

Chapter Eighteen

Chapter relating to the signs that became apparent whilst Sayyiduna ‘Abdul Muttalib رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ dug the Zam Zam

1. Imam Ibn Ishaq (d. 151 AH) and Imam Baihaqi (d. 458 AH) عَلَيْهِمُ الرِّضْوَانُ extracted a narration from Sayyiduna ‘Ali Ibn Abi Talib رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمَا who stated, “Whilst Sayyiduna ‘Abdul Muttalib رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ was sleeping near the Hajr Aswad (Black Stone) somebody came to him in his dream and it was said, “Dig Barrah”¹. He said, “What is Barrah?” Then the person disappeared until the next day came. (Sayyiduna) ‘Abdul Muttalib رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ slept in the same place. Somebody came to him and it was said to him, “Dig Al-Madnunah”². (Sayyiduna) ‘Abdul Muttalib رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ said, “What is Madnunah?” Whoever was in the dream disappeared. The next day, he رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ returned and slept in the same resting place of his. Somebody came to him and it was said, “Dig Tayyibah”³. He رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ said, “What is Tayyibah?” Whoever was in the dream disappeared. So the next day, when he returned to his resting place and slept, somebody came to him and it was said, “Dig Zam Zam.” He said, “What is Zam Zam?” The person said, “It does not drain out and nor will it move.” Then he described its place to him. So (Sayyiduna) ‘Abdul Muttalib رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ began to dig where it was described to him.

The Quraysh said, “What is this O ‘Abdul Muttalib رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ?” He said, “I have been commanded to dig Zam Zam.” When it became apparent and they saw it, they said, “O ‘Abdul Muttalib رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ, indeed we have a right over it with you. Indeed it is the drink of our Forefather (Sayyiduna) Ismail عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام). Sayyiduna ‘Abdul Muttalib رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ said, “It is not for you. I have been given speciality over it rather than yourselves.” They said, “Should we take this matter to a judge?” He said, “Yes.” They said, “The female soothsayer of Banu Sa’d Ibn Hudaim will be the judge between ourselves and yourselves.” She was residing in the highlands of Shaam (Syria, Jordon, Lebanon and Palestine).

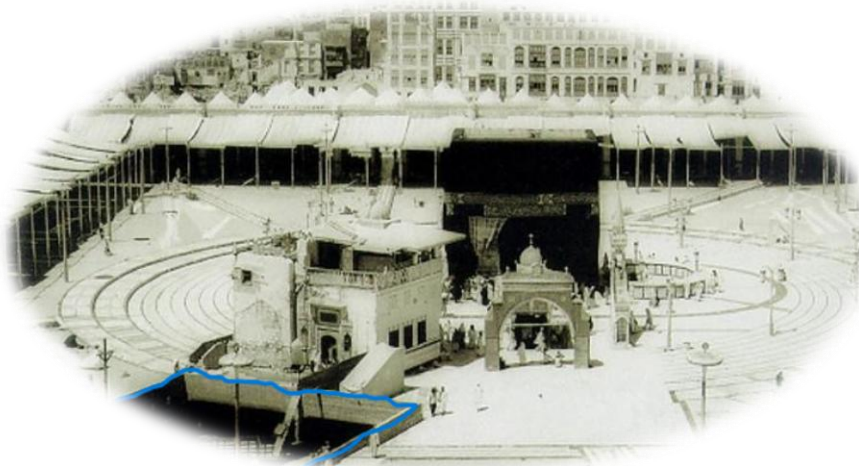
(Sayyiduna) ‘Abdul Muttalib رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ rode in a group from his tribe and every representative from the tribe of Quraysh rode with him. There were deserts between Sham and Hijaz. They were in a desert amongst the deserts of those lands. The water of (Sayyiduna) ‘Abdul Muttalib رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ and his companions ran out and they became certain that they will be destroyed. They sought water from the people. The people said, “We do not have the ability to give you water because we fear a similar affliction to what has afflicted you.” (Sayyiduna) ‘Abdul Muttalib رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ said to his companions, “What is your view?” They said, “We have no view except to follow your opinion.” (Sayyiduna) ‘Abdul Muttalib رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ said, “I view that each man should dig a hole. Whenever a man amongst you dies then his companion should send him into the hole until the last of you is buried by his companion. Loss of one man is lighter than all of you. So they did this and then they said, “By Allah (عَزَّوَجَلَّ), indeed we are passing ourselves to death with our own hands. Why do we not travel on the earth and seek water? Perhaps Allah (عَزَّوَجَلَّ) will grant us water based upon our incapability.” He said to his companions, “Set off.” So they set off and he set off. When he sat on his she camel and set off with it, springs gushed out from under the she camel’s hooves with sweet water. So he stopped the animal and the

¹ The water of Zam Zam was called Barrah due to its abundant benefits and due to its vastness of water.

