بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

HEROES OF ISLAM

SERIES 5

SA'D IBN ABI WAQQAS

Commander at al-Qadisiyyah and Opener of al-Mada'in, According to the Qur'an and Authentic Hadith

فَلَمْ تَقْتُلُوهُمْ وَلَٰكِنَّ ٱللَّهَ قَتَلَهُمْ ۚ وَمَا رَمَيْتَ إِذْ رَمَيْتَ وَلَٰكِنَّ ٱللَّهَ رَمَىٰ وَلِيُبْلِيَ ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ مِنْهُ بَلَآءً حَسَنًا ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ ﴿١٧﴾

"And you did not kill them, but it was Allah who killed them. And you threw not, [O Muhammad], when you threw, but it was Allah who threw that He might test the believers with a good test. Indeed, Allah is Hearing and Knowing."

Surah Al-Anfal 8:17

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

All praise is due to Allah, from whom alone victory comes. May blessings and peace be upon our master, the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, and upon his family and Companions — and especially upon Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqas رضى الله عنه, to whom he said: "Shoot! May my father and mother be your ransom."

This book is specially dedicated to my beloved wife,

ZAHARAH MOHD LATIF;

my dear children,

MUHAMMAD HAFIZ, NOOR HAZWANI, ABDUL HAKIM, NOOR HIDAYAH, NOR AQILA and **NOR ATIQAH**;

and my sons- and daughters-in-law,

FAZILAH, MALEK, HANIN, FAIRIZAL and **FIRWAN**.

This fifth book of Heroes of Islam tells the story of Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqas رضى الله عنه: among the first to embrace Islam, the first Arab to shoot an arrow in the way of Allah, one of the ten promised Paradise, the commander at al-Qadisiyyah and opener of al-Mada'in, and the Companion whose supplications were answered. May this knowledge be 'ilmun yuntafa'u bih — knowledge that brings benefit.

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ABOUT THE COVER OF THIS EBOOK

This eBook's cover does not depict any human being or animal. It shows ***the plains of Iraq on the banks of the Euphrates*** at sunrise: palm groves, a winding river and the morning mist. Faintly on the horizon stands ***the great arch of the palace of Khosrow (Taq Kasra) at al-Mada'in***, the Persian capital that Sa'd opened in 16 AH.

On a large rock lie ***an Arab bow and a leather quiver of arrows***. They recall that Sa'd was the first Arab to shoot an arrow in the way of Allah (Sahih al-Bukhari 3728), and the words of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ at Uhud: «ارْمِ فِدَاكَ أَبِي وَأُمِّي» — "Shoot! May my father and mother be your ransom" (Sahih al-Bukhari 4059).

One arrow lies across the rock, pointing toward the horizon, recalling the words of Allah: "And you did not throw when you threw, but it was Allah who threw" (Surah Al-Anfal 8:17). On the right, ***a white banner*** flies from a spear, standing for Sa'd's leadership as commander at al-Qadisiyyah.

The ***dark blue band*** at the bottom, framed by ***fine gold lines***, is where the author's name appears — the same as on the covers of Series 1 to Series 4, so that all the covers of Heroes of Islam match.

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CONTENTS

SA'D IBN ABI WAQQAS 5
1. WHO WAS SA'D? 6
2. ONE-THIRD OF ISLAM 7
3. A TEST FROM HIS OWN MOTHER 8
4. WITH THE WEAK AND THE POOR 10
5. THE FIRST ARROW IN THE WAY OF ALLAH 11
6. BADR: A BROTHER MARTYRED 12
7. UHUD: "SHOOT! MAY MY FATHER AND MOTHER BE YOUR RANSOM!" 13
8. GUARD OF THE MESSENGER OF ALLAH ﷺ 15
9. SUPPLICATIONS THAT WERE ANSWERED 16
10. THE BEQUEST OF ONE-THIRD 17
11. AMONG THE TEN PROMISED PARADISE 19
12. COMMANDER AT AL-QADISIYYAH 20
13. OPENING AL-MADA'IN AND BUILDING KUFAH 21
14. THE COMPLAINT OF THE PEOPLE OF KUFAH 22
15. THE CONSULTATIVE COUNCIL 24
16. STAYING AWAY FROM STRIFE 25
17. THE DEATH OF SA'D 26
18. THE CHARACTER OF SA'D 27
19. SOURCES OF THE STORIES OF SA'D 28
20. PEOPLE IN THE STORY OF SA'D 29
21. PLACES IN THE STORY OF SA'D 30
22. TIMELINE OF SA'D'S LIFE 31
23. FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT SA'D 32
24. LESSONS AND CONCLUSION 34
REFERENCES 35
SUPPORT & DONATIONS 36

Colour guide: green box = verses of the Qur'an; gold box = Hadith; brown box = sirah note (report from the books of sirah); blue table = comparison.com.

SA'D IBN ABI WAQQAS

On the day of Uhud, when the Muslim army was scattered, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ took the arrows out of his own quiver and handed them to one Companion, saying: **«□□□□□ □□□□□□□ □□□□□ □□□□□□□□»** — "Shoot! May my father and mother be your ransom!" That Companion was ***Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqas*** رضى الله عنه.

Sa'd was among the first to embrace Islam, the first Arab to shoot an arrow in the way of Allah, one of the ten Companions promised Paradise, and the commander who defeated the Persian Empire at al-Qadisiyyah and opened the city of al-Mada'in. His supplications were also famous for being answered.

This eBook is the fifth in the ***Heroes of Islam*** series. As in the earlier books, the story of Sa'd رضى الله عنه is gathered first from the Qur'an and authentic Hadith, and then from the trusted books of sirah and history. The source of every report is given. Famous stories with weak chains are explained honestly.

The story of Sa'd is a story of firm faith before his own mother, courage on the battlefield, and wisdom in staying away from strife when the Ummah divided. He lived long after the other Companions, and was the last of the ten promised Paradise to leave this world.

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WHO WAS SA'D?

His full name was ***Sa'd ibn Malik ibn Uhayb ibn 'Abd Manaf ibn Zuhrah*** al-Qurashi az-Zuhri. His father, Malik, was better known by the kunyah ***Abu Waqqas***, which is why he was called Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqas. Sa'd's own kunyah was ***Abu Ishaq***; 'Umar ibn al-Khattab addressed him by it (Sahih al-Bukhari 755).

He was from Banu Zuhrah, the clan of ***Aminah bint Wahb***, the mother of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. His mother was Hamnah bint Sufyan ibn Umayyah. Sa'd was born in Makkah about twenty-three years before the Hijrah (around 595 CE). The books of biography describe him as short and sturdy, somewhat dark, with thick hair and very sharp eyesight.

HADITH NOTE: "THIS IS MY MATERNAL UNCLE"

It is narrated from Jabir ibn 'Abdullah that when Sa'd came, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: **«**□□□□□ □□□□□□□ □□□□□□□ □□□□□□□□□□□ □□□□□□**»** — "This is my maternal uncle; let a man show me (a maternal uncle like) his." At-Tirmidhi explains that Sa'd was from Banu Zuhrah, the clan of the Prophet's mother ﷺ.

Status of the report: At-Tirmidhi graded it *hasan gharib*, but its chain depends on Mujalid, who is weak; Darussalam graded it *da'if*. Sa'd's kinship with the clan of the Prophet's mother ﷺ is an established historical fact.

REFERENCES:
Jami' at-Tirmidhi 3752.

