Illuminating the Darkness

The Virtues of Blacks and Abyssinians

_al-Allāmah_ Abu 'l-Faraj Ibn al-Jawzī (d. 597/1200)
Illuminating the Darkness

The Virtues of Blacks and Abyssinians

al-'Allamah Abu 'l-Faraj Ibn al-Jawzi (d. 597/1200)

DAR AL-ARQAM
"The house of al-Arqam is the house of Islām"

Al-Ḥākim (d. 403h.) in al-Mustadrak ‘ala al-Ṣaḥiḥayn (6185)
ILLUMINATING THE DARKNESS

THE VIRTUES OF
BLACKS AND ABYSSINIANS

Al-‘Allamah Abu 'l-Faraj Ibn al-Jawzi (d. 597/1200)
Contents

13
Translator's Note

19
Author's Introduction

23
In mention of the origin of black people

27
The cause of their darkness in colour

29
In mention of ‘Īsā ibn Maryam bringing Ḥām ibn Nūh back to life

31
In mention of the kingdoms of black people and their vastness

33
In mention of the virtues ingrained in black people
Virtues specific to things of black colour amongst animals, plants and stones

In proclamation that the white person has no superiority over the black, and that superiority lies in piety

In mention of those from amongst the Companions who emigrated to Abyssinia and their number

The request of the Quraysh to al-Najashi to hand over the Companions of the Prophet to them

In mention of that which the Prophet wrote to al-Najashi inviting him to Islam, and of his conversion

In mention of the coming of the Abyssinians to the Messenger of Allah and their war game in the masjid whilst the Prophet watched
In mention of words in the Qur'an which conform with the Abyssinian language

In mention of what the Messenger of Allāh Ḥ 删除 heard of the Abyssinian language and how he was impressed

In mention of the Abyssinians being singled out for the call to the prayer

Those of whom it has been said that they were Prophets from amongst black people

In mention of the major kings of the Habash

In mention of the esteemed blacks amongst the Companions

In mention of the noble black women from the female Companions

In mention of the illustrious scholars from amongst the black people
في ذكر شعرائهم و من تمثل منهم بشعر
In mention of their poets and those amongst them who recited some poetry to express a meaning

في ذكر طائفة من فئتها السوداني والسودانيات وأذكيائهم وكرمائها
In mention of a group of discerning, intelligent and generous black men and women

في ذكر المتعبدين منهم والهاد
In mention of the worshippers and ascetics amongst the black people

في ذكر المتعبدات من السودانيات فمن المعروفات الأشقاء
In mention of the worshippers from amongst the women of the black people

في ذكر من كان يؤثر الجذور السود على البيض ومن كان يعشقهن ومن مات من عشقهن
In mention of those who preferred black bondmaidens to white ones, those who loved them, and those who died due to their love

في ذكر أبناء الحبشيات من قريش
In mention of the sons of Habashi women from Quraysh

في مواضع واصايا
In exhortation and counsel

فيه أذكار و تسبيحات
Words of remembrance and glorification of Allâh
Supplications
Before you is a classical work from the twelfth century which sets out to display the equality of races within Islam. The aim of translating and publishing this book is to display the falsity of certain claims against Islam which have resurfaced recently, and which have been amplified due to social media.

About the author Ibn al-Jawzī [extracts from Siyar A'lam al-Nubalā'] by al-Dhahabi]:

He is the shaykh, the imām, the ‘allāmah, the ḥāfīz, the mufassir, shaykh al-Islām, the pride of Baghdād: Jamal al-Dīn Abu al-Faraj ʿAbd al-Rahman ibn ‘Ali ibn Muḥammad ibn ‘Ali ibn ʿUbaydullāh ibn ʿAbdullāh ibn Ḥammād ibn Muḥammad ibn Ḥammād ibn Jaʿfar ibn ʿAbdullāh ibn al-Qāsim ibn al-Nāḍr ibn al-Qāsim ibn Muḥammad ibn ʿAbdullāh ibn al-Faqīh al-Qāsim ibn Muḥammad ibn Khalīfāt Rasūlullāh, Abī Bakr al-Siddīqī, al-Qurashī, al-Taymī, al-Bakrī, al-Baghdādī, al-Ḥanbālī, the illustrious preacher and prolific author.

He was born during the year 510 or 509 [Hijri] (corresponding to 1116 or 1115), and he first took knowledge during the year 516.

He learned the knowledge of ḥadīth mainly from Ibn Nāṣir, the knowledge of Qurān and literature from the son of al-Khayyāt and Ibn al-Jawālīqī, and the knowledge of fiqh from many scholars.

1 Volume 21, pp. 365-384.
Tanwiru ‘l-Ghabashi fi Faḍli ‘s-Sūdānī wa ‘l-Ḥabashi

He was the master of preaching and had the throne in exhortations; he would utter eloquent words and astonishing prose naturally, he would elaborate and flabbergast the minds. There was no one like him that preceded him in such skills nor will there be one comparable after him. He was the carrier of the flag of exhortation, the master of its sciences, and he had a pleasant look, good voice with a strong influence upon people. His character was good amongst the people, and he was an ocean in tafsīr, a scholar in siyar and history. He was known for his knowledge in hadīth and its sciences, and as a faqīh with excellent knowledge in matters of consensus and difference of opinion. He made good contributions in the field of medicine, and he was highly intellectual, with an excellent memory and propensity for prompt recallment.

His father died when he was three years old and his paternal aunt raised him. His relatives were in the business of copper; thus, it could be possible that he was referred to as ‘Abd al-Rahmān ibn ʿAlī al-Ṣaffār (i.e. in reference to the colour of copper). After he grew up, his aunt sent him to Ibn Nāṣir from whom he heard hadīth. When he was a teenager, he admired preaching, so he delivered sermons whilst he was still a young boy and he became highly esteemed and an example for others preachers to follow until he became famous.

He authored many books in different fields, such as al-Mughni in tafsīr, which he later abridged into four volumes and titled Zād al-Masīr; he also authored Tadhkīrat al-Arib, al-Wujūh wa al-Naẓāʾīr, Funūn al-Afnān, Jāmiʿ al-Masānid, al-Ḥadāʾiq, and many others.

He was famous and well known; renowned scholars, kings, rulers, and some of the Caliphs would attend his lectures, and people would come in their thousands to hear them.

His grandson, Abu al-Muẓaffar said, “I heard my grandfather say on the minbar, ‘I wrote with my hands two thousand books, and one hundred thousand people repented upon my hands, and twenty thousand embraced Islam upon them.’ He would complete the Qurʾān once each week.”

He also said, “He was ascetic in his life; sufficing with the bare minimum;
and it was said about him that he never made a joke with anyone or played with a young boy, or ate from a source that he was not certain of it being lawful.”

Abu ‘Abdullāh ibn al-Dubaythī said in his Tārikh, “Our shaykh Jamāl al-Dīn authored many works within the branches of the Islamic sciences, such as tafsīr, fiqh, hadīth, history and other than them. He had prowess in the knowledge of hadīth and its sciences, differentiating the authentic from the weak. He was the best of people in speech and eloquence. He learned fiqh from al-Dinawārī and preaching from Abī Qāsim al-‘Alawī. He was blessed in his life and knowledge.”

