True and Only One God. This story of Salman is similar to stories of people in our own time. The search of some people took them from one church to another, from church to Buddhism or Passiveness, from Judaism to 'Neutrality', from religion to meditations to mental abuse. There are those who shifted from one idea to another, but don't even think of wanting to know something about Islam! When they met some Muslims, however, they opened their minds. The story of Salman is that of a long search. You could make your search for truth shorter by benefiting from his.

Footnotes:

[1]

An Arab tribe.

[2] Salman has arrived in Medinah before Muhammad, may the mercy and blessings of God be upon him, was commissioned as a prophet.

[3] Thirteen years after he received the revelation from God.

[4] The outskirts of Medinah.

[5] A miracle from God.

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