NAME AND TITLES

NAME OR TITLE	EXPLANATION
Sa'd ibn Malik	His real name
Ibn Abi Waqqas	After his father's kunyah, Abu Waqqas
Abu Ishaq	His kunyah (Sahih al-Bukhari 755)
Az-Zuhri	From Banu Zuhrah, the clan of the Prophet's mother ﷺ
Faris al-Islam	"The horseman of Islam", a title in the books of history

LESSONS

Sa'd came from a noble family, but his true honour came from his faith and service. His family tie with the Messenger of Allah ﷺ did not make him proud; rather, he strove to be the best in serving Islam.

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ONE-THIRD OF ISLAM

Sa'd embraced Islam at about seventeen years of age, in the very first days of the call in Makkah. According to Ibn Ishaq, he embraced Islam through the call of ***Abu Bakr as-Siddiq*** رضى الله عنه, together with 'Uthman ibn 'Affan, az-Zubayr ibn al-'Awwam, 'Abd ar-Rahman ibn 'Awf and Talhah ibn 'Ubaydillah. Sa'd himself described how early he embraced Islam:

HADITH — SAHIH AL-BUKHARI, NO. 3727

حَدَّثَنِي إِبْرَاهِيمُ بْنُ مُوسَى، أَخْبَرَنَا ابْنُ أَبِي زَائِدَةَ، حَدَّثَنَا هَاشِمُ بْنُ هَاشِمِ بْنِ عُتْبَةَ بْنِ أَبِي وَقَّاصٍ، قَالَ سَمِعْتُ سَعِيدَ بْنَ الْمُسَيَّبِ، يَقُولُ سَمِعْتُ سَعْدَ بْنَ أَبِي وَقَّاصٍ، يَقُولُ مَا أَسْلَمَ أَحَدٌ إِلاَّ فِي الْيَوْمِ الَّذِي أَسْلَمْتُ فِيهِ، وَلَقَدْ مَكَثْتُ سَبْعَةَ أَيَّامٍ وَإِنِّي لَثُلُثُ الإِسْلاَمِ. تَابَعَهُ أَبُو أُسَامَةَ حَدَّثَنَا هَاشِمٌ.

TRANSLATION:

Sa'id ibn al-Musayyib said: I heard Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqas say: ***"No one embraced Islam except on the day I embraced it. And I remained for seven days as one-third of Islam."***

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari: from Ibrahim ibn Musa, from Ibn Abi Za'idah, from Hashim ibn Hashim, from Sa'id ibn al-Musayyib, from Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqas رضى الله عنه.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari in Sahih al-Bukhari, Book of the Virtues of the Companions of the Prophet ﷺ, Chapter on the Virtues of Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqas, Hadith No. 3727.

GRADE: SAHIH — contained in Sahih al-Bukhari, the most authentic book of Hadith after the Qur'an by consensus of the Hadith scholars.

Source: sunnah.com/bukhari:3727

This means that in the first week after he embraced Islam, the believing adult men were only three. The scholars explain that Sa'd spoke according to his own knowledge; others may have believed in secret at that time.

LESSONS

Sa'd embraced Islam while still young. Youth is the best time to accept the truth and serve it, before the heart is occupied with wealth and position.

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A TEST FROM HIS OWN MOTHER

Sa'd's hardest test did not come from an enemy, but from his own mother, Hamnah bint Sufyan. When she learned that Sa'd had embraced Islam, she swore not to eat or drink until he returned to his old religion:

HADITH — SAHIH MUSLIM, NO. 1748C

حَدَّثَنَا أَبُو بَكْرِ بْنُ أَبِي شَيْبَةَ، وَزُهَيْرُ بْنُ حَرْبٍ، قَالاَ حَدَّثَنَا الْحَسَنُ بْنُ مُوسَى، حَدَّثَنَا زُهَيْرٌ، حَدَّثَنَا سِمَاكُ بْنُ حَرْبٍ، حَدَّثَنِي مُصْعَبُ بْنُ سَعْدٍ، عَنْ أَبِيهِ، أَنَّهُ نَزَلَتْ فِيهِ آيَاتٌ مِنَ الْقُرْآنِ - قَالَ - حَلَفَتْ أُمُّ سَعْدٍ أَنْ لاَ تُكَلِّمَهُ أَبَدًا حَتَّى يَكْفُرَ بِدِينِهِ وَلاَ تَأْكُلَ وَلاَ تَشْرَبَ . قَالَتْ زَعَمْتَ أَنَّ اللَّهَ وَصَّاكَ بِوَالِدَيْكَ وَأَنَا أُمُّكَ وَأَنَا آمُرُكَ بِهَذَا . قَالَ مَكَثَتْ ثَلاَثًا حَتَّى غُشِيَ عَلَيْهَا مِنَ الْجَهْدِ فَقَامَ ابْنٌ لَهَا يُقَالُ لَهُ عُمَارَةُ فَسَقَاهَا فَجَعَلَتْ تَدْعُو عَلَى سَعْدٍ فَأَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ فِي الْقُرْآنِ هَذِهِ الآيَةَ { وَوَصَّيْنَا الإِنْسَانَ بِوَالِدَيْهِ حُسْنًا} { وَإِنْ جَاهَدَاكَ عَلَى أَنْ تُشْرِكَ بِي} وَفِيهَا { وَصَاحِبْهُمَا فِي الدُّنْيَا مَعْرُوفًا} ...

TRANSLATION:

(Excerpt) Mus'ab ibn Sa'd narrated from his father that several verses of the Qur'an were revealed concerning him. He said: ***The mother of Sa'd swore that she would never speak to him until he disbelieved in his religion, and that she would neither eat nor drink.*** She said: "You claim that Allah has commanded you to be dutiful to your parents. I am your mother, and I command you to do this." He said: She stayed like that for three days until she fainted from exhaustion. Then a son of hers named 'Umarah stood up and gave her water, and she began to pray against Sa'd. So Allah, Mighty and Majestic, revealed this verse in the Qur'an: ***"And We have enjoined upon man goodness to his parents"***, ***"but if they strive to make you associate with Me"***, and in it: ***"but accompany them in this world with appropriate kindness."***

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam Muslim: from Abu Bakr ibn Abi Shaybah, from Al-Hasan ibn Musa, from Zuhayr ibn Mu'awiyah, from Simak ibn Harb, from Mus'ab ibn Sa'd, from Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqas رضى الله عنه.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam Muslim in Sahih Muslim, Book of the Virtues of the Companions, Chapter on the Virtue of Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqas, Hadith No. 1748c (excerpt).

GRADE: SAHIH — contained in Sahih Muslim, one of the two most authentic books of Hadith (as-Sahihayn).

Source: sunnah.com/muslim:1748c

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The verse revealed about this event is in Surah Al-'Ankabut, and its meaning is repeated in Surah Luqman 31:15:

SURAH AL-'ANKABUT 29:8

وَوَصَّيْنَا ٱلْإِنسَٰنَ بِوَٰلِدَيْهِ حُسْنًا ۖ وَإِن جَٰهَدَاكَ لِتُشْرِكَ بِى مَا لَيْسَ لَكَ بِهِۦ
عِلْمٌ فَلَا تُطِعْهُمَآ ۚ إِلَىَّ مَرْجِعُكُمْ فَأُنَبِّئُكُم بِمَا كُنتُمْ تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٨﴾

And We have enjoined upon man goodness to parents. But if they endeavor to make you associate with Me that of which you have no knowledge, do not obey them. To Me is your return, and I will inform you about what you used to do.

Translation: Sahih International — quran.com/29:8

LESSONS

Islam commands us to be dutiful to our parents, but not to obey them in disobedience to Allah. Sa'd remained gentle with his mother, yet did not trade away his faith. The Qur'an teaches balance: firm in belief, kind in conduct.