Al-Muwaffaq ‘Abd al-Latīf said, “Ibn al-Jawzī was handsome, pleasant-natured, with a melodious voice and he was good company. A hundred thousand would attend his assemblies, and [sometimes] more than that. He would not waste anything from his time, writing four booklets a day. He had a share in every branch of knowledge, however in tafsīr he was from the most remarkable, in hadīth he was a hāfīz, and his grasp of history was vast. He was competent in fiqh, and he had an amazing gift for preaching. In medicine he had a book named al-Luqāt.”

He also said, “He had a lot of mistakes within his works, for he would finish his books and not review them (as he authored a vast number of works).”

Al-Dhahabī commented upon this, “This is the case, and his mistakes are due to leaving off revision and taking from manuscripts [with errors in them,] for he authored such an amount that doing such revision would have required more than a second life.”

He fell ill for five days and subsequently passed away. This occurred between the two night prayers (i.e. maghrib and ʿisha) on the thirteenth of Ramadan during the year 597 (1200), which was a Friday night. [End]

This book falls under the fāḍāʾil (virtues) genre of literature, wherein the author provides narrations he possesses regarding the virtues of a certain subject. It is important to note that not everything in the book is authentic, neither is it the case that the author necessarily views everything to be authentic, and we may not agree with everything herein. However, we have
translated his work as it is, and the author has provided the chain of transmission for every narration (through which their authenticity can be ascertained).

Note: The book has been translated completely unabridged except for one poem on page 285, which was difficult to render into English. The remainder of the narration wherein it is cited has been translated, and the Arabic text of the poem has been retained. The footnotes are mainly based upon the edition of the Arabic text edited by Marzūq ‘Alī Ibrāhīm. Any additions to the footnotes by the translator have been marked with [T], and additions of the editor have been marked with [E].
Illuminating the Darkness: The Virtues of Blacks and Abyssinians
In the name of Allah, the Most Merciful, the Most Beneficient, my Lord, I seek your assistance.

The Shaykh, the Imam, the ‘Alim, the Hafiz, Jamal al-Din Abu al-Faraj ‘Abd al-Rahman ibn ‘Ali ibn Muhammad al-Jawzi said:

Praise be to Allah Who has favoured man over the rest of creation, and among them He has favoured the people of piety and faith. He then made the heart the point of His concern and not the physical figure. He looks to the serenity of the inner (i.e. sincerity), and not to the purity of one’s colour. He brought about differences amongst the human race; amongst them are those who are like angels and those who are like devils. He brings forth the living from the dead, and thus Ibrahim, al-Khalil emerged from Azar, the disbeliever. Likewise, He brings forth the dead from the living, thus Kan‘an emerged from Nooh. In accordance with the decree of Allah, Abu Talib disbelieved and ‘Uthman accepted Islam, and Abu Lahab went astray and Bilal
Tanwīrū 'l-Ghabashi fī Faḍlī 's-Sūdānī wa 'l-Habashi

was the one authorised to perform the call to prayer. He causes some to perish and others to remain. He makes some to be content and others wretched. Every day He has a matter to bring forth.

أَحْمَدٌ - إِذْ أعْمَض وَصَانَ - عَدْدُ الأَورَاق والْأَغْصَانِ، وَأَقْرَرَ بِعُدْدَانِتِهِ إِفْرَارًا يَصِدَّ عَنْ بَرَحَانٍ، وَأِصْلَى عَلَى رَسُولِهِ مُحْمَّدٍ أَشْرَف مُخْلُوقٌ وَجَدْ وَكَانَ، وَعَلَى صَاحِبِهِ أَبِي بِكَر الصَّدِيقُ الَّذِي أَنْقَرَ بِنِصْرِهِ فِي الْغَرَّ وَأَعَانَهُ، وَعَلَى عِمْرُ الْفَارُوقِ المُشْهَدِدِ فِي الدُّنْيَا فَمَلَانَ، وَعَلَى النَّقِي النَّقِي عُمْمَانِ بِنْ عَفْقٍ، وَعَلَى عَلِيِّ بْنِ أَبِي طَالِبٍ مُقْدِمِ الْعَلَمَاءِ وَسَيْدِ الشَّجَاعَةِ، وَعَلَى عَمَّهُ النَّجَاسَ بْنِ عِبْدِ المَطْلُوبِ المُسْتَمِقِي بِشِيِّبَهُ، فَأَقْبِلَ السُّحُّ الْهَتَانِ، جَدٌ سِيْدَةٌ وَمُولِانُ الإِمَامِ المُسْتَضِيِّ بِأَمْرِ اللَّهِ أَيْمِرُ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ الَّذِي أَشْرَفَ بِولَاتِهِ الْزَّيْمَانِ، سَقِيَ زُرْعُ العَدْلِ مُيَاهُ الْفَضْلِ، فَالدَّنَّيْنَ فِي أَيَامِهِ النَّجَاسِ، فَذَكَرَهُ فِي مَسَامِ مَشَامِ الصَّالِحِينَ أَرَكَى مِنْ رِيحٍ وَرَيْحَانٍ، وَقُلُوبُهُمْ مَعْلَتَةَ يَحْبِهِ وَحَبُّ الْخَلْقِ لِحَبِّ الْخَلْقِ عَنَوانٌ، قَرِنَ اللَّهُ نَعْمَةَ دُنْيَاهُ بِبَعْضَةِ أَخْرَاه، وَإِنَّ الدُّنْيَا الأخَرَ لِهِيُ الْخَيْوَانٍ، وَإِسْتَجَابَ فِي أَيَامِهِ دُعَاءَ كُلْ ذَا عَقِيبَةٌ طَعِمَ الرِّحْمَانِ.

I praise Him frequently like the leaves and twigs, for He protects and safeguards us. I affirm His oneness, and this is an affirmation emanating from clear proof. I send salāh upon His messenger Muḥammad, the most noble of creation to be found or exist, and upon his companion Abī Bakr al-Ṣiddīq who alone supported him in the cave and aided him. I also send it upon ‘Umar al-Fārūq who was firm in the religion and did not compromise in it, and upon ‘Uthmān ibn ‘Affān, the pious and the pure. I send it upon ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭalīb, the foremost of the scholars and the leader of the brave, and upon his uncle al-‘Abbās ibn ‘Abd al-Muṭṭalib, who was used as a means to Allāh for rain, and upon this intercession rain started to fall heavily, the grandfather of our Caliph, al-Mustadī’ Bi Amrillah— the Commander of the Faithful whose rulership enlightened the time and drank from the fountain of justice and virtue; life under his authority was a garden and the scent of
his name among the pious smells better than basil and aroma; their hearts attached to him, and such love is a sign of Allâh’s love to him; Allâh linked the pleasures of this life to the pleasures of his hereafter, but the hereafter is truly the real life; during his time, the prayers of the people were answered and they tasted from the plate of his kindness.

To proceed: I bore witness to a group of eminent Habash (Abyssinian) who were disheartened due to the darkness of their skin colour. I thus clarified to them that the matter upon which consideration is placed is good deeds rather than one’s appearance, and I wrote this book for them to mention the virtue of many from amongst the Abyssinian and black people. I have divided it into twenty-eight chapters, and with Allâh aid is sought.
In mention of the origin of black people

Sa‘īd ibn al-Musayyib reported on the authority of Abū Hurayrah that the Prophet ﷺ said, “Nūḥ bore three sons: Sām, Ḥām and Yāfīth. As for Sām, he is the father of the Arabs, the Persians and the Byzantines. As for Yāfīth, he is the father of Yājūj and Mājūj. As for Ḥām, he is the father of the black-skinned people.”

2 [T] There is a section before this wherein the author lists the chapters of the book. This has been omitted as they are listed in the contents page.

