THE TEN PROMISED PARADISE · BOOK TWO

Umar ibn al-Khattab

Justice Without Fear



SAKEENA PRESS

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What the Faruq Teaches the Mind, the Heart and the Life of the One Who Walks After Him

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The Ten Promised Paradise, Book Two

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This book is for education and reflection. It is not a complete biography, and it does not replace the study of the books of sirah and hadith from which it draws.

First edition. Printed on demand.

For everyone who knows what is right
and is afraid of what it will cost.

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PREFACE

A Word Before You Begin

There are ten men whom the Prophet ﷺ named in a single breath and promised Paradise. The first book in this series walked with the first of them, Abu Bakr, the man who heard the truth and said yes without delay. This book walks with the second.

Umar ibn al-Khattab did not say yes without delay. He said no, loudly, for six years, and then he said yes so completely that the Prophet ﷺ said Satan took another road when he saw him coming. He is the companion for everyone who came to the truth late, or fought it first, or carries a temper and a history and wonders whether a person like that can be of any use to Allah. He is the proof that such a person can be of more use than almost anyone.

He is also the companion of justice. The Prophet ﷺ called him al-Faruq, the one who separates truth from falsehood, and for ten years he ruled an empire from a mosque floor in a patched cloak, afraid of nothing except his Lord and the account he would give. If the ten are a school, Umar is its lesson in courage: not the courage of the battlefield only, though he had that, but the courage to say the true thing, do the just thing and refuse the comfortable thing, whatever it costs.

For every claim in this book there is evidence: a verse of the Quran, a hadith with its reference, or a report from the early historians, named as such. Where a report is outside the two Sahihs we say so and give its grading where one exists. We have tried not to decorate this man. He would not have allowed it.

Read it slowly. Then go and do one thing he did.

How this book is arranged

Part One introduces the ten again, explains why the second book is about Umar, and describes the man he was before the message came and the day it reached him.

Parts Two to Six each take one thing he was or did: he distinguished truth from falsehood, he stood beside the Prophet ﷺ, he was loved and trusted, he carried the weight of the community, and he returned to his Lord. Each claim comes with its evidence.

Part Seven shows how to walk with him: the words he carried to us, seven habits drawn from his life, and a forty-day plan for making them your own.

Verses are given in Arabic with their meaning in English and their reference. Hadith are given with the numbers of the standard printed editions as used on sunnah.com, and gradings are noted where a narration is outside Sahih al-Bukhari and Sahih Muslim.

Reports from the books of history and sirah appear in boxes marked From the Sources. They are the accounts of Ibn Ishaq, Ibn Hisham, al-Tabari, Ibn Sa'd, Ibn al-Jawzi and Ibn Kathir, and they are offered as the historians recorded them, not as hadith.

I

PART ONE

The Ten, and the Second of Them

Who the ten were, why the second book is about Umar, who he was before the message came, and the du'a that brought him.

1 Ten Names, One Promise

2 Who He Was Before

3 The Du'a That Was Answered

01

CHAPTER ONE

Ten Names, One Promise

Abd al-Rahman ibn Awf, who was himself one of them, reported that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said ten names and after each name said the same thing: in Paradise. He did not say they would be judged kindly, or that there was hope for them. He said where they would be, as a man describes a place he has seen.

HADITH

أَبُو بَكْرٍ فِي الْجَنَّةِ، وَعُمَرُ فِي الْجَنَّةِ، وَعُثْمَانُ فِي الْجَنَّةِ، وَعَلِيٌّ فِي الْجَنَّةِ، وَطَلْحَةُ فِي الْجَنَّةِ، وَالزُّبَيْرُ فِي الْجَنَّةِ، وَعَبْدُ الرَّحْمَنِ بْنُ عَوْفٍ فِي الْجَنَّةِ، وَسَعْدٌ فِي الْجَنَّةِ، وَسَعِيدٌ فِي الْجَنَّةِ، وَأَبُو عُبَيْدَةَ بْنُ الْجَرَّاحِ فِي الْجَنَّةِ

“Abu Bakr is in Paradise, Umar is in Paradise, Uthman is in Paradise, Ali is in Paradise, Talhah is in Paradise, al-Zubayr is in Paradise, Abd al-Rahman ibn Awf is in Paradise, Sa'd is in Paradise, Sa'id is in Paradise, and Abu Ubaydah ibn al-Jarrah is in Paradise.”