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WITH THE WEAK AND THE POOR

The leaders of Quraysh once asked the Messenger of Allah ﷺ to send the poor and weak Companions away from his gatherings, so that they would agree to sit with him. Sa'd said that a verse of the Qur'an was revealed about six Companions, including himself and 'Abdullah ibn Mas'ud (Sahih Muslim 2413). Allah says:

SURAH AL-AN'AM 6:52

وَلَا تَطۡرُدِ ٱلَّذِينَ يَدۡعُونَ رَبَّهُم بِٱلۡغَدَوٰةِ وَٱلۡعَشِيِّ يُرِيدُونَ وَجۡهَهُۥۖ مَا عَلَيۡكَ مِنۡ حِسَابِهِم مِّن شَيۡءٖ وَمَا مِنۡ حِسَابِكَ عَلَيۡهِم مِّن شَيۡءٖ فَتَطۡرُدَهُمۡ فَتَكُونَ مِنَ ٱلظَّٰلِمِينَ ٥٢

And do not send away those who call upon their Lord morning and afternoon, seeking His countenance. Not upon you is anything of their account and not upon them is anything of your account. So were you to send them away, you would [then] be of the wrongdoers.

Translation: Sahih International — quran.com/6:52

LESSONS

A person's standing with Allah is not measured by wealth or rank, but by the sincerity of their worship. Islam honours those who call upon their Lord morning and evening, even if people look down on them.

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THE FIRST ARROW IN THE WAY OF ALLAH

In the first year of the Hijrah, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ sent a small force under 'Ubaydah ibn al-Harith toward Rabigh. The force met a caravan of Quraysh, and Sa'd shot an arrow toward them. That was the first arrow shot in the way of Allah.

Sa'd himself said: ***"I was the first of the Arabs to shoot an arrow in the way of Allah. We used to go on campaigns with the Prophet ﷺ, and we had no food except the leaves of trees"*** (Sahih al-Bukhari 3728).

LESSONS

Sa'd and his companions struggled in extreme hardship, even eating the leaves of trees. The later victories of Islam were built on the sacrifice of the early generation, who were patient through hunger and want.

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BADR: A BROTHER MARTYRED

Sa'd took part in the Battle of Badr (Ramadan, 2 AH) together with his younger brother, ***'Umayr ibn Abi Waqqas***, who was then still a teenager.

SIRAH NOTE: 'UMAYR WHO HID

It is reported that 'Umayr hid from the sight of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ while he was inspecting the army, fearing he would be sent home because of his young age. When the Messenger of Allah ﷺ told him to go back, 'Umayr wept, and so he allowed him to stay.

Sa'd said that he himself tied the straps of his brother's sword because it was too big for him. 'Umayr was martyred at Badr at about sixteen years of age.

Status of the report: Narrated in the books of sirah and biography, and widely accepted by the historians.

REFERENCES:
Ibn Sa'd, at-Tabaqat al-Kubra; al-Waqidi, al-Maghazi; Ibn Hajar, al-Isabah (biography of 'Umayr ibn Abi Waqqas).

LESSONS

The spirit of jihad in the family of Abu Waqqas began at a young age. An elder brother who sent his younger brother to the battlefield and then saw him martyred shows how great the sacrifice of the Companions' families was for Islam.

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UHUD: "SHOOT! MAY MY FATHER AND MOTHER BE YOUR RANSOM!"

At the Battle of Uhud (Shawwal, 3 AH), when the Muslim army was attacked from behind, Sa'd stood in front of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ and shot arrows at the enemy. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ himself emptied his quiver for Sa'd (Sahih al-Bukhari 4055). 'Ali ibn Abi Talib رضى الله عنه witnessed an honour never given to anyone else:

HADITH — SAHIH AL-BUKHARI, NO. 4059

حَدَّثَنَا يَسَرَةُ بْنُ صَفْوَانَ، حَدَّثَنَا إِبْرَاهِيمُ، عَنْ أَبِيهِ، عَنْ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ بْنِ شَدَّادٍ، عَنْ عَلِيٍّ ـ رضى الله عنه ـ قَالَ مَا سَمِعْتُ النَّبِيَّ صلى الله عليه وسلم جَمَعَ أَبَوَيْهِ لأَحَدٍ إِلاَّ لِسَعْدِ بْنِ مَالِكٍ، فَإِنِّي سَمِعْتُهُ يَقُولُ يَوْمَ أُحُدٍ " يَا سَعْدُ ارْمِ، فِدَاكَ أَبِي وَأُمِّي ".

TRANSLATION:

'Ali رضى الله عنه said: ***"I never heard the Prophet ﷺ mention both his parents (as ransom) for anyone except Sa'd ibn Malik. I heard him say on the day of Uhud: 'O Sa'd, shoot! May my father and mother be your ransom.'"***

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari: from Yasarah ibn Safwan, from Ibrahim ibn Sa'd, from Sa'd ibn Ibrahim, from 'Abdullah ibn Shaddad, from 'Ali ibn Abi Talib رضى الله عنه.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari in Sahih al-Bukhari, Book of Military Expeditions (al-Maghazi), Chapter "When Two Parties Among You Were About to Lose Heart", Hadith No. 4059.

GRADE: SAHIH — contained in Sahih al-Bukhari, the most authentic book of Hadith after the Qur'an by consensus of the Hadith scholars.

Source: sunnah.com/bukhari:4059

"May my father and mother be your ransom" is the highest expression of love and honour in Arabic. Yet Sa'd knew that victory did not come from his arrows, but from Allah:

SURAH AL-ANFAL 8:17

فَلَمْ تَقْتُلُوهُمْ وَلَٰكِنَّ ٱللَّهَ قَتَلَهُمْ ۚ وَمَا رَمَيْتَ إِذْ رَمَيْتَ وَلَٰكِنَّ ٱللَّهَ رَمَىٰ وَلِيُبْلِيَ ٱلْمُؤْمِنِينَ مِنْهُ بَلَآءً حَسَنًا ۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ ﴿١٧﴾

And you did not kill them, but it was Allah who killed them. And you threw not, [O Muhammad], when you threw, but it was Allah who threw that He might test the believers with a good test. Indeed, Allah is Hearing and Knowing.

Translation: Sahih International — quran.com/8:17

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LESSONS

Sa'd shot with all his skill, yet left the outcome to Allah. A Muslim does their very best and then puts their trust in Allah; true success comes from Allah.

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GUARD OF THE MESSENGER OF ALLAH ﷺ

In the early days in Madinah, when the safety of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ was still under threat, he once stayed awake at night and wished that a righteous Companion would guard him:

HADITH — SAHIH AL-BUKHARI, NO. 2885

حَدَّثَنَا إِسْمَاعِيلُ بْنُ خَلِيلٍ، أَخْبَرَنَا عَلِيُّ بْنُ مُسْهِرٍ، أَخْبَرَنَا يَحْيَى بْنُ سَعِيدٍ، أَخْبَرَنَا عَبْدُ اللَّهِ بْنُ عَامِرِ بْنِ رَبِيعَةَ، قَالَ سَمِعْتُ عَائِشَةَ ـ رضى الله عنها ـ تَقُولُ كَانَ النَّبِيُّ صلى الله عليه وسلم سَهِرَ فَلَمَّا قَدِمَ الْمَدِينَةَ قَالَ " لَيْتَ رَجُلاً مِنْ أَصْحَابِي صَالِحًا يَحْرُسُنِي اللَّيْلَةَ ". إِذْ سَمِعْنَا صَوْتَ سِلاَحٍ فَقَالَ " مَنْ هَذَا ". فَقَالَ أَنَا سَعْدُ بْنُ أَبِي وَقَّاصٍ، جِئْتُ لأَحْرُسَكَ. وَنَامَ النَّبِيُّ صلى الله عليه وسلم.