3 A similar report was reported by al-Bazzār in his Musnad, Ibn Abī Ḥātim and Ibn Mardawīh in al-Taṣfīr, and al-Qaṭṭāb al-Baghdādī in Thānī al-Taḥkīṣ. It was also mentioned by al-Suyūṭī in al-Azhūr al-‘Urūsh. [T] Ibn Ḥajar stated in Fath al-Bārī that it was reported by Ibn Abī Ḥātim on the authority of Abu Hurayrah as marfu, however there is weakness in its isnād (16/222).
Al-Ḥasan al-Ḥaṣrī reported upon the authority of Samrah that the Prophet said, "The sons of Nūh were Sām, Ḥām and Yāfīth. Sām is the father of the Arabs, Ḥām is the father of the Zanj and Yāfīth is the father of the Byzantines."⁴

Wahb ibn Mūnabbih said, "Sām is the father of the Arabs, the Persians, and Byzantines. Ḥām is the father of black people, Yāfīth is the father of the Turks and the father of Gog and Magog—who are related to the Turks.

The author said: The sons of Ḥām are: Kūsh, Nīras, Maw‘aghi and Buwān. Kūsh bore a son named Namrūd—the first of the Namāridah [kings], who ruled three hundred years after the flood. It was during his time that the earth was divided up, and so subsequently the people began to separate

---

⁴ This was mentioned by al-Suyūṭī in Aṣbāḥ al-‘Uruš (3/a) and he stated after it, "It was reported by al-Tirmidhī—who graded it as ḍaḥān, and Ibn Jarir, Ibn al-Mundhir, Ibn Abī Ḥātim and Ibn Mardawīh in their tafsīrs, and al-Ḥākim in al-Mustadrak—who graded it as ṣaḥīḥ."
and form into different tribes. The Namrūd whom encountered Ibrāhīm was from amongst his sons. Those whom descended from Nīras were the Turks and the Khazr. Those whom descended from Maw'āgh were Gog and Magog. Those whom descended from Buwān were al-Ṣaqqālibah, the Nubians, the Abyssinians, the people of Hind and Sind. And when the earth had been divided by the descendants of Nūh, Ḥām’s children settled in the direction of the south and westerly winds, thus Allāh put into their complexion darkness and a little whiteness, and they occupied the majority of the earth.
Chapter Two

The cause of their darkness in colour

The author said: The apparent, in terms of their skin colour is that there is no obvious cause for it being so, except that which we have reported in regards to the descendants of Nūḥ dividing [and spreading] amongst the earth after his death. The person who divided the earth amongst them was Qālāgh ibn ‘Abbīr. The descendants of Šām settled in the centre of the earth, and so they possessed darkness and whiteness. The descendants of Yāfīth settled in the direction of the north and the easterly winds, and so they possessed redness and fairness. The descendants of Ḥām settled in the direction of the south and westerly winds and so there was an alteration in their colour.

As for that which has been narrated in relation to Nūḥ that his ‘awrāh (pri-
vate parts) showed and he did not cover it and so he became black, this is something not established and evidently not *sahih* (authentic).
In mention of 'Isa ibn Maryam bringing Ḥām ibn Nūḥ back to life

Ibn Shihāb reported that it was requested from 'Isa ibn Maryam that he bring Ḥām ibn Nūḥ back to life. ‘Isa replied, “Show me his grave,” and so they showed him. He stated, “O Ḥām ibn Nūḥ, come back to life by the permission of Allāh,” however he did not come out. He stated this again and Ḥām came forth, and his hair and beard were white. ‘Isa asked, “What
is this whiteness?” He replied, “I heard the first call and thought that it was [the call] from Allah for the reckoning, and so my hair turned white from fright. Then I heard the second call and knew that it was from the dunyā (worldly existence), and so I exited.” He asked, “How long since you [tasted] death?” He replied, “For four thousand years the agony of death has not left me.”

The author stated: This is how it is narrated in this report, however it has also been reported to us through a different route on the authority of Mu‘āwiyah ibn Qurrah that the one whom ‘Isā brought back to life was Sām ibn Nūḥ. And Allāh knows best.

---

5 Reported by Ibn Abī al-Dunyā in Man ‘Asha ba‘da al-Maut (75-76), and it was mentioned by al-Suyūṭī in al-Durr al-Manthūr (2/216). The narrator in its isnād (chain of narration) named Ibn Lahiyah is considered to be da‘if (weak).
Chapter Four

In mention of the kingdoms of black people and their vastness

Al-Asma‘î reported upon the authority of al-Namr ibn Hilâl that he said, “The earth consists of twenty-four thousand farsaks. From these, twelve thousand belong to the blacks, eight thousand to the Romans, three thousand to the Persians, and one thousand to the Arabs.”
Abū al-Husayn Ahmad ibn Ja'far al-Munadī said, “It reached us that the sea known as Buntas behind Constantinople flows from the Caspian Sea and that the width of its mouth is six miles. The first province of the world commences from the East, stretching from the remotest parts of China to its southern border wherein the city of its emperor is located. Then it passes through the South of Hind and the land of al-Sind, then it goes through the Arabian Peninsula and the land of Yemen wherein there are the famous cities such as Azfār, ‘Omān, Ḥadramawt, ‘Aden, Ṣanʿā’, Tabāla, and Jurash. Then the province passes over the Red Sea and extends into Abyssinia and it passes through the Nile of Egypt. Within it is the city of the Abyssinian king named Jarma, and also the Nubian city of Danqalah. Then the province traverses the Maghrib to the south of the land of the Berbers, and it ends at the Western Sea.”

Al-A‘mash reported upon the authority of Mujāhid that he said, “A quarter of those who do not wear clothing from amongst the blacks are like the rest of the people (i.e. in number).”
In mention of the virtues ingrained in black people

From them: Strength in body and heart—of which bravery bears fruit. There is mention of the Abyssinians’ abundant generosity, good manners, rareness in offense, baring of teeth in smiles, excellent eloquence, ease in expression, and charm in speech.

Ishaq ibn Ibrāhīm ibn Mūsili said that Shabib ibn Shaybah stated that Khalid ibn Ṣafwān entered upon Abī al-'Abbās al-Saffāh and said, “O Commander of the Faithful, you have prohibited yourself from finding pleasure
in female slaves. Some are dark-lipped and dark-skinned and some are yellow with large buttocks, and those born in Madīnah, Ta'if and Yamāmah are sweet talkers and quick witted.
From animals:

Blackness of the eyes: The eye is constructed of ten parts of which there are seven layers and three are wet, and its layers are reminiscent of the peeling of an onion. From them the place of the vision is black (i.e. the pupil), which displays the prestige of the colour as it has been selected for this prestigious organ. Furthermore, the eyelashes were made black so as to absorb light.
From these things is the liver: Which metabolises food and directs it to the body through the hollow vein which grows in a crooked manner. It directs the liquid to the kidneys and the foam of bile to the gallbladder, and the black deposit is directed to the spleen. The liver has a vein within which food enters that is named as *al-bāb* (the door) and another vein which carries food from it to the other organs that is named as *al-ajwāf* (the hollow). The liver provides the organs with the substance with which their health is sustained and they are quenched. Bearing in mind this prestige, it is black, and this displays the noble nature of this colour, for it was selected as the colour for this prestigious organ.

From them is the heart: It is the most prestigious part of the body and the black part found within its middle—which is like a blood clot—is the similarity in importance to the brain within the head.

