

# THE **F1RST**S

A Lecture Series

**YAQREEN**<sup>™</sup>  
INSTITUTE FOR ISLAMIC RESEARCH

# Who were the Hanifeen?

## Uthman ibn Al-Huwayrith, Ubaydullah ibn Jahsh, Waraqa ibn Naufar, Zaid ibn Amr ibn Nufayl

- The group of four monotheists that decided that they wanted to follow the religion of Abraham.
- They were deeply troubled by paganism and idol worship, and they couldn't quite figure out what the right path should be.
- These four men decided amongst themselves that we're not going to follow the pagan culture in Makkah and we're going to look for something else.
- *Uthman ibn al-Huwayrith*
  - Became Christian as a result of his rejection of paganism and became a minister amongst the Romans.
- *Ubaydullah ibn Jahsh*
  - Became Christian until the Prophet ﷺ brings Islam and he accepts Islam.
  - Migrated to Abyssinia, a Christian land — some sources say he became Christian again and died as a Christian, but there may be some issues with the narration.
- *Waraqa bin Naufar*
  - Became Christian too, but Warakah would become a very specific type of Christian. He would become a nistorian priest, which is the Christian that Salman al Faris followed.
- *Zaid ibn Amr ibn Nufayl*
  - Was never really satisfied with Christianity or Judaism in his time. In this pre-Islamic era, he became a follower of Abraham. Challenged society in unique ways.

## Background

### His name was Zaid ibn Amr ibn Nufayl

- Zaid was the son of Amr ibn Nufayl, a member of the [Adi](#) clan of the [Quraysh](#) tribe. The nephew of Al-Khattab ibn Nufayl (Umar ibn Al-Khattab's first cousin)
- So that would make Khatab the paternal uncle of Zaid. So Zaid is the first cousin of Umar.
- Zaid had 2 kids: Saeed and Aatika

### The Prophet ﷺ & Zaid ibn Amr

- The Prophet ﷺ saw Zaid growing up and he was fascinated by him. The Prophet ﷺ never worshipped idols. Abu Bakr (r) never worshipped idols. But at the same time they were not challenging idol worship in society because the Prophet ﷺ had not been called to do that.
- Zaid on the other hand says idol worship is a rejection of the way of Ibrahim (a) and Zaid will challenge his society in a very unique way.

عن عبد الله بن عمر -رضي الله عنهما- أن النبي -صلى الله عليه وسلم- لقي زيد بن عمرو بن نفيل بأسفل  
يَلْدَحَ قَبْلَ أَنْ يَنْزَلَ عَلَى النَّبِيِّ -صلى الله عليه وسلم- الوحي  
فَقَدِمَتْ إِلَى النَّبِيِّ -صلى الله عليه وسلم- سفرة، فأبى أن يأكل منها، ثم قال زيد: إني لست آكل مما تذبحون على  
أنصابكم، ولا آكل إلا مما ذكر اسم الله عليه  
وأن زيد بن عمرو كان يعيب على قريش ذبائحهم، ويقول: الشاة خلقها الله، وأنزل لها من السماء الماء، وأنبت  
[لها من الأرض، ثم تذبحونها على غير اسم الله، إنكاراً لذلك، وإعظاماً له] [رواه البخاري: 3826]

- The Prophet ﷺ met Zaid in a place near tan'eem and served him some food and Zaid said, "I do not eat from what was slaughtered in the name of other than Allah. Oh son of my brother, do not eat from this." Zayd ibn Haaritha says, "From that day onward, the Prophet never ate any of the meat of Quraysh."

- Zaid ibn Amr likes the Prophet ﷺ as a person, he's a noble young man and he sees some good characteristics in the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. So while the Prophet ﷺ comes to him, Zaid does not respond aggressively to him.
- This is the position that Zaid Ibn Amr is taking the society of Makkah. He's significantly older than the Prophet ﷺ. Then comes again, Zaid now breaking off from this group of four even to be the only one that doesn't become a Christian but at the same time obviously he's still considered amongst that group of people because Christianity was still one of tawheed so he still relates to them. He still considers amongst the group but Zaid insisted.