TRANSLATION:

'A'ishah رضى الله عنها said: The Prophet ﷺ was sleepless one night. When he came to Madinah, he said: ***"If only a righteous man from among my Companions would guard me tonight."*** Suddenly we heard the sound of weapons. He asked: "Who is this?" He replied: ***"I am Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqas. I have come to guard you."*** Then the Prophet ﷺ slept.

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari: from Isma'il ibn Khalil, from 'Ali ibn Mushir, from Yahya ibn Sa'id, from 'Abdullah ibn 'Amir ibn Rabi'ah, from 'A'ishah رضى الله عنها.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari in Sahih al-Bukhari, Book of Jihad and Expeditions, Chapter on Guarding During Campaigns in the Way of Allah, Hadith No. 2885.

GRADE: SAHIH — contained in Sahih al-Bukhari, the most authentic book of Hadith after the Qur'an by consensus of the Hadith scholars.

Source: sunnah.com/bukhari:2885

In the report of Muslim, 'A'ishah adds that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ slept so soundly that she heard him snore (Sahih Muslim 2410). The Messenger of Allah ﷺ called Sa'd ***"a righteous man"***.

LESSONS

Sa'd did not wait to be asked. He was alert to the needs of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ and came at once with his weapons. The best service comes from a caring heart, before anyone asks.

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SUPPLICATIONS THAT WERE ANSWERED

Sa'd was known among the Companions as a man whose supplications were answered. He narrated that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ prayed for him: **«□□□□□□□□ □□□□□□□□□ □□□□□□□□□□ □□□□□□□ □□□□□»** — "O Allah, answer Sa'd when he calls upon You" (Jami' at-Tirmidhi 3751; graded *hasan* by Darussalam).

That is why the Companions were careful not to be on the receiving end of a supplication from Sa'd. The most famous story of his supplication is told in the chapter "The Complaint of the People of Kufah". Allah Himself promises that He is near to His servants who call upon Him:

SURAH AL-BAQARAH 2:186

وَإِذَا سَأَلَكَ عِبَادِى عَنِّى فَإِنِّى قَرِيبٌ ۖ أُجِيبُ دَعْوَةَ ٱلدَّاعِ إِذَا دَعَانِ ۖ
فَلْيَسْتَجِيبُوا۟ لِى وَلْيُؤْمِنُوا۟ بِى لَعَلَّهُمْ يَرْشُدُونَ ﴿١٨٦﴾

And when My servants ask you, [O Muhammad], concerning Me - indeed I am near. I respond to the invocation of the supplicant when he calls upon Me. So let them respond to Me [by obedience] and believe in Me that they may be [rightly] guided.

Translation: Sahih International — quran.com/2:186

NOTE: THE SECRET OF SA'D'S SUPPLICATION

It is reported that Sa'd was asked why his supplications were answered. He replied: "I have never raised a morsel of food to my mouth without knowing where it came from and where it went."

Status of the report: These are words attributed to Sa'd in books of advice and biography, not a Hadith of the Prophet ﷺ. Their meaning agrees with the authentic Hadith that Allah is good and accepts only what is good (Sahih Muslim 1015).

REFERENCES:

Ibn Rajab al-Hanbali, Jami' al-'Ulum wal-Hikam (commentary on the 10th hadith); adh-Dhahabi, Siyar A'lam an-Nubala'.

LESSONS

Answered supplication is not for Sa'd alone. Whoever guards the lawfulness of their provision, believes and obeys Allah, has great hope that their supplications will be accepted.

THE BEQUEST OF ONE-THIRD

In the year of the Farewell Pilgrimage (10 AH), Sa'd fell seriously ill in Makkah. He feared he would die in the land he had left as an emigrant. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ came to visit him:

HADITH — SAHIH AL-BUKHARI, NO. 2742

حَدَّثَنَا أَبُو نُعَيْمٍ، حَدَّثَنَا سُفْيَانُ، عَنْ سَعْدِ بْنِ إِبْرَاهِيمَ، عَنْ عَامِرِ بْنِ سَعْدٍ، عَنْ سَعْدِ بْنِ أَبِي وَقَّاصٍ ـ رضى الله عنه ـ قَالَ جَاءَ النَّبِيُّ صلى الله عليه وسلم يَعُودُنِي وَأَنَا بِمَكَّةَ، وَهْوَ يَكْرَهُ أَنْ يَمُوتَ بِالأَرْضِ الَّتِي هَاجَرَ مِنْهَا قَالَ " يَرْحَمُ اللَّهُ ابْنَ عَفْرَاءَ ". قُلْتُ يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ، أُوصِي بِمَالِي كُلِّهِ قَالَ " لاَ ". قُلْتُ فَالشَّطْرُ قَالَ " لاَ ". قُلْتُ الثُّلُثُ. قَالَ " فَالثُّلُثُ، وَالثُّلُثُ كَثِيرٌ، إِنَّكَ أَنْ تَدَعَ وَرَثَتَكَ أَغْنِيَاءَ خَيْرٌ مِنْ أَنْ تَدَعَهُمْ عَالَةً يَتَكَفَّفُونَ النَّاسَ فِي أَيْدِيهِمْ، وَإِنَّكَ مَهْمَا أَنْفَقْتَ مِنْ نَفَقَةٍ فَإِنَّهَا صَدَقَةٌ، حَتَّى اللُّقْمَةُ الَّتِي تَرْفَعُهَا إِلَى فِي امْرَأَتِكَ، وَعَسَى اللَّهُ أَنْ يَرْفَعَكَ فَيَنْتَفِعَ بِكَ نَاسٌ وَيُضَرَّ بِكَ آخَرُونَ ". وَلَمْ يَكُنْ لَهُ يَوْمَئِذٍ إِلاَّ ابْنَةٌ.

TRANSLATION:

Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqas رضى الله عنه said: The Prophet ﷺ came to visit me while I was in Makkah, and he disliked that a person should die in the land from which he had emigrated. He said: "May Allah have mercy on Ibn 'Afra'." I said: "O Messenger of Allah, may I bequeath all my wealth?" He said: "No." I said: "Half?" He said: "No." I said: "One-third?" He said: ***"One-third, and one-third is a lot. To leave your heirs rich is better than leaving them poor, begging from people. Whatever you spend is charity, even the morsel you raise to your wife's mouth. Perhaps Allah will lengthen your life so that some people benefit through you and others are harmed through you."*** At that time he had only one daughter.

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari: from Abu Nu'aym al-Fadl ibn Dukayn, from Sufyan ath-Thawri, from Sa'd ibn Ibrahim, from 'Amir ibn Sa'd, from Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqas رضى الله عنه.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari in Sahih al-Bukhari, Book of Wills, Chapter: Leaving One's Heirs Rich Is Better Than Leaving Them Begging from People, Hadith No. 2742.

GRADE: SAHIH — contained in Sahih al-Bukhari, the most authentic book of Hadith after the Qur'an by consensus of the Hadith scholars.

Source: sunnah.com/bukhari:2742

The supplication of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ was answered. Sa'd recovered and lived more than forty years longer. He was blessed with many children, and through his leadership at al-Qadisiyyah the Muslims gained greatly while the Persian Empire suffered defeat. From this Hadith also comes the ruling that a bequest may not exceed one-third of one's wealth.

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LESSONS

Islam teaches not only charity but also care for one's family's rights. Spending on one's wife and children is charity. Leaving one's heirs well provided for is better than leaving them to beg.