[7] Al-Nu‘mān ibn Bashīr reported, “I heard the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ state, “In the body there is a morsel of flesh: If it is sound, the entire body shall be...”
sound, and if it is corrupt then the entire body shall be corrupt. This is non other than the heart.” This has been reported by al-Bukhārī and Muslim.

From them is the hair: If it is dark, it denotes human beauty, and when it becomes white, this beauty abates.

Abū Nahik al-Azdi reported that ‘Amr ibn Akhtab stated, “The Messenger of Allah sought water, so I brought for him a vessel within which was a hair, and I took it out and gave it to him. He said, ‘O Allah beautify it.’”

Abū Nahik stated, “I came across [Amr] when he was ninety-three years old, and there was no hint of whiteness upon his head or beard.”

6 Al-Hāfiz Ibn Hajar said in al-İsâbah (4/78), “This was reported by al-Tirmidhī in al-Sunan and al-Shamā’il, and Ibn Hibbān and al-Ḥakim—who both graded it as saḥīḥ, and it was also reported by Muslim.”

7 In al-İsâbah it states “ninety-four”. In al-Musnad (22932) it also states that he was ninety-four: (وهو ابن أربع وتسعين ليس في ليه شعرة بيضاء).
We have reported upon the authority of Abū Qatādah that the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ supplicated for him, “O Allāh, bless him in his hair and body.”

He died when he was seventy but it was as if he was fifteen years of age. The Arabs still weep over the departure of youth and the arrival of white hair.

‘Amr ibn al-Walid said:

Youth packed and left, once it saw the light of my grey hair.
I wish I could replace that which has arrived, with what has gone away.
May the age of youth never cease, for it is the age of strength and wonders.
Youth was my beloved one, so how can I come closer to my beloved?”

Da’bal said:

8 Al-Hāfiz stated in al-Isābah (4/128), “This was reported by al-Wāqidī from the route of Yahyā ibn ‘Abdullāh from the route of Abī Qatādah.”
9 It has been said that his age was seventy-two. His biography is in al-Isābah (4/158-159).
O Salma, do not be surprised from a man, who cried once grey hair landed on his head,

He used to laugh when he was young, but once the youth had gone he rarely laughed,

Where is youthfulness and in which direction it went, and where to find it, nay it is gone and never to come back.

Abū Tammām said:

Blame not who cries over his lost youthfulness except if he does not cry blood over it,

We never appreciate it well enough until after we grow old and age with grey hair,

It is like the sun; its merit does not manifest until after darkness covers the earth,

Many things we take for granted, and only become fond of once they no longer exist.

Al-Muṭanabbī said:

Youth brought forth energy into my soul, while old age showed me such energy in others.

[10] أخبرنا أبو منصور الفثاز قال أنا أحمد بن علي بن ثابت قال أنا الحسن بن
Abū Talib al-Da‘bali said, “Ali ibn al-Jaham composed the following for us:

When she saw the grey hear invading my head, she rejected me in a polite manner.
I keep asking for her love humbly, but my grey hair kept gesturing to say not to accept me.”

Zāhir reported that Abū Bakr al-Ṣanwabī composed:

She showed me nothing but a grumpy and frowning face, which prompted the tears in my eyes.
She saw me comb my ivory like hair with an ivory comb, but she still liked ebony like hair (i.e. youth).

Al-Rādī composed:

The black hair attracts young women, but white hair entices the en-
mity of fair women,
Enjoy their pampering while you are young, for they will stop once you are old.

And he also composed:

Who to intercede for me with her when she finds old age is my sin, and grey hair is a sin which may not be forgiven.
The whiteness of my hair was enough to remove all traces of love from her heart, Indeed, it is not always a pleasure to see brightness (i.e. white hair) break the darkness (i.e. black hair).

Mihyar composed:

After we came close and stood together, I was about to leave, She noticed a few grey hairs hiding in my head, so her face changed in disapproval, She exclaimed, you are an old man but I said, I am just middle aged,
so she said, this is a worrying sign and an alert,
Neither my heart nor my eyes like to see you, how could a black hair
like its opposite!

And he also composed:

I reminded her of our pledge but she said I forgot as being away
makes one forget.
And your hair seems to have changed, which replaced my affability
with aversion.
[I replied] it is just grey hair but do you not know that dawn will
follow night.

The author said: Arabs at that time would prefer the lips of women to be
nearly black, as it would make them desire to kiss them.

Dhū al-Rummah said:

A mouth with lips that are black mixed with red, and a glowing outer tooth.
The author stated: Amongst plants there are many such things but [we do not wish] to lengthen their mention:

From them is al-Shûniz: It has been named as black seed. It resolves the cold wind, prevents [the build up of] phlegm, clears the chest of wet and sticky substances, removes warts and vitiligo, exterminates worms and regulates the menses, and is mixed with honey and hot water to treat bladder and kidney stones. It dries up feverish phlegm and melancholy (black bile) and removes vermin with its smoke.

Abû al-Rahmân reported upon the authority of Abû Hurayrah that the Prophet said, “There is healing within the black seed for all diseases except al-sâm.” Al-Zuhrhî stated, “Al-sâm refers to death, and black seed refers to al-shûniz.” This was reported in the two Sahîhs [of al-Bukhârî and Muslim.]
From them is the fruit of *arāk*:

> قال الأصمَّعي: النضيج من نَّمَر الأَراَك هُوَ الكباث، وأسوده أشد نضجاً.

Al-Asma‘i said, “The ripe fruits from the *arāk* are called *al-kabāth* and the blackest of them are the most ripe.”

> ومنَّهَا: الأَهَبَل: وَهُوَ نَّمَر العَرَع الْجَبَلِي مخترِاهُ الأَسْوَد، ينفع من القرُون العفنة، والصد، وأورام الأعصاب.

From them is the savin: This refers to the fruit of the mountain juniper plant, of which the best ones are the black. It is beneficial for septic injuries, blocked fallopian tubes and for swelling of the nerves.

> ومنَّهَا: الأَحْلِيلُجِ الأَسْوَد: فَإِنَّهُ يسِهل السُؤَادْاء، وينفِّع البلغم من المعدة، وينفع الجذام.

From them is the black *iḥlaj*: This relieves blackheads and dries the phlegm within the stomach and it is beneficial for leprosy.

---

10 Reported by Imam Ahmad in *al-Musnad* (3/326). It is also found in *Saḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* and *Saḥīḥ Muslim*.

11 A tree which grows in Hind, Kābul and China.
From them is the plantago seed: The best type is the black one, and it abates anxiety and high temperature.

From them is ebony: It dissipates bladder stones and reduces the white covering which occurs in the eye and cataracts when a small quantity of it is crushed with a small amount of sugar and applied to the eye repeatedly, and its colour is pleasant.

From stones: The black stone [of the Ka'bah].

Qatadah reported on the authority of Anas that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, “The black stone is from the stones of Paradise.”