JAMI' AT-TIRMIDHI 3747; ALSO SUNAN ABI DAWUD 4649 FROM SA'ID IBN ZAYD. GRADED SAHIH BY AL-ALBANI.

The second name

The Prophet ﷺ said Abu Bakr and then he said Umar, and the Companions, when they ranked the people after the Prophet ﷺ, did the same. The two names went together in his lifetime and have gone together ever since. He would go out with the two of them, and come back with the two of them, and he said of them, in a hadith we will meet in Part Six, that he hoped to be raised with them. When a believer greets the Prophet ﷺ at his grave in Madinah he greets, a step to the right, the two men who lie beside him, and the second of them is Umar.

The Quran describes them without naming them.

وَٱلسَّٰبِقُونَ ٱلْأَوَّلُونَ مِنَ ٱلْمُهَٰجِرِينَ وَٱلْأَنصَارِ وَٱلَّذِينَ ٱتَّبَعُوهُم بِإِحْسَٰنٍ رَّضِيَ ٱللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ وَرَضُوا۟ عَنْهُ وَأَعَدَّ لَهُمْ جَنَّٰتٍ تَجْرِى تَحْتَهَا ٱلْأَنْهَٰرُ خَٰلِدِينَ فِيهَآ أَبَدًا ۚ ذَٰلِكَ ٱلْفَوْزُ ٱلْعَظِيمُ

"And the first forerunners [in the faith] among the Muhajireen and the Ansar and those who followed them with good conduct - Allah is pleased with them and they are pleased with Him, and He has prepared for them gardens beneath which rivers flow, wherein they will abide forever. That is the great attainment."

SURAH AT-TAWBAH 9:100

The first forerunners. Umar was not among the very first; nine of the ten came to Islam before him. But the Prophet ﷺ had asked Allah for him by name, and when he came, Ibn Mas'ud said, the Muslims had been weak and were weak no longer. He was a forerunner in the sense that matters: he ran ahead of everyone once he began to run.

Why a series

A promise of Paradise from the mouth of the Prophet ﷺ is the highest thing that can be said about a human being, and it was said about these ten. Yet most of us know them as a list. A list cannot be followed. A man can. So this series takes them one at a time, short enough to be read in a few sittings and built so that it can be returned to, and each book ends with a forty-day plan, because a companion is someone you walk beside for a while, until some of his way of walking becomes yours.

Why Umar second

Because the Prophet ﷺ named him second, and because he is the companion that the first book could not give you. Abu Bakr teaches the believer who is ready to say yes. Umar teaches the believer who said no first, and who carries a strength that could go either way. Most of us are more like Umar than we would like to admit: we have a history before the truth reached us, a temper or a pride or a habit that we are not sure the truth can use, and a fear that the price of doing right is more than we can pay. He had all of that, and Allah

made him the man who stood for justice when no one else dared. That is why he is second, and why he is next.

◆

Ten names, and the second of them is the man who fought the truth for six years and then carried it further than anyone.

02

CHAPTER TWO

Who He Was Before

Umar ibn al-Khattab ibn Nufayl was born in Makkah about thirteen years after the Year of the Elephant, which makes him about thirteen years younger than the Prophet ﷺ. He belonged to the clan of Adi ibn Ka'b, a branch of Quraysh that was not among the wealthiest but held an office that tells you what its men were like: when Quraysh had a dispute with another tribe, or needed to send someone to speak for them, they sent a man of Adi. Before Islam, that man was Umar.

A hard beginning

His father, al-Khattab, was a hard man. Umar himself remembered him without affection.