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AMONG THE TEN PROMISED PARADISE

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ once named ten Companions and told that all of them were in Paradise. Sa'd is named in that list: ***"…Sa'd is in Paradise…"*** (Jami' at-Tirmidhi 3747; sahih).

Sa'd was also among those who took part in the ***Pledge of ar-Ridwan*** at al-Hudaybiyah (6 AH), the Companions with whom Allah declared Himself pleased in Surah Al-Fath 48:18. Of those ten, Sa'd was the last to die.

LESSONS

The glad tidings of Paradise did not make Sa'd feel safe and stop striving. He kept up jihad and worship and guarded himself from strife until the end of his life. The promise of Paradise increased his gratitude, not his heedlessness.

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COMMANDER AT AL-QADISIYYAH

After the defeat of the Muslims at the Battle of the Bridge (13 AH), the Caliph 'Umar ibn al-Khattab wanted to lead the army to Iraq himself. The Companions advised him to remain in Madinah and appoint a commander. 'Abd ar-Rahman ibn 'Awf proposed Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqas, and 'Umar appointed him.

HISTORICAL NOTE: THE BATTLE OF AL-QADISIYYAH

In 15 AH (some reports say 14 or 16 AH), a Muslim army of about 30,000 faced a much larger Persian army under its commander, ***Rustam***, complete with war elephants.

At that time Sa'd was ill (with boils on his body and sciatica) and could not ride a horse. He directed the battle from the top of a palace at al-'Udhayb, lying on his chest, and sent orders on small notes to Khalid ibn 'Urfutah, who led on the field.

The battle lasted several days. In the end Rustam was killed, the Persian army withdrew, and the door of Iraq opened to Islam.

Status of the report: The details of the battle are narrated in the books of history in various wordings; Sa'd's victory at al-Qadisiyyah is agreed upon by the historians.

REFERENCES:

At-Tabari, Tarikh ar-Rusul wal-Muluk (events of 14–15 AH); Ibn Kathir, al-Bidayah wan-Nihayah; al-Baladhuri, Futuh al-Buldan.

HISTORICAL NOTE: ABU MIHJAN ATH-THAQAFI

It is reported that Abu Mihjan, a warrior, was held in chains by Sa'd for drinking wine. When the battle was at its height, he begged Sa'd's wife to release him, promising to return to his chains if he lived.

He fought bravely on Sa'd's horse, then returned and put his chains back on. When Sa'd learned of it, he set Abu Mihjan free, and Abu Mihjan swore never to drink wine again.

Status of the report: This story is famous in the books of history and biography; its details differ between reports.

REFERENCES:

At-Tabari, Tarikh ar-Rusul wal-Muluk; Ibn Hajar, al-Isabah (biography of Abu Mihjan).

LESSONS

Sa'd did not let his illness stop him from his duty. He led with intelligence and planning even though he could not stand. The story of Abu Mihjan teaches that the door of repentance is always open, and a wise leader gives a chance to those who want to change.

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OPENING AL-MADA'IN AND BUILDING KUFAH

After al-Qadisiyyah, Sa'd advanced on ***al-Mada'in*** (Ctesiphon), the capital of the Persian Empire, on the far side of the Tigris. The city was opened in 16 AH.

HISTORICAL NOTE: CROSSING THE TIGRIS

The historians report that the Persian army destroyed the bridges, and the Tigris was in flood at the time. Sa'd ordered the Muslim army to cross it on horseback. They crossed while remembering Allah and trusting in Him, until the Persian army was stunned and abandoned the city.

When Sa'd entered the palace of Khosrow (Iwan Kisra), he recited the verses of Surah Ad-Dukhan 44:25–28 about a people who left behind their gardens, springs and comforts. Then he prayed eight rak'ahs of thanksgiving inside it.

Status of the report: Narrated by at-Tabari and the historians; the opening of al-Mada'in under Sa'd's leadership is agreed upon.

REFERENCES:
At-Tabari, Tarikh ar-Rusul wal-Muluk (events of 16 AH); Ibn Kathir, al-Bidayah wan-Nihayah.

In 17 AH, on 'Umar's instructions, Sa'd built the city of ***Kufah*** as a base for the Muslim army in Iraq. The city later became one of the greatest centres of Islamic learning; it was there that scholars such as Imam Abu Hanifah arose.

LESSONS

Victory did not make Sa'd proud. In the palace of the most powerful king of the time, he recited verses about the destruction of the arrogant, then bowed in gratitude. True victory is when the heart draws closer to Allah.

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THE COMPLAINT OF THE PEOPLE OF KUFAH

As governor of Kufah, Sa'd was once complained about to 'Umar by some of its people. They even accused him of not praying properly:

HADITH — SAHIH AL-BUKHARI, NO. 755

حَدَّثَنَا مُوسَى، قَالَ حَدَّثَنَا أَبُو عَوَانَةَ، قَالَ حَدَّثَنَا عَبْدُ الْمَلِكِ بْنُ عُمَيْرٍ، عَنْ جَابِرِ بْنِ سَمُرَةَ، قَالَ شَكَا أَهْلُ الْكُوفَةِ سَعْدًا إِلَى عُمَرَ ـ رضى الله عنه ـ فَعَزَلَهُ وَاسْتَعْمَلَ عَلَيْهِمْ عَمَّارًا، فَشَكَوْا حَتَّى ذَكَرُوا أَنَّهُ لاَ يُحْسِنُ يُصَلِّي، فَأَرْسَلَ إِلَيْهِ فَقَالَ يَا أَبَا إِسْحَاقَ إِنَّ هَؤُلاَءِ يَزْعُمُونَ أَنَّكَ لاَ تُحْسِنُ تُصَلِّي قَالَ أَبُو إِسْحَاقَ أَمَّا أَنَا وَاللَّهِ فَإِنِّي كُنْتُ أُصَلِّي بِهِمْ صَلاَةَ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم مَا أَخْرِمُ عَنْهَا، أُصَلِّي صَلاَةَ الْعِشَاءِ فَأَرْكُدُ فِي الأُولَيَيْنِ وَأُخِفُّ فِي الأُخْرَيَيْنِ. قَالَ ذَاكَ الظَّنُّ بِكَ يَا أَبَا إِسْحَاقَ. فَأَرْسَلَ مَعَهُ رَجُلاً أَوْ رِجَالاً إِلَى الْكُوفَةِ، فَسَأَلَ عَنْهُ أَهْلَ الْكُوفَةِ، وَلَمْ يَدَعْ مَسْجِدًا إِلاَّ سَأَلَ عَنْهُ، وَيُثْنُونَ مَعْرُوفًا، حَتَّى دَخَلَ مَسْجِدًا لِبَنِي عَبْسٍ، فَقَامَ رَجُلٌ مِنْهُمْ يُقَالُ لَهُ أُسَامَةُ بْنُ قَتَادَةَ يُكْنَى أَبَا سَعْدَةَ قَالَ أَمَّا إِذْ نَشَدْتَنَا فَإِنَّ سَعْدًا كَانَ لاَ يَسِيرُ بِالسَّرِيَّةِ، وَلاَ يَقْسِمُ بِالسَّوِيَّةِ، وَلاَ يَعْدِلُ فِي الْقَضِيَّةِ. قَالَ سَعْدٌ أَمَا وَاللَّهِ لأَدْعُوَنَّ بِثَلاَثٍ، اللَّهُمَّ إِنْ كَانَ عَبْدُكَ هَذَا كَاذِبًا، قَامَ رِيَاءً وَسُمْعَةً فَأَطِلْ عُمْرَهُ، وَأَطِلْ فَقْرَهُ، وَعَرِّضْهُ بِالْفِتَنِ، وَكَانَ بَعْدُ إِذَا سُئِلَ يَقُولُ شَيْخٌ كَبِيرٌ مَفْتُونٌ، أَصَابَتْنِي دَعْوَةُ سَعْدٍ. قَالَ عَبْدُ الْمَلِكِ فَأَنَا رَأَيْتُهُ بَعْدُ قَدْ سَقَطَ حَاجِبَاهُ عَلَى عَيْنَيْهِ مِنَ الْكِبَرِ، وَإِنَّهُ لَيَتَعَرَّضُ لِلْجَوَارِي فِي الطُّرُقِ يَغْمِزُهُنَّ.