---

12 Reported by al-Fākhrī in Akhbār Makkah (1/84) and al-Bazzār in Kashf al-Astār (2/23). Al-Haytham mentioned it in al-Majma’ (3/243) and said, “It was reported by al-Bazzār and al-Ṭabarānī in al-Awsat, and there is a narrator in its isnād named ‘Umar ibn Ibrāhīm al-‘Abdī. He was adjudged to be thiqa (trustworthy) by Ibn Ma‘īn and others, though he has some weakness.”
‘Ikrimah reported on the authority of Ibn ‘Abbâs that he said, “The black stone is the right hand of Allah. He who has not given the pledge of allegiance to the Messenger of Allah [directly], if he has touched this stone then he has given this pledge to Allah and His Messenger.”¹³

Sa‘îd ibn Jubayr reported upon the authority of Ibn ‘Abbâs, “The Messenger of Allah [saw] said, ‘This stone will resurrect during the Day of Judgement, upon it will be two eyes with which it will see, and a tongue with which it will utter and testify in favour of those who touched it with sincerity.’”¹⁴

---

¹³ This was reported by al-‘Tabârânî in al-Muṣ‘jam and Ibn Abî al-Fawâris in Tâsi‘ al-Tâkbûsat. It is da‘if (weak). [T] Ibn al-Jauzî said in al-‘Ilal al-Muṭandhibah (575/2), “This hadith is not sahih.”

¹⁴ Reported by Imam Ahmad in al-Musnad (1/291, 307 and 371), al-Azraqî in Akhbâr Makkah (1/324) in a mawqif form, Ibn Hibbân in his Sahih (6/10), and al-Ḥâkim in al-Mustadrak (1/457), who said, “This hadith is sahih and they (al-Bukhârî and Muslim) did not report it.”
The author said: The stone named maghānīs (magnet) is a black stone which has a unique and marvellous characteristic in that it pulls iron towards it without touching it.

And the stone which—through rubbing against it—reveals the inner secret of gold, and the stones which kindle fire are mainly of the Abyssinian colour. From the stones of which their benefits are widespread are the kohl stones named al-ithmid, and they are extremely black in colour.

Sa‘īd ibn Jubayr reported on authority of Ibn ‘Abbās that the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ said, “The best of your kohl is al-ithmid; it brightens the sight and strengthens the growth of eye lashes.”15

The author stated: If we were to continue listing such things, the matter...
would be prolonged, and we would have mentioned musk, for the Prophet ﷺ said, “It is the best of scents.”16 And we would have mentioned *al-ʿūd* and others, but what we have mentioned so far serves as an indication to give notice to that which has not been listed.

---

16 Reported by al-Ḥākim in *al-Mustadrak* on the authority of Abī Saʿīd al-Khudrī (361/1).
In proclamation that the white person has no superiority over the black, and that superiority lies in piety

Muhammad ibn Ka‘b reported upon the authority of Ibn ‘Abbās that the Messenger of Allah said, “He who would be happy by being the most honourable of people should have taqwā (God-consciousness) of Allah. [[17]]

[17] It is a part of the longer ḥadith reported by al-Ḥākim in al-Mustadrak, al-Ṭabarānī in al-Mu‘jam and al-'Uqayli in his book. It is considered to be defective due to the narrator Hishām ibn Ziyād. Al-Dhahabī said, “Hishām ibn Ziyād was said to be da‘īf by al-Bukhārī, al-Nasa‘ī, Ahmad ibn Ḥanbal and Ibn Ma‘īn.” He agreed with them and said, “The weakness of his narrations is clear.”

Chapter Seven
Saʿīd al-Maqbūrī reported on the authority of Abū Hurayrah, "A man came to the Prophet ﷺ and said, 'O Messenger of Allah, who is the most honourable amongst men?' He replied, 'The one with the most taqwā of Allah ﷺ.'"

One of the 'ulamāʾ (scholars) said to a noble, "Your nobility is in need of piety, but the one with piety is not in need of nobility."

---

18 Sahih Ibn Hibbān (2/20).
It is reported in the two *sahīḥs* on the authority of Abū Hurayrah that the Prophet ﷺ said, “There are two rewards for the righteous slave.”

There is another ḥadīth reported only by al-Bukhārī on the authority of Abū Musā that the Prophet ﷺ said, “The reward is doubled for the slave who performs his ‘ibādah (worship) to Allāh well and also carries out his duties to his master well by being dutiful, sincere and obedient.”
In mention of those from amongst the Companions who emigrated to Abyssinia and their number

The reason for the emigration of the emigrants to Abyssinia is that when the Messenger of Allah Ú孚 displayed Islam openly, the Polytheists became hostile to him and strove to cause harm to him and his Companions. However, Allah Ú孚 protected him through the means of his uncle Abi Ṭalib. [Then in light of this hostility] he ordered his Companions to set forth to the land of Abyssinia, and he stated to them, “There is a king therein who does not oppress the people within his land, so stay with him until Allah provides you with relief.”
[Of the Companions,] one group emigrated and one group went into hiding. Then the news reached those in Abyssinia that the Polytheists had softened towards the Messenger of Allah and so they returned to Makkah. However, when it came to their attention that they had resumed persecuting him they returned to Abyssinia and not one from amongst them entered Makkah except Ibn Mas'ūd who entered with protection. A large number from the Muslims went with them.  

19 See *Sirat Ibn Hishām* (1/321 onwards) and *Tabaqat Ibn Sa'd* (1/161-162).

In mention of the Muslims who were born in Abyssinia

Muḥammad ibn Abī Ḥudhayfah; Muḥammad ibn Ḥāṭib, Zaynab bint Abī Salamah; Mūsā, ‘Ā’ishah and Zaynab, the children of al-Ḥarīth ibn Khālid.
Chapter Nine

The request of the Quraysh to al-Najashi to hand over the Companions of the Prophet to them

Abī Bakr ibn ‘Abd al-Raḥmān ibn al-Ḥārith reported upon the authority
of Umm Salamah—the wife of the Prophet—and she said, “When we arrived in Abyssinia we were received by the best of hosts, al-Najashi. We were safe in our religion, we worshipped Allah and were not harmed, nor did we hear anything offensive said to us. When information regarding this reached the Quraysh, they resolved to send two firm envoys regarding us to al-Najashi, and to gift him with some choice items of Makkah. From the nicest items they brought was tanned leather, and so they gathered a large amount for him, and they did not leave one from his generals except that a gift was set for him. This was then despatched with ‘Abdullāh ibn Abī Rabī‘ah al-Makhzūmī and ‘Amr ibn al-‘Āṣ with the following instructions, ‘Provide each general with his gift before you talk to al-Najashi regarding them. Then present al-Najashi’s gift to him, following this, ask him to hand them over to you before he can speak to them.’”

She continued, “So we were with al-Najashi, enjoying our stay and the hospitality we were being shown. There was not a general from the generals except that they presented him his gift before they went to speak to al-Najashi. Then they confided to each of the generals, ‘Indeed, there have defected to the king’s land some ignorant young people from our tribe who have renounced the religion of their forefathers and have not embraced your religion, but have brought forth a new religion that neither of us recognise. The noblemen of their tribe have sent us to the king seeking their extradition, so when we speak with the king about this, counsel him to deliver them to us without talking with them, for their own people are more cognisant of...”
them and better acquainted with their beliefs and wrongdoing.’ They (the generals) agreed with this.

Then they presented their gifts to al-Najāshī, and they were accepted by him. Then they stated to him, ‘O king, indeed there have defected to your land some ignorant young people from our tribe, who have renounced the religion of their forefathers and have not embraced your religion, but have come up with a new religion that neither of us recognise. The noblemen of their tribe including their parents, uncles, and clansmen have sent us to you seeking their extradition, for their own people are more cognisant of them and better acquainted with their beliefs and wrongdoing.’

She continued, “Nothing could have been more disliked to ‘Abdullāh ibn Abī Rabī‘ and ‘Amr ibn al-Āş than al-Najāshī giving his ear to them (i.e. the Companions). The generals around him stated, ‘This is the truth O king. Their people are most cognisant regarding them and better acquainted with their faults. So hand them over to these two and permit them to return them to their country and their people.’