² The water of Zam Zam is called Madnuna because the disbeliever is withheld from it. Thus, the hypocrite will never manage to fill his stomach with it.

³ Pure.

companions stopped. They drank, they used the water and gathered the water. Then they called their companions and said to them, “Come to the water. For indeed Allah (عَزَّوَجَلَّ) has granted us water.” They came, they drank, they used the water and gathered the water. Then they said, “O ‘Abdul Muttalib (رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ)! Indeed, Allah (عَزَّوَجَلَّ) is The One who decreed in your favour and granted you water in this desert. Indeed Allah (عَزَّوَجَلَّ) is The One who has granted you Zam Zam. Therefore, it is yours and we will not dispute with you in this regard.”



The area bottom left was stairs going down to the well. It was covered after the year 2000 CE.

2. Imam Baihaqi (d. 458 AH) رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ extracted a narration from the chain of Sayyiduna Zuhri رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ amongst the first things that are mentioned about Sayyiduna ‘Abdul Muttalib رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ the grandfather of the Messenger of Allah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ, is that the Quraysh left the Haram (Ka’bah) running away from the people of the Elephant. The Quraysh became scared from the people of the elephant. Sayyiduna ‘Abdul Muttalib رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ said, “By Allah (عَزَّوَجَلَّ), I will not leave from the Haram (Ka’bah) of Allah (عَزَّوَجَلَّ) seeking honour in other than it.” So he sat near the Ka’bah and said, “O Allah (عَزَّوَجَلَّ)! Indeed a person protects his abode so protect Your Place⁴.”

So Sayyiduna ‘Abdul Muttalib رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ stayed in the Haram till Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ destroyed the elephants and their people. The Quraysh returned and their reverence grew for him due to his patience and his respect for the sanctities of Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ. It was during this time that somebody came to him in his dream. It was said to him, “Dig Zam Zam which has been hidden by a great Shaykh.” So he woke up and said, “O Allah (عَزَّوَجَلَّ)! Make it clear to me.” So he was shown in the dream another time that it was said to him, “Dig Zam Zam which is hidden between dung and blood, in the place where the Albino crows search in the group of Ants, facing towards the red idols.”

So Sayyiduna ‘Abdul Muttalib رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ arose and walked until he sat in Masjid Al-Haraam waiting for the signs that had been mentioned to him. A cow was sacrificed in Hazoorah (place between Safa and Marwa) which ran away from its slaughter to save its life until death overcame it in the masjid, in the place of Zam Zam. That cow was sacrificed in its place and then its meat was carried away. A crow

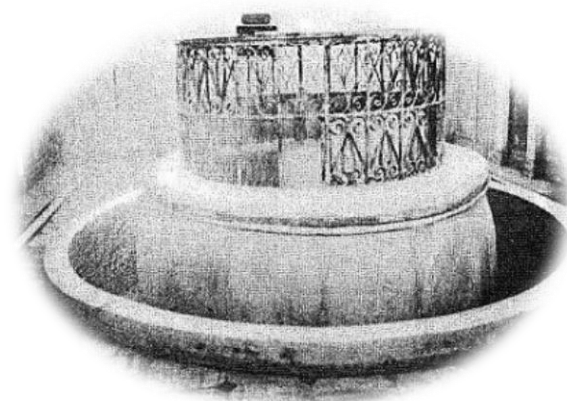
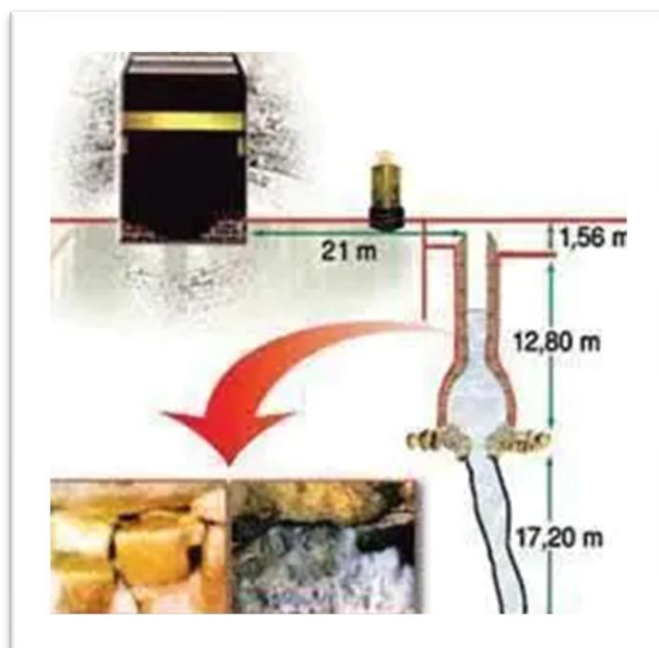
⁴ As You are the creator of the people and The Most Powerful.