TRANSLATION:

Jabir ibn Samurah said: The people of Kufah complained about Sa'd to 'Umar رضى الله عنه, so 'Umar dismissed him and appointed 'Ammar as their governor. They complained until they said that he did not pray properly. 'Umar sent for him and said: "O Abu Ishaq, these people claim that you do not pray properly." Abu Ishaq replied: ***"By Allah, I used to lead them in the prayer of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ and I did not omit anything from it. I would pray 'Isha', lengthening the first two rak'ahs and shortening the last two."*** 'Umar said: "That is what we thought of you, O Abu Ishaq." Then 'Umar sent one or more men with him to Kufah to ask its people about him. He did not leave a single mosque without asking about him, and they praised him well, until he entered a mosque of Banu 'Abs. A man among them named Usamah ibn Qatadah, known as Abu Sa'dah, stood up and said: "Since you have asked us under oath: Sa'd did not go out with the army, did not divide equally, and was not just in judgement." Sa'd said: ***"By Allah, I will make three supplications: O Allah, if this servant of Yours is lying and stood up to show off and seek fame, then***

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lengthen his life, lengthen his poverty, and expose him to trials." Afterwards, when he was asked, he would say: "An old man afflicted with trials; the supplication of Sa'd struck me." 'Abd al-Malik said: I saw him later; his eyebrows had fallen over his eyes from old age, and he would harass young girls in the streets.

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari: from Musa ibn Isma'il, from Abu 'Awanah, from 'Abd al-Malik ibn 'Umayr, from Jabir ibn Samurah رضى الله عنه.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam al-Bukhari in Sahih al-Bukhari, Book of the Call to Prayer, Chapter on the Obligation of Recitation for the Imam and Those Behind Him, Hadith No. 755.

GRADE: SAHIH — contained in Sahih al-Bukhari, the most authentic book of Hadith after the Qur'an by consensus of the Hadith scholars.

Source: sunnah.com/bukhari:755

Sa'd did not pray against the man unconditionally. His supplication was conditional: "if this servant of Yours is lying". The man's end showed that he was indeed lying, and Sa'd's supplication was answered, as the Messenger of Allah ﷺ had prayed for him.

LESSONS

Even a just leader can be slandered. Sa'd answered the accusation calmly and honestly, and 'Umar investigated fairly before deciding. Slandering the innocent is a grave sin whose consequences may strike the slanderer even in this world.

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THE CONSULTATIVE COUNCIL

When 'Umar ibn al-Khattab was stabbed in 23 AH, he was asked to appoint a successor. 'Umar named six Companions with whom the Messenger of Allah ﷺ was pleased when he died: 'Ali, 'Uthman, az-Zubayr, Talhah, ***Sa'd*** and 'Abd ar-Rahman.

About Sa'd, 'Umar said: ***"If the leadership falls to Sa'd, then he is the one. Otherwise, whoever of you is appointed should seek his help, for I did not dismiss him for weakness or betrayal"*** (Sahih al-Bukhari 3700).

In that council, Sa'd handed his right to 'Abd ar-Rahman ibn 'Awf, and in the end 'Uthman ibn 'Affan received the pledge as caliph.

LESSONS

'Umar's words cleared Sa'd's name of the slander of the people of Kufah. A just leader not only investigates complaints, but also restores the dignity of those who were wronged.

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STAYING AWAY FROM STRIFE

After the killing of 'Uthman ibn 'Affan (35 AH), the Muslims divided and fighting broke out among Muslims. Sa'd chose not to join any side. He withdrew to his land at al-'Aqiq, near Madinah:

HADITH — SAHIH MUSLIM, NO. 2965

حَدَّثَنَا إِسْحَاقُ بْنُ إِبْرَاهِيمَ، وَعَبَّاسُ بْنُ عَبْدِ الْعَظِيمِ، - وَاللَّفْظُ لإِسْحَاقَ - قَالَ عَبَّاسٌ حَدَّثَنَا وَقَالَ، إِسْحَاقُ أَخْبَرَنَا - أَبُو بَكْرٍ الْحَنَفِيُّ، حَدَّثَنَا بُكَيْرُ بْنُ مِسْمَارٍ، حَدَّثَنِي عَامِرُ بْنُ سَعْدٍ، قَالَ كَانَ سَعْدُ بْنُ أَبِي وَقَّاصٍ فِي إِبِلِهِ فَجَاءَهُ ابْنُهُ عُمَرُ فَلَمَّا رَآهُ سَعْدٌ قَالَ أَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ مِنْ شَرِّ هَذَا الرَّاكِبِ فَنَزَلَ فَقَالَ لَهُ أَنَزَلْتَ فِي إِبِلِكَ وَغَنَمِكَ وَتَرَكْتَ النَّاسَ يَتَنَازَعُونَ الْمُلْكَ بَيْنَهُمْ فَضَرَبَ سَعْدٌ فِي صَدْرِهِ فَقَالَ اسْكُتْ سَمِعْتُ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم يَقُولُ " إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الْعَبْدَ التَّقِيَّ الْغَنِيَّ الْخَفِيَّ " .

TRANSLATION:

'Amir ibn Sa'd said: Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqas was among his camels when his son 'Umar came to him. When Sa'd saw him, he said: "I seek refuge with Allah from the evil of this rider." His son dismounted and said: "Have you settled among your camels and sheep, leaving the people to fight among themselves over power?" Sa'd struck him on the chest and said: "Be quiet! I heard the Messenger of Allah ﷺ say: ***Allah loves the servant who is God-fearing, free of want and inconspicuous.***"

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam Muslim: from Ishaq ibn Ibrahim, from 'Abbas ibn 'Abd al-'Azim, from Abu Bakr al-Hanafi, from Bukayr ibn Mismar, from 'Amir ibn Sa'd, from Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqas رضى الله عنه.

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam Muslim in Sahih Muslim, Book of Asceticism and Softening of Hearts, Hadith No. 2965.

GRADE: SAHIH — contained in Sahih Muslim, one of the two most authentic books of Hadith (as-Sahihayn).

Source: sunnah.com/muslim:2965

Sa'd did not blame any Companion, but he himself chose not to raise his weapon against fellow Muslims. Ahl as-Sunnah hold that all the Companions involved in that strife acted on their own judgement, and we speak ill of none of them.

LESSONS

The hero who defeated the Persian Empire chose silence when the Ummah divided. Courage is not only on the battlefield; sometimes courage is holding oneself back from strife and choosing to be a servant who is God-fearing, content and unseen.

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THE DEATH OF SA'D

Sa'd lived a long life, as the Messenger of Allah ﷺ had prayed. He died at his palace in al-'Aqiq, about ten miles from Madinah, in 55 AH (some reports say between 51 and 58 AH), at more than eighty years of age.

HISTORICAL NOTE: THE CLOAK OF BADR

It is reported that when death drew near, Sa'd asked for an old woollen cloak to be brought. He said: "Shroud me in it, for I wore it when I met the idolaters on the day of Badr, and I have kept it for this day."