## The Deen of Abraham (as)

### “Oh Allah I am on the way of Ibrahim.”

وعن أسماء بنت أبي بكر رضي الله تعالى عنهما - قالت: رأيت زيد بن عمرو بن نفيل قائماً مسنداً ظهره إلى الكعبة، يقول: يا معاشر قريش والله ما منكم على دين إبراهيم غيري، وكان يحيى الموءدة، يقول للرجل إذا أراد أن يقتل ابنه: لا تقتلها أنا أكفيك مؤنتها، فيأخذها، فإذا ترعرعت، قال لأبيها: إن شئت دفعتها إليك، وإن شئت كفيتك مؤنتها

- Asmaa bint Abi Bakr heard Zaid praying in front of the Ka'aba saying, “Oh Allah, if only I knew which of the ways where most pleasing to you I would worship you in accordance with that way but I don't know.”
- He would make sujood to the Ka'aba not knowing anything of salah.
- The Prophet ﷺ asked him: Why do I see that your people hate you so much? He said I left their religion and their idols for the religion and God of Ibrahim.

إلهي إله إبراهيم، وديني دين إبراهيم

- He used to say, “My God is the God of Ibrahim. My religion is the religion of Ibrahim.
- Now think about what's happening in Makkah right now. They've taken the rituals of Ibrahim (AS), made for monotheism, made for tawheed, and they've turned all of

them into pagan rituals. The Kaba was built for the worship of Allah. Tawaf was supposed to be an exclusive remembrance of god, centering Allah as the one God.

## **He used to give life to the girl being buried alive. - Asmaa bint Abi Bakr**

- He would say to the father as he was about to kill her, do not kill her I will take care of her. Once she would grow old enough to be married: he would say to the father: if you like I can return her to you and you can find her a suitor, or I can take care of that as well.
- Zaid had one daughter himself Aatika bint Zaid that he of course didn't bury. Look what Allah gave him through here: Aatika bint Zaid was the wife of 5 shuhadaa: Zaid ibn al-Khattab, Abdullah ibn Abi Bakr, Omar ibn al-Khattab, Az-Zubayr, Al-Hassan ibn Ali

## **He would never commit Zina:**

**“Beware of Zina, for verily it yields poverty.” - Zaid ibn Amr**

- Where is that fitrah from? How is the guy making sujood, saving young girls being buried alive, and it's even narrated about him, he never committed adultery and he never drank alcohol.
- He's living this life in accordance with the religion that would come after him and that was the sincerity of the way of Ibrahim (as).

## **Traveling to find Guidance:**

- He and Waraqa went to al-Shaam together. Waraqa immerses himself with the literature of the Old Testament, New Testament, Injeel, the Gospel, the Torah. He learns Hebrew, he goes very deep into this where it becomes his life and he sort of becomes a priest. Waraqa became a Christian.
- Zaid ibn Amr on the other hand continues to travel. Is never really satisfied with the answers he is given and he doesn't have the support of his family.

- His uncle tortures him, Al-Khattab, and says don't come around and if you come around you'll be beaten. He instructed people to beat Zaid if he's seen entering into Makkah again.
- His wife would become stressed every time he would say I'm going to Sham. Because while the people would go to Sham for trade, Zaid would go out to learn more and to try to answer these questions nagging at him about revelation and about the oneness of God and Ibrahim (as).
- Zaid's wife Safiyya disliked his travels to Syria. Whenever she saw him preparing for a journey, she reported it to al-Khattab, who would reproach Zaid for abandoning their religion. Zaid did not bother to explain himself to al-Khattab, but he rebuked Safiyya for trying to humiliate him.
- Al-Khattab harassed Zaid so severely that Zaid was forced to leave the city. He spent the last few years of his life in the mountain-caves surrounding Mecca. Al-Khattab then instructed the "young irresponsible men of the Quraysh" to ensure that Zaid could never enter the city again. Whenever Zaid tried to enter in secret, al-Khattab's men drove him out again. [\[2\]:102-103\[7\]](#)
- He went to Mosul and al-Shaam (Similar to Salman Al-Farsi)
- When he went to Sham, he asked for the most knowledgeable raahib.
- In al-Shaam he was told by a priest no one is left upon this. This is the time that God will send a prophet to revive the way of Abraham. He's told he's coming out from the same place you left.
- So Zaid gets excited, he turns back towards Makkah, he has no idea that that young man Muhammad ﷺ who he used to call Ibn Akhi, my cousin. He had no idea that that was going to be the one that was going to be the Messenger, but he's making his way back to Makkah so that he can await for this prophet.