arrived and swooped down until it fell in the dung. It searched for the group of ants. So Sayyiduna ‘Abdul Muttalib رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ stood and dug that place. Quraysh came to him and said, “What is this that you are doing?” He said, “Indeed I am digging this well until when it is possible to dig.” When it became extremely difficult for him, he made a vow that he would sacrifice one of his children. He dug until the water gushed out. He built a pool over it that he would fill and that the Hajjis (pilgrims) would drink from. However, some jealous people from Quraysh would break it during the night and Sayyiduna ‘Abdul Muttalib رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ would rectify it in the morning. When their mischief became excessive, Sayyiduna ‘Abdul Muttalib رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ supplicated to his Lord and he was shown in his dream. It was said to him, “Say, O Allah (عَزَّوَجَلَّ)! I do not make it permissible on the one who is bathing rather it is permissible for drinking and you are sufficient as Protector for it.” Sayyiduna ‘Abdul Muttalib رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ woke up and called out with the words that he was shown. Then he returned and after that, whoever would cause harm to the pool would be afflicted with an illness in his body. Due to this, they stopped coming to the pool and to the well. Then Sayyiduna ‘Abdul Muttalib رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ said, “O Allah (عَزَّوَجَلَّ)! Indeed I made a vow to you that I would sacrifice one of my children. Indeed I draw lots between them so make it reach who You will.” So he drew lots between them and the name that came out was of Sayyiduna ‘Abdullah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ. He was the most beloved child to Sayyiduna ‘Abdul Muttalib رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ. He said, “O Allah (عَزَّوَجَلَّ)! Is he more beloved to you or one hundred camels?” A lot was drawn between ‘Abdullah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ and hundred camels, and the name of hundred camels came so he sacrificed one hundred camels in place of Sayyiduna ‘Abdullah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ.

3. Imam Ibn Sa’d (d. 230 AH) رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ extracted a narration from the chain of Sayyiduna Ibn Abbas رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمَا who stated, “When Sayyiduna ‘Abdul Muttalib رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ saw that he had less helpers in relation to the digging of Zam Zam, he made a vow that if Allah عَزَّوَجَلَّ would grant him ten sons he would sacrifice one of them. When the amount of his sons reached ten, he gathered them and informed them of his vow. They responded to him and said, ‘Fulfil your vow and do as you wish.’ So he placed lots between them. The name of Sayyiduna ‘Abdullah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ came out. So he took Sayyiduna ‘Abdullah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ by his hand and led him to the place of sacrifice. He had a knife with him. The daughters of Sayyiduna ‘Abdul Muttalib رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ cried and one of them said, ‘Excuse your son by placing lots in relation to your camels which are freely grazing in the Haram (Ka’bah).’ So he placed lots between Sayyiduna ‘Abdullah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ and ten camels which was blood money at the time. The lot came out upon the name of Sayyiduna ‘Abdullah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ. He continued to add ten camels each time. At each time, the name of Sayyiduna ‘Abdullah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ came out until a hundred reached completion. Then the name of the camels came out. Sayyiduna ‘Abdul Muttalib رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ recited takbir (Allahu Akbar) and the people also recited the takbir with him. He put the camels forward and sacrificed them. Sayyiduna ‘Abdul Muttalib رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ was the first person to establish a hundred camels to be the blood money for human life. This became the norm amongst the Quraysh and the Arabs. The Messenger of Allah صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ maintained this.”

4. Imam Hakim (d. 405 AH), Imam Ibn Jareer (d. 310 AH) and Imam Umawi (d. 249AH) in his Maghazi from the chain of Sanabihi extracted a narration of Sayyiduna Muawiyah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ who stated, “We were with the Messenger of Allah (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ) when a bedouin came and said, ‘O Messenger of Allah (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ), I left the fields dry (lack of harvest), the water scarce, the dependants have been destroyed and the wealth has been wasted. Promise to me what Allah (عَزَّوَجَلَّ) has granted to you from war booty O Ibn Dhabihayn (O son of the two sacrificed ones).’ The Messenger of Allah (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ وَسَلَّمَ) smiled and did not reject and the people said, “Who are the two sacrificed, O

leader of the believers?” Sayyiduna Muawiyah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ said, “When (Sayyiduna) ‘Abdul Muttalib (رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ) was commanded to dig Zam Zam, he made a vow that if the matter became easy for him, he would sacrifice one of his sons. So when he finished, he drew lots between them. There were ten sons and the name of (Sayyiduna) ‘Abdullah (رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ) came out. (Sayyiduna) ‘Abdul Muttalib (رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ) intended to sacrifice (Sayyiduna) ‘Abdullah (رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ). His maternal uncles, Banu Makhzum, stopped him and said, “Please your Lord and give ransom of one hundred camels in place of your son.” Sayyiduna Muawiyah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ said, “So this is one (of the two sacrificed ones) and the other is (Sayyiduna) Ismail عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام.”



Old picture of the Zam Zam well