His body was carried to Madinah on people's shoulders and buried in ***al-Baqi'***. He was the last of the ten promised Paradise, and the last of the Muhajirun, to die.

Status of the report: Narrated in the books of biography and history; the date of his death differs between reports, and the best-known view is 55 AH.

REFERENCES:

Ibn Sa'd, at-Tabaqat al-Kubra; al-Hakim, al-Mustadrak; adh-Dhahabi, Siyar A'lam an-Nubala'.

LESSONS

Sa'd kept the cloak of Badr for more than fifty years as provision for meeting Allah. He did not take pride in the palace of Khosrow that he had opened, but in his first deed in the way of Allah. The most precious thing is a sincere deed, not worldly glory.

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THE CHARACTER OF SA'D

The story of Sa'd portrays a believer who combined courage, firm faith and wisdom.

QUALITY	EXAMPLE FROM HIS LIFE
Firm faith	Did not leave Islam though his mother went on hunger strike (Sahih Muslim 1748)
Courage	The first Arab to shoot an arrow in the way of Allah (Sahih al-Bukhari 3728)
Skill	"Shoot! May my father and mother be your ransom" at Uhud (Sahih al-Bukhari 4059)
Attentiveness	Came to guard the Messenger of Allah ﷺ unasked (Sahih al-Bukhari 2885)
Lawful provision	His supplications were answered (Jami' at-Tirmidhi 3751)
Leadership	Led al-Qadisiyyah though ill
Gratitude	Prayer of thanksgiving in the palace of Khosrow
Avoiding strife	Withdrew when the Ummah divided (Sahih Muslim 2965)

LESSONS

Sa'd proved that a true hero is not only mighty on the battlefield, but also firm before his family, just as a leader, and wise in times of strife.

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SOURCES OF THE STORIES OF SA'D

This table summarises the source of each story and its status, so that readers can tell the authentic from what is merely famous.

STORY	SOURCE	STATUS
One-third of Islam	Sahih al-Bukhari 3727	Sahih
Mother's hunger strike; Al-'Ankabut 29:8	Sahih Muslim 1748c	Sahih
The verse Al-An'am 6:52	Sahih Muslim 2413	Sahih
The first arrow	Sahih al-Bukhari 3728	Sahih
"Shoot! May my father and mother be your ransom"	Sahih al-Bukhari 4055, 4059	Sahih
Guarding the Messenger of Allah ﷺ	Sahih al-Bukhari 2885; Sahih Muslim 2410	Sahih
The bequest of one-third	Sahih al-Bukhari 2742	Sahih
The complaint of the people of Kufah	Sahih al-Bukhari 755	Sahih
'Umar's words at the council	Sahih al-Bukhari 3700	Sahih
The God-fearing, inconspicuous servant	Sahih Muslim 2965	Sahih
The ten promised Paradise	Jami' at-Tirmidhi 3747	Sahih
Answered supplication	Jami' at-Tirmidhi 3751	Hasan
"This is my maternal uncle"	Jami' at-Tirmidhi 3752	Da'if
'Umayr at Badr	Ibn Sa'd; al-Waqidi	Sirah
The secret of supplication: lawful food	Ibn Rajab; adh-Dhahabi	Athar
Al-Qadisiyyah and Abu Mihjan	At-Tabari; Ibn Kathir	History
Crossing the Tigris; al-Mada'in	At-Tabari	History
The cloak of Badr as his shroud	Ibn Sa'd; al-Hakim	History

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PEOPLE IN THE STORY OF SA'D

PERSON	ROLE
Abu Bakr as-Siddiq	Called him to Islam
Hamnah bint Sufyan	His mother, who went on hunger strike to make him leave Islam
'Umayr ibn Abi Waqqas	His younger brother, martyred at Badr
'Ali ibn Abi Talib	Narrator of "Shoot! May my father and mother be your ransom"
'A'ishah	Narrator of the story of Sa'd guarding the Messenger of Allah ﷺ
'Umar ibn al-Khattab	Appointed him commander in Iraq and governor of Kufah
Rustam	Persian commander at al-Qadisiyyah
Abu Mihjan ath-Thaqafi	The warrior who repented at al-Qadisiyyah
Jabir ibn Samurah	Narrator of the complaint of the people of Kufah
Abu Sa'dah (Usamah ibn Qatadah)	The man who slandered Sa'd
'Amir ibn Sa'd	His son, narrator of several Hadith about him

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PLACES IN THE STORY OF SA'D

PLACE	EVENT
Makkah	Birthplace; embraced Islam in the earliest days
Rabigh	The first arrow in the way of Allah (1 AH)
Badr	The Battle of Badr; his brother 'Umayr martyred (2 AH)
Uhud	"Shoot! May my father and mother be your ransom" (3 AH)
Al-Hudaybiyah	The Pledge of ar-Ridwan (6 AH)
Makkah	Serious illness; the bequest of one-third (10 AH)
Al-Qadisiyyah	Victory over Persia (15 AH)
The Tigris and al-Mada'in	Crossing the river; the palace of Khosrow (16 AH)
Kufah	Built the city; became its governor (17 AH)
Al-'Aqiq	Withdrew during the strife; died there (55 AH)
Al-Baqi', Madinah	Place of burial

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TIMELINE OF SA'D'S LIFE

YEAR	EVENT
c. 23 BH	Born in Makkah in Banu Zuhrah
Early prophethood	Embraced Islam at about 17
1 AH	Emigrated to Madinah; the first arrow at Rabigh
2 AH	The Battle of Badr
3 AH	The Battle of Uhud
6 AH	The Pledge of ar-Ridwan at al-Hudaybiyah
8 AH	The Conquest of Makkah
10 AH	Illness in Makkah; the bequest of one-third
14–15 AH	Appointed commander in Iraq; victory at al-Qadisiyyah
16 AH	Opening of al-Mada'in
17 AH	Built the city of Kufah
c. 21 AH	Dismissed from Kufah after the complaint; supplication against Abu Sa'dah
23 AH	Member of the consultative council after 'Umar
35 AH onward	Stayed away from the strife at al-'Aqiq
55 AH	Died at al-'Aqiq; buried in al-Baqi'

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FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT SA'D

This chapter answers questions often asked about Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqas رضى الله عنه. The answers are brief; details are in the earlier chapters.

1. WHAT WAS THE REAL NAME OF SA'D IBN ABI WAQQAS?

Sa'd ibn Malik ibn Uhayb az-Zuhri. His father, Malik, had the kunyah Abu Waqqas.

2. HOW WAS SA'D RELATED TO THE MESSENGER OF ALLAH ﷺ?

He was from Banu Zuhrah, the clan of Aminah bint Wahb, the mother of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ.

3. WAS SA'D REALLY THE THIRD PERSON TO EMBRACE ISLAM?

He said he was "one-third of Islam" for seven days (Sahih al-Bukhari 3727), according to his own knowledge.

4. WHICH VERSE WAS REVEALED BECAUSE OF SA'D'S MOTHER?

Surah Al-'Ankabut 29:8, with its meaning repeated in Surah Luqman 31:15 (Sahih Muslim 1748c).

5. WHY IS SA'D CALLED THE FIRST TO SHOOT AN ARROW IN THE WAY OF ALLAH?

Because he shot an arrow in the force of 'Ubaydah ibn al-Harith in 1 AH, and he himself mentioned it (Sahih al-Bukhari 3728).

6. WHAT DOES «فِدَاكَ أَبِي وَأُمِّي» MEAN?

"May my father and mother be your ransom", the highest expression of love, spoken by the Messenger of Allah ﷺ to Sa'd at Uhud (Sahih al-Bukhari 4059).

