

ومن كلام له (عليه السلام) لابنه محمد بن الحنفية لما أعطاه الراية يوم الجمل

Delivered in the Battle of Jamal when Amīr al-mu'minīn gave the standard to his son Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥanafiyyah [1]

تَزُولُ الْجِبَالُ وَلَا تَزُلُّ! عَضَّ عَلِيٌّ نَاجِذَكَ، أَعْرَى اللَّهُ جُمُوعَتَكَ، تَدُ فِي الْأَرْضِ قَدَمَكَ، أَرْمِ بِبَصْرِكَ أَقْصَى الْقَوْمِ، وَغُضَّ بَصْرَكَ،
واعلم أن النصر من عند الله سبحانه.

Mountains [2] may move from their position but you should not move from yours. Grit your teeth. Lend to Allāh your head (in fighting for Allāh, give yourself to Allāh). Plant your feet firmly on the ground. Have your eye on the remotest foe and close your eyes (to their numerical majority). And keep sure that succour is but from Allāh, the Glorified.

Footnote :

[1] Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥanafiyyah was Amīr al-mu'minīn's son but called Ibn Ḥanafiyyah after his mother. His mother's name was Khawlah bint Ja'far. She was know as Ḥanafiyyah after her tribe Banu Ḥanifah. When people of Yamāmah were declared apostates for refusing to pay zakat (religious tax) and were killed and their women-folk were brought to Medina as slave girls, this lady also came to Medina with them. When her tribesmen came to know it they approached Amīr al-mu'minīn and requested him to save her from the blemish of slavery and protect her family honour and prestige. Consequently, Amīr al-mu'minīn set her free after purchasing and married here whereafter Muḥammad was born.

Most historians have written his kuniya as Abu'l-Qasim. Thus, the author of al-Isti'āb (vol. 3, pp. 1366, 1367—1368, 1370, 1371—1372) has narrated the opinion of Abu Rashid ibn Hafs az-Zuhri that from among the sons of the companions (of the Prophet) he came across four individuals everyone of whom was named Muḥammad and given kuniya Abu'l-Qasim, namely (1) Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥanafiyyah, (2) Muḥammad ibn Abu Bakr (3) Muḥammad ibn Ṭalḥah and (4) Muḥammad ibn Sa'd. After this he writes that Muḥammad ibn Ṭalḥah's name and kuniya was given by the Prophet. al-Waqidi writes that the name and kuniya of Muḥammad ibn Abu Bakr was suggested by 'Ā'ishah. Apparently the Holy Prophet's giving the name of Muḥammad ibn Ṭalḥah seems incorrect since from some traditions it appears that the Prophet had reserved it for a son of Amīr al-mu'minīn and he was Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥanafiyyah.

As regards his kuniya it is said that the Prophet had particularised it and that he had told `Ali that a son would be born to you after me and I have given him my name and kuniya and after that it is not permissible for anyone in my people to have this name and kuniya together.

With this opinion before us how can it be correct that the Prophet had given this very name and kuniya to anyone else since particularisation means that no one else would share it. Moreover, some people have recorded the kuniya of Ibn Ṭalḥah as Abu Sulayman instead of Abu'l-Qasim and this further confirms our view point. Similarly, if the kuniya of Muḥammad ibn Abu Bakr was on the ground that his son's name was Qasim who was among the theologians of Medina, then what is the sense in `Ā'ishah having suggested it. If she had suggested it along with the name how could Muḥammad ibn Abu Bakr tolerate it later on since having been brought up under the care of Amīr al-mu'minīn the Prophet's saying could not remain concealed from him. Moreover, most people have recorded his kuniya as Abu `Abd ar-Raḥmān, which weakens the view of Abu Rashid.