## Death

- On his way back, he was captured and killed. in a land called Balqaa' around 5 years before revelation.

## **Zaid's dua: Oh Allah if you forbade me from the companionship of of your Prophet, don't forbid it from my son Saeed.**

**Saeed's Fate: Saeed was one of the first to accept Islam and one of the 'Asshar Mubashireen fil Jannah. He married Fatima, the daughter of al-Khattab and was beaten by Omar for being Muslim.**

- Saeed and Omar asked the Prophet ﷺ: Ya Rasulullah, can we seek forgiveness for Zaid? And the Prophet ﷺ said, Seek forgiveness for him, for by Allah I saw on the Day of Judgment as the Prophets line up with their ummah behind them, with their nations behind them, 124,000 prophets all line up on the Day of Judgment, behind them are their nations. Some prophets have one person. Some have ten. Some have a thousand. Some have 80. The Prophet ﷺ has the largest nation. After him the nation of Musa (a) Moses peace be upon him. So these large nations line up behind the prophets, right. And Subhanallah the Prophet ﷺ said (arabic) that he would be resurrected all by himself as an ummah. The man is an ummah, he's a nation. And in an authentic narration, this is so touching because it gives you the image, he said (arabic) between me and Jesus (the son of Mary). So while the lines of the prophets are there, and may Allah make us amongst those standing behind Rasuallah ﷺ with his testimony for us, imagine you're lining up behind the Prophet ﷺ and you're looking and you see Jesus over there, Isa (a), and between the Prophet ﷺ and Isa (a) there's one man standing all by himself. And he in an Ummah, all by nation himself. He is a nation all by himself. And that is Zaid Ibn Amr (r)

إنه يبعث يوم القيامة أمة وحده

Between me and Isa ibn Maryam is an ummah of one

- Amir Ibn Rabee'a says Zaid told me: I am waiting for a prophet from the children of Ishmael. I believe in him and will support him and testify he is a prophet. But I have a feeling I won't live to see him. If you live long enough to see him, give him my salaam. Amir ibn Rabee'a said when I became Muslim I gave the prophet his salaam.

The Prophet said salaam back to him, made dua for mercy for him, and said I saw him in paradise dragging his garments.

- In another authentic narration,

قال رسول الله ﷺ في شأن زيد بن نفيل والد سعيد بن زيد: دخلت الجنة فرأيت لزيد بن عمرو بن نفيل درجتين. رواه ابن عساكر وحسنه الألباني.

The Prophet ﷺ said I entered into paradise and I saw that Allah has reserved two levels of paradise for one man, for Zaid. That Allah gave him two levels of paradise all by himself.

- When Waraqa bin Naufal who also followed the same faith, came to know about his death he cried so much and recited an elegy in his honor:

**You were altogether on the right path, Ibn Amr;**

**You have escaped Hell's burning oven**

**by serving the one and only God**

**and abandoning vain idols ...**

**for the mercy of God reaches men**

**though they be sixty valleys deep below the earth.** [2]:103

- The Prophet ﷺ talked about this idea of intuition, of the righteousness of a Muslim, of a soul that is at peace with Allah is naturally guided to what is pleasing to Allah. That when the fitrah is in tact, when a person's natural disposition is in tact, that they will naturally find themselves in worship and in service. And even though Zaid had no idea of what was to come after him but that's the kind of sincerity he had. You see that what's very prevalent in many of these stories is a refusal to be complacent. And to look deeper into society around him and Zaid thinking deeply and deeply about theology and becoming the person that he was.

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