7. WERE SA'D'S SUPPLICATIONS REALLY ANSWERED?

Yes. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ prayed that his supplications would be answered (Jami' at-Tirmidhi 3751), and the story of Abu Sa'dah proves it (Sahih al-Bukhari 755).

8. WHY IS A BEQUEST LIMITED TO ONE-THIRD?

Because of the words of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ to Sa'd: "One-third, and one-third is a lot" (Sahih al-Bukhari 2742).

9. WHEN DID THE BATTLE OF AL-QADISIYYAH TAKE PLACE?

According to the best-known view, in 15 AH, under the command of Sa'd.

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10. WHY DID SA'D NOT TAKE PART IN THE FIGHTING BETWEEN THE COMPANIONS?

Because he chose to stay away from strife, holding to the Prophet's ﷺ words that Allah loves the servant who is God-fearing, free of want and inconspicuous (Sahih Muslim 2965).

11. WHEN AND WHERE DID SA'D DIE?

In 55 AH at al-'Aqiq, and he was buried in al-Baqi', Madinah.

12. WHAT IS THE GREATEST LESSON OF SA'D'S STORY?

Firm faith, courage, lawful provision, and the wisdom to stay away from strife.

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LESSONS AND CONCLUSION

The story of Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqas رضى الله عنه begins with a young man of Makkah who embraced Islam when Islam was only days old, and ends with an old man shrouded in the cloak of Badr. Between the two lies a life full of jihad, leadership and God-consciousness.

LESSON	FROM THE STORY OF SA'D
Faith above all	Firm even when his mother went on hunger strike
Dutiful without disobeying Allah	Remained kind to his mother
Effort and trust in Allah	Shooting at Uhud; victory from Allah
Caring before being asked	Came to guard the Messenger of Allah ﷺ
Lawful provision, answered prayer	Guarded every morsel of food
Protecting heirs' rights	A bequest no larger than one-third
Avoiding strife	Withdrew when the Ummah divided

SA'D IN OUR LIVES

We may never hold a bow or lead an army, but we can inherit Sa'd's qualities: holding firm to faith even when tested by loved ones, guarding the lawfulness of our provision, caring for the needs of others, and holding back from strife and quarrels.

In the age of social media, when slander spreads easily, Sa'd's choice to be "a servant who is God-fearing, free of want and inconspicuous" is very close to our own lives.

In sha' Allah, the Heroes of Islam series will continue with Mus'ab ibn 'Umayr, the first envoy of Islam to Madinah. May Allah be pleased with Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqas, the hero of al-Qadisiyyah, and gather us with the Messenger of Allah ﷺ and his Companions in His Paradise.

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SURAH AL-BAQARAH 2:261

مَّثَلُ ٱلَّذِينَ يُنفِقُونَ أَمۡوَٰلَهُمۡ فِي سَبِيلِ ٱللَّهِ كَمَثَلِ حَبَّةٍ أَنۢبَتَتۡ سَبۡعَ سَنَابِلَ فِي كُلِّ سُنۢبُلَةٖ مِّاْئَةُ حَبَّةٖۗ وَٱللَّهُ يُضَٰعِفُ لِمَن يَشَآءُۚ وَٱللَّهُ وَٰسِعٌ عَلِيمٌ ٢٦١

The example of those who spend their wealth in the way of Allah is like a seed [of grain] which grows seven spikes; in each spike is a hundred grains. And Allah multiplies [His reward] for whom He wills. And Allah is all-Encompassing and Knowing.

Translation: Sahih International — quran.com/2:261

SURAH SABA' 34:39

قُلۡ إِنَّ رَبِّي يَبۡسُطُ ٱلرِّزۡقَ لِمَن يَشَآءُ مِنۡ عِبَادِهِۦ وَيَقۡدِرُ لَهُۥۚ وَمَآ أَنفَقۡتُم مِّن شَيۡءٖ فَهُوَ يُخۡلِفُهُۥۖ وَهُوَ خَيۡرُ ٱلرَّٰزِقِينَ ٣٩

Say, "Indeed, my Lord extends provision for whom He wills of His servants and restricts [it] for him. But whatever thing you spend [in His cause] - He will compensate it; and He is the best of providers."

Translation: Sahih International — quran.com/34:39

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HADITH — SAHIH MUSLIM, NO. 2588

حَدَّثَنَا يَحْيَى بْنُ أَيُّوبَ، وَقُتَيْبَةُ، وَابْنُ، حُجْرٍ قَالُوا حَدَّثَنَا إِسْمَاعِيلُ، - وَهُوَ ابْنُ جَعْفَرٍ - عَنِ الْعَلاَءِ، عَنْ أَبِيهِ، عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ، عَنْ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم قَالَ « مَا نَقَصَتْ صَدَقَةٌ مِنْ مَالٍ وَمَا زَادَ اللَّهُ عَبْدًا بِعَفْوٍ إِلاَّ عِزًّا وَمَا تَوَاضَعَ أَحَدٌ لِلَّهِ إِلاَّ رَفَعَهُ اللَّهُ ».

TRANSLATION:

Abu Hurayrah رضى الله عنه narrated that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: "Charity does not decrease wealth.

Allah does not increase a servant who forgives except in honour. And no one humbles himself for the sake of Allah except that Allah raises him in rank."

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam Muslim: from Yahya bin Ayyub, Qutaibah bin Sa'id and 'Ali bin Hujr, from Isma'il bin Ja'far, from al-'Ala' bin 'Abd al-Rahman, from his father 'Abd al-Rahman bin Ya'qub, from Abu Hurayrah رضى الله عنه .

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam Muslim in Sahih Muslim, Book of Virtue, Good Manners and Joining the Ties of Kinship (Kitab al-Birr wa al-Silah wa al-Adab), chapter on the encouragement of forgiveness and humility, Hadith No. 2588.

GRADE: SAHIH — contained in Sahih Muslim.

Source: sunnah.com/muslim:2588

HADITH — SAHIH MUSLIM, NO. 1631

حَدَّثَنَا يَحْيَى بْنُ أَيُّوبَ، وَقُتَيْبَةُ، - يَعْنِي ابْنَ سَعِيدٍ - وَابْنُ حُجْرٍ قَالُوا حَدَّثَنَا إِسْمَاعِيلُ، - هُوَ ابْنُ جَعْفَرٍ - عَنِ الْعَلاَءِ، عَنْ أَبِيهِ، عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ، أَنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صلى الله عليه وسلم قَالَ « إِذَا مَاتَ الإِنْسَانُ انْقَطَعَ عَنْهُ عَمَلُهُ إِلاَّ مِنْ ثَلاَثَةٍ إِلاَّ مِنْ صَدَقَةٍ جَارِيَةٍ أَوْ عِلْمٍ يُنْتَفَعُ بِهِ أَوْ وَلَدٍ صَالِحٍ يَدْعُو لَهُ ».

TRANSLATION:

Abu Hurayrah رضى الله عنه narrated that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: "When a person dies, his deeds come to an end except for three: an ongoing charity, knowledge that is benefited from, or a righteous child who prays for him."

CHAIN OF NARRATION: Narrated by Imam Muslim: from Yahya bin Ayyub, Qutaibah bin Sa'id and 'Ali bin Hujr, from Isma'il bin Ja'far, from al-'Ala' bin 'Abd al-Rahman, from his father 'Abd al-Rahman bin Ya'qub, from Abu Hurayrah رضى الله عنه .

REFERENCE: Narrated by Imam Muslim in Sahih Muslim, Book of Wills (Kitab al-Wasiyyah), chapter on the reward that reaches a person after his death, Hadith No. 1631.

GRADE: SAHIH — contained in Sahih Muslim.

Source: sunnah.com/muslim:1631

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