Then they presented their gifts to al-Najāshī, and they were accepted by him. Then they stated to him, ‘O king, indeed there have defected to your land some ignorant young people from our tribe, who have renounced the religion of their forefathers and have not embraced your religion, but have come up with a new religion that neither of us recognise. The noblemen of their tribe including their parents, uncles, and clansmen have sent us to you seeking their extradition, for their own people are more cognisant of them and better acquainted with their beliefs and wrongdoing.’

She continued, “Nothing could have been more disliked to ‘Abdullāh ibn Abī Rabī‘ and ‘Amr ibn al-Āş than al-Najāshī giving his ear to them (i.e. the Companions). The generals around him stated, ‘This is the truth O king. Their people are most cognisant regarding them and better acquainted with their faults. So hand them over to these two and permit them to return them to their country and their people.’
She said, “Al-Najāshī became angry and then said, ‘I will not turn them over to these two men and will not dishonor a group of people who are my guests and who have chosen my protection over all others, until I call them and ask them about whatever these two men accuse them of. If they are like what these two men have stated, then I will hand them over to them, and permit their return to their people. But if they are not so, then I shall offer them my protection and hospitality as long as they wish to remain with me.’”

She said, “Then he sent for the Companions of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. When his messenger arrived to them, they gathered and consulted each other, ‘What will you say to this man when you stand before him?’ They said, ‘By Allah, we shall say what we know of the truth and of the commandments of our Prophet ﷺ, no matter what.’ When they arrived at the court of al-Najāshī, they found that he had called his bishops who were seated around him with their scriptures open to ask the Muslims about their beliefs. He said, ‘What is this religion with which you have renounced the religion of your people, and have turned away from my religion and the religion of other nations?’”
She said, "The one who served as the spokesperson was Ja'far ibn Abi Talib, he said, 'O king, we were a group of people living in ignorance and immorality; we used to worship idols, eat the flesh of dead animals, engage in debauchery, sever the ties of kinship, break the rights of neighbors, and the strong amongst us would take the rights of the weak. We remained in this manner until Allah sent to us a messenger [from amongst us] whose lineage, truthfulness, honesty, and chastity were already well-known to us. He invited us to Allah—to single him out and worship Him—and to renounce the stones and idols which we and our forefathers worshipped besides Him. He commanded us to speak the truth, keep our promises, keep good ties with relatives, show kindness to neighbors and avoid harming them, to avoid all forbidden acts and bloodshed. He prohibited and warned us against performing debauchery, false testimony, taking the property of the orphan, and against falsely accusing chaste women. He ordered us to worship Allah alone and not to associate anything with Him, to establish the prayer, to give zakāt and to fast.'"
She said, “So he enumerated for him the key principles of Islam. [He then said,] ‘So we affirmed [his message,] believed in him and followed him in that which he brought forth, and we worshipped Allah alone without associating anything with Him. We prohibited ourselves from that which he made prohibited and we viewed lawful to us that which he made so. Our people thus persecuted us and abused us in order to turn us from our religion, and return to the worship of idols instead of the worship of Allah and for us to make lawful that which we previously deemed as such from the immoral matters. So, when they subdued and oppressed us, made miserable our lives, and prevented us from practicing our religion, we sought refuge in your land, choosing you over others, desiring your protection and hoping to live in justice and peace under your rule, O king.’”

 وقال: فقال [اله] النجاشي: هل ملك منا جاء به عن الله وجل من شيء؟ فقال: [اله] جعفر: نعم، فقال للنجاشي: فأقرأه على:She said, “Al-Najashi said to him, ‘Do you have with you anything which was revealed from Allah?’ Ja’far replied to him, ‘Yes.’ So, al-Najashi said, ‘Then recite it for me.’”

قالت: فقرأ عليه صدرا من كمبعص. قالت: فبكي والله النجاشي حتى أخضعت لهجته، و بكنت أسامته حتى اخضعت مصاحفهم جين سمعوا وما تلي عليهم، ثم قال النجاشي: إن هذا والذي جاء به عليه ليخرج من مشكاة واجدة، أنطفأ فأسلام الله لا أسلمهم إلا كمن أبدا ولا أقاد. She said, “So he recited for him a passage from the opening of كَفْ-حَاء-يَا-عين-سَدَدَ (Surah Maryam).” She continued, “By Allah, al-Najashi wept until his tears moistened his beard, and his bishops wept until their tears moistened their scriptures when they heard his recital. Then al-Najashi stated, ‘Verily, this and that which came from Mūsā are from the same mishkāt
Illuminating the Darkness: The Virtues of Blacks and Abyssinians

(niche). You two must leave, for—by Allah—I will not hand them over to you and would never do so.”

Umm Salamah said, “When we left them, ‘Amr ibn al-‘As said, ‘By Allah, tomorrow I will tell him a defect of theirs which will remove their prosperity.’ ‘Abdullah ibn Abi Rab’ah—who was the more pious of them—said to him regarding us, ‘Do not do so, for they are bonded to us through the womb despite their differing with us.’ He replied, ‘By Allah, I will inform him that they view that ‘Isa ibn Maryam is a slave.’”

She said, “The next morning he went and said, ‘O king, these people state a grave thing about ‘Isa ibn Maryam. Send for them and ask them in regards to what they state.’”

She said, “So he sent for them and enquired in regards to ‘Isa.” She continued, “We had not experienced such a thing before, and so the party consulted, asking one another, ‘What shall you say if you are asked regarding ‘Isa?’ And they said, ‘By Allah we shall say that which Allah said and which our Prophet stated, no matter what may arise.’
When they entered the court of al-Najāshi, he asked them, ‘What do you say about ‘Īsā ibn Maryam?’ Ja‘far ibn Abī Ṭalīb replied to him, ‘We say regarding him that which our Prophet ﷺ brought forth: He is a slave of Allāh, a prophet from Him cast into the womb of Mary, the virgin maiden.’”

She continued, “Then al-Najāshi struck the ground with his hand and picked up a small stick from the ground and stated, ‘‘Īsā ibn Maryam is no different to what you have said as much as the length of this stick.’ His generals surrounding him snorted when he said this. So he said, ‘By Allāh, even if you snort. [Speaking to the Companions:] Go, for you are safe and secure in my land, the one who curses you will be punished, [indeed] the one who curses you will be punished. I would not like to have a mountain of gold while anyone of you should come to any harm.’—The word al-dabr in the language of the Abyssinians means ‘mountain’—‘Return their gifts for we are not in need of them, for—by Allāh—Allāh did not take a bribe from me when he returned to me my kingdom so [how could I] take a bribe in regards to this. And he [did not] make me obeyed by the people so that I obey them in this.’”
She said, "They left his court dejected and that which they came with was rejected, while we remained residing with him in a peaceful location with a hospitable host."

She said, "By Allah, during this time an opposer arose to take his kingdom."

She said, "By Allah, we did not ever know a sadness stronger than the sadness we felt at the thought that the opposition should overpower al-Najashi, and that a leader should come who does not understand our case how al-Najashi did."

She said, "Al-Najashi went [to meet the enemy] and the breadth of the Nile was between the two parties."

She said, "The Companions of the Messenger of Allah stated, 'Who will go to the scene of the battle between the people and then bring us news of the event?'

Al-Zubayr ibn al--Awwām said, 'I will do so.'"
She continued, “He was from the youngest of the group.” She said, “We blew into a water-skin for him and he placed it on his chest and swam on it until he reached the part of the Nile where the armies were gathered. He then rushed until he reached them.