Let alone these people's kuniya being Abu'l-Qasim, even for Ibn al-Ḥanafīyah this kuniya is not proved. Although Ibn Khallikān (in Wafayāt al-a'yān, vol. 4, p. 170) has taken that son of Amīr al-mu'minīn for whom the Prophet had particularised this kuniya to be Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥanafīyah, yet al-`Allāmah al-Māmagāni (in Tanqih al-maqāl, vo1. 3, Part 1, p. 112) writes:

In applying this tradition to Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥanafīyah, Ibn Khallikān has got into confusion, because the son of Amīr al-mu'minīn whom the Prophet's name and kuniya together have been gifted by the Prophet, and which is not permissible to be given to any one else, is to the awaited last Imām (may our lives be his ransom), and not to Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥanafīyah, nor is the kuniya Abu'l-Qasim established for him, rather some of the Sunnis being ignorant of the real intention of the Prophet, have taken to mean Ibn al-Ḥanafīyah.

However, Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥanafīyah was prominent in righteousness and piety, sublime in renunciation and worship, lofty in knowledge and achievements and heir of his father in bravery. His performance in the battles of Jamal and Ṣiffīn had created such impression among the Arabs that even warriors of consequence trembled at his name. Amīr al-mu'minīn too was proud of his courage and valour, and always placed him forward in encounters. ash-Shaykh al-Bahā'i has written in al-Kashkul that `Ali ibn Abi Talib kept him abreast in the battles and did not allow Ḥasan and Ḥusayn to go ahead, and used to say, "He is my son while these two are sons of the Prophet of Allāh." When a Khārijite said to Ibn al-Ḥanafīyah that

`Ali thrust him into the flames of war but saved away Ḥasan and Ḥusayn he replied that he himself was like the right hand and Ḥasan and Ḥusayn like `Ali's two eyes and that `Ali protected his eyes with his right hand. But al-`Allāmah al-Māmagāni has written in Tanqih al-maqāl that this was not the reply of Ibn al-Ḥanafiyyah but of Amīr al-mu'minīn himself. When during the battle of Ṣiffīn Muḥammad mentioned this matter to Amīr al-mu'minīn in complaining tone he replied, "You are my right hand whereas they are my eyes, and the hand should protect the eyes."

Apparently it seems that first Amīr al-mu'minīn must have given this reply and thereafter someone might have mentioned it to Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥanafiyyah and he must have repeated the same reply as there could be no more eloquent reply than this one and its eloquence confirms the view that it was originally the outcome of the eloquent tongue of Amīr al-mu'minīn and was later appropriated by Muḥammad al-Ḥanafiyyah. Consequently, both these views can be held to be correct and there is no incongruity between them. However, he was born in the reign of the second Caliph and died in the reign of `Abd al-Malik ibn Marwān at the age of sixty-five years. Some writers have recorded the year of his death as 80 A.H.61 and others as 81 A.H. There is a difference about the place of his death as well. Some have put it as Medina, some Aylah and some Ta'if.

[2] When in the Battle of Jamal Amīr al-mu'minīn sent Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥanafiyyah to the battle-field, he told him that he should fix himself before the enemy like the mountain of determination and resoluteness so that the onslaught of the army should not be able to displace him, and should charge the enemy with closed teeth because by pressing teeth over the teeth tension occurs in the nerves of the skull as a result of which the stroke of the sword goes amiss, as he said at another place also viz. "Press together the teeth. It sends amiss the edge of the sword." Then he says, "My child, lend your head to Allāh in order that you may be able to achieve eternal life in place of this one, because for a lent article there is the right to get it back. Therefore, you should fight being heedless of your life, otherwise also if your mind clings to life you will hesitate to advance towards deathly encounters and that would tell upon your reputation of bravery. Look, don't let your steps falter because the enemy is emboldened at the faltering of steps, and faltering steps fastens the feet of the enemy. Keep the last lines of the enemy as your aim so that the enemy may be overawed with loftiness of your intentions and you may feel ease in tearing through their lives, and their movement should also not remain concealed from you. Look, do not pay heed to their superiority in numbers, otherwise your valour and courage would suffer." This sentence can also mean that one should not wide open the eyes to be dazzled by the shining of weapons, and

the enemy may make an attack by taking advantage of the situation. Also, always bear it in mind that victory is from Allāh. “If Allāh helps you no one can overpower you.” Therefore, instead of relying on material means seek His support and succour.

(Remember O’ ye Believers!) If Allāh helpeth you, none shall over-come you . . .
(Qur’ān, 3:159)