She said, “We supplicated to Allâh to make al-Najâshi overcome his adversary and to establish his power in his land. The matter in Abyssinia ended in al-Najâshi’s favour, and we lived pleasantly with him until we returned to the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ in Makkah.”

Zubayr ibn Bakkâr reported on the authority of Mus‘ab ibn ‘Abdullâh, “The Quraysh despatched ‘Umarâh ibn al-Wâlîd and ‘Amr ibn al-‘Âs to al-Najâshi to discuss with him in regards to those who emigrated to him. ‘Umarâh ibn al-Wâlîd corresponded with a female servant of al-Najâshi about ‘Amr ibn al-‘Âs, and she was with him until she passed by ‘Amr and he became aware of this and said,
Illuminating the Darkness: The Virtues of Blacks and Abyssinians

‘Umārah, know that the worst trait for your like who calls his cousin a brother.20

If you are a person with two garments, yet you are not innocent of trespassing upon that which your cousin viewed sacred.

If a man does not leave food he likes, and does not forbid his desiring heart from landing wherever it wants.

It will fulfill what it wants and then leave him alone, the examples of which when mentioned would fill the mouth.

وَقَدْ كَانَ عَمَّارَةُ أَخَيْ عُمَرَةَ أَنْ زَوْجَةَ الْمَلِكِ النَّجَاشِيِّ عَلَفَتَهُ وَأَدْخَلَتَهُ فَلَمَّا بَيِّنَ عُمَرَ بِنَ الْخَاصِبِيَّ مِنْ أَمْرِ الْمُهَاجِرِينَ عَنْدَ النَّجَاشِيِّ مَخْلُ بَعَمَارَةَ عِنْدَهُ فَأَخَرَجَهُ حُبُّهُ وَأَخَرَجَ زَوْجَتَهُ. فَقَالَ لِهَا النَّجَاشِيِّ: ابْنِي بِعَلَامَةِ عَسَدَلَ بَيْنَهَا عَلَى مَا قَلَتْ فَغَادَ عَمَّارَةُ وَأَخَرَجَ عُمَرَةَ بِأَمْرِهِ وَأَمْرُ زَوْجَتَهُ النَّجَاشِيِّ فَقَالَ لِهَا عُمَرَ: لَا أَقْلُ هَذَا مَنْكَ إِلَّا أَنْ لَا تَضْرِضِي مَثْنَا أَيْنَ تَتَطَسْكُ [مُثْنَى] مِنْ دُهْنِ الْمَلِكِ الْأَلِيْلِيِّ لَا يَدْهَنْ بِهِ غَيْرُهُ. فَكَلِمَهَا عَمَّارَةُ فِي الْدُّهْنِ فَقَالَتْ: أَحَافُ مِنْ الْمَلِكِ فَأَيْنَ أَنْ يُضْرِضَ مَثْنَا حُتْيَ تَطْسِكُ ذَلِكَ الْدُّهْنَ فَأَعْطِهِ مَثْنَىٰ أَعْطَاهُ عُمَرَةُ فِي إِنَادَةَ عِمَرَةَ فَجَاءَ بِهِ إِلَى النَّجَاشِيِّ فَنَفَخَ سَحَرًا فِي إِنَادَهُ فَذَهَبَ مَعَ الْمَوْجَحٍ فِي مَا يَقُولُهُ فُرْيَشُ فَلَمْ يَزَالَ مَسْتوُحَشًا يُرْسَلُهُ فِي جُرَّةَ بَأَرَضِ الْحُبَشَةِ حُتْيَ خَرَجَ إِلَيْهِ عَبْدُ اللَّهِ بْنَ أَبِي رَبِيعَةِ فِي جَمْعَةِ مِنْ أَضْحَاَبِهِ فَرَصَدَهُ عَلَى الْمَهِاءَ فَأَخَذَهُ فَجَعَلَ يَصِيحُ بِهِ أَرْسَلَيْنِ فَأَمَّوتُ إِن
'Umārah confided in 'Amr that the woman of al-Najāshī had performed intercourse with him. When 'Amr ibn al-‘Āṣ became despondent in regards to the affair of the emigrants who were with al-Najāshī, he attempted to harm 'Umārah by informing al-Najāshī about the incident between him and his woman. Al-Najāshī stated to him, 'Bring me a sign proving what you have said.' Later 'Umārah mentioned again what took place between him and the woman of al-Najāshī and so 'Amr said to him, 'I will not accept your account except if [you say to her] that you are not pleased with her until she brings for you something from amongst the king's oils which no one uses except him. 'Umārah spoke to her regarding the oil but she replied, 'I am afraid of the king.' He pressed her regarding the matter and stated that he would not be pleased with her until she brought him this oil, and so she brought the oil, which he subsequently passed to 'Amr. This was then brought before al-Najāshī, [and as punishment] he blew a magic substance in his private part and he went away whilst behaving feral, according to what the Quraysh stated, and he remained in this state, roaming by the water of the peninsula of the Abyssinian land until 'Abdullāh ibn Abī Rabī‘ah alongside some of his companions came for him and laid in wait for him before catching him. This caused him to begin shouting at him, 'Release me for I will die if you touch me.' He took hold of him, and he passed away in his hands.'
In mention of that which the Prophet ﷺ wrote to al-Najashī ﷺ, inviting him to Islam, and of his conversion

The author stated: The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ wrote to al-Najashī inviting him to Islam. Subsequently, al-Najashī accepted Islam and a group of his companions believed also. Then he responded to the letter and sent his son to him with sixty Abyssinians, and all of them drowned in the sea. The story of this incident will follow in the chapter mentioning the kings of Abyssinia, by the will of Allāh ﷺ.
Chapter Eleven

In mention of the coming of the Abyssinians to the Messenger of Allah and their war game in the masjid whilst the Prophet watched

'Urwah ibn al-Zubayr reported that 'Aishah said, “I recall the Messenger of Allah covering me with his upper garment whilst I was watching the Abyssinians performing in the masjid until I grew weary—and you know the length with which a young girl remains interested in entertainment (i.e. displaying the length of their performance).”

Thabit reported that Anas said, “When the Messenger of Allāh arrived at

---

21 Reported by Imām Aḥmad in al-Musnad (6/84–85, 166 and 273) and al-Nasāʾī.
Madīnah the Abyssinians joyfully performed with their weapons in happiness at his coming."22

‘Urwaḥ ibn al-Zubayr reported that ‘Āishah ﷺ said, “The Messenger of Allāh was with me on the day that the black people performed with their shields and weapons. So, either I requested from the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ or he asked me, ‘Do you wish to see?’ I replied affirmatively and so he stood me behind him—my cheek touching his, and he was saying, ‘Carry on, O Banū Arfadah.’21 When I grew weary, he asked me, ‘Are you satiated?’ I replied that I was and so he said, ‘Then leave.’”24

22 This was mentioned by al-Suyūṭī in Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī (443 and 944) and by Muslim (892).

23 Al-Suyūṭī reported in Ṣaḥīḥ al-Hubshān (48/a) that al-Zarkashī said, “This refers to an ancestor of the Ethiopians.” He also quoted Abū ‘Amr as saying, “Banū Arfadah refers to a group from the Ethiopians who were known for this type of dancing.”
Illuminating the Darkness: The Virtues of Blacks and Abyssinians

‘Urwah reported that ‘Āishah said, “The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ was sitting and he heard some commotion and the voices of children, so he stood and there was an Abyssinian woman prancing for some children around her. The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ said, ‘O ‘Āishah, get up and look.’ So I got up and placed my chin on the shoulder of the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ watching her from between his shoulders and his head. Then he said to me, ‘Are you satisfied?’ I said, ‘No,’ so as to see my station with him (i.e. to see how he ﷺ would respond to her).”

Abū ‘Awānah reported on the authority of Abī Bishr that the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ and Abū Bakr passed by some Abyssinians who were playing while saying:

25 Reported by al-Tirmidhī in al-Sunan (3691), and he graded it as hasan sabib gharib min badha al-wajib (hasan sabib which is gharib (singular) in this way). [T] In Tubfat al-Abwadbi (10/170), al-Mubarakfūrī states that it was also reported by Ibn ‘Adi in al-Kāmil (3/51).
Tanwīru 'l-Ghabashi fī Faḍlī s-Sūdānī wa 'l-Habashi

O you guest knocking [on the door], you should have visited the house of ʿAbd al-Dār,

Had you asked for their hospitality, they would have saved you the hardship and hunger.
In mention of words in the Qur’ān which conform with the Abyssinian language

Abū al-Ahwāṣ reported on the authority of Abū Mūsā [in regards to the word “kiflayn” in the āyah,] {He will [then] give you a double portion of His mercy}: This word means “di’fayn (two-fold)” and this is “kiflayn” according to the Abyssinian language.

Ibn Qutaybah said, “‘Al-mishkāṭ’ is a word in the Abyssinian language which refers to a small window.
Sa‘id ibn ‘lyād said, “‘Al-mishkāt’ in the Abyssinian language refers to a small window.”

Wakī said that ‘Umar ibn Abī Zā‘idah said, “I heard ‘Ikrimah say that {Ṭāḥa} in the Abyssinian language means: ‘Say, O man.’”

Wakī said that Sa‘īd ibn Jubayr reported upon the authority of Ibn ‘Abbas that he said [in regards to the āyāb] {Verily, the rising by night}, “According to the Abyssinian language this means, ‘If he wills, he stands.’”

Wakī said that Ibn Mas‘ūd said, “It means ‘standing during the night [in prayer]’ in the language of the Abyssinians.”

Al-Zajāj said, “‘Rising by night’ means any part of the night.”


26 Al-Suyūṭī said in Aẓḥār al-‘Uฎšb (11/b), “This was reported by Ibn Abī Shaybah in al-Muṣṭanṣaf and Ibn Abī Ḥātim on the authority of ‘Ikrimah, and al-Ḥākim in al-Mustadrak on the authority of Ibn ‘Abbās—who graded it as sahib.”

27 See Rāf Shān al-Ḥubshān (p. 62/b) and al-Suyūṭī said in Aẓḥār al-‘Uฎšb (12/b), “This was reported from Ibn ‘Abbās by Wakī, Sa‘īd ibn Mansūr, Ibn ‘Jarīr, Ibn Mundhir and al-Bayhaqī in al-Sunan.”
Ibn ‘Abbās said, “{Indeed Ibrahim was awāhun and forbearing}⁴⁸: ‘Al-awāhun’ means ‘believer’ according to the Abyssinian language.”²⁹

---

²⁸ Al-Tawbah: 114
²⁹ The author of al-Ṭirāz al-Manqūsh (21/b and 22/a) said, “[In relation to the matter of exegetes citing words being found in other languages:] This does not mean that these words are not Arabic i.e. that they are Ḥabashīh or Zanjīh, rather it is merely to highlight that the words are present in those languages as well [...] This is because Allāh did not speak to the Prophet except in the tongue of the Quraysh, as explicitly stated by Ibn al-Anbārī.”
Chapter Thirteen

In mention of what the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ heard of the Abyssinian language and how he was impressed

Abî al-Zubayr reported upon the authority of Jâbir, “When the emigrants of Abyssinia returned to the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ, he said, ‘Would you inform me of the most remarkable thing you witnessed in the land of Abyssinia?’

...
A youngster from amongst them stated, ‘O Messenger of Allāh, whilst we were sitting, an elderly woman from them passed by us and upon her head was a qullāb (container) of water which she was carrying. She passed by a youngster from them, and he placed one of his hands between her two shoulders and pushed her, thus she fell to her knees and the container broke. When she stood back up she turned to him and stated, ‘You will know O conniver when Allāh establishes the kursī and gathers the first of mankind and the last, when the hands and feet will unveil what they used to earn, you will come to know my case and yours then.’

فَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: (صِدَاقَةٌ: كَيْفَ بِقَدْسِ اللَّهِ قُوْمًا، لَا يُؤْخَذُ لِضِعْفِهِمْ مِنْ قَوْبِهِمْ؟)).

Then the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ said, ‘She spoke the truth. Why would Allāh sanctify a people when they do not make their weak safe from their strong?’

---

30 Reported by Ibn Mājah (2/1329). It states in al-Zawā‘id, “Its isnād (chain of narration) is hasan.”
Chapter Fourteen

In mention of the Abyssinians being singled out for the call to the prayer

Abū Maryam al-Anṣārī reported on the authority of Abī Hurayrah that he said, “The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ said, ‘Leadership is for the Quraysh, the judiciary is for the Anṣār, the call to prayer is for the Abyssinians and the trust is amongst the Azd (i.e. the Yemenis).’”31

31 Reported by al-Tirmidhi in al-Sunan, within the Chapter of Virtues, section of the virtues of Yemen (9/421).
Those of whom it has been said that they were Prophets from amongst black people

From those whom it has been narrated that they were black and from the Prophets is the prophet of Aṣḥāb al-'Ukhdūd (the people of al-'Ukhdūd).

Ja'far ibn Muḥammad ibn al-Faḍl al-Rāsānī narrated in his Tārīkh (book of history) with his isnād (chain of narration) on the authority of 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib, “The Prophet of Aṣḥāb al-'Ukhdūd was an Abyssinian.”

The scholars of tafsīr have stated that the ones who burned were from the Abyssinians.

Wahb ibn al-Munabbih said, “They were twelve thousand in number.”

32 People of the Ditch, see Sūrah al-Burūj.
33 Al-Suyūṭī said in Aṣbār al-'Urūb (6/a), “This was reported by Ibn Abī Ḥātim on the authority of ‘Alī.”
Ibn al-Sā'īb said, “They were seventy thousand in number.”

The reason for their burning is found within that which we have reported from ‘Ālī ibn Ṭālib [2], “One of the kings became intoxicated and approached his sister intimately. When he became sober, he said to her, ‘Woe to you, what should we do to get out of this trouble?’ She replied, ‘Gather your people and inform them that Allāh has permitted marriage between siblings, and then when this leaves the minds of the people and they forget, address them regarding its forbiddance.’ He did this and the people rejected this from him, so he lashed his whip at them and uncovered his sword but they still rejected him. Then he prepared a ditch for them and ignited a fire within it, and those who opposed were thrown in it.’”

 فقال ابن السائب: سبعين ألفاً.

There is a difference of opinion in regards to Dhū al-Qarnayn.

 وقال عبد اللَّه بن عمرو بن سعد بن المغيرة والضحاك بن مواحم: كان نبياً.
Illuminating the Darkness: The Virtues of Blacks and Abyssinians

‘Abd Allāh ibn ‘Amr ibn Sa‘īd ibn al-Musayyib and al-Ḍaḥḥāk ibn Muzāḥim said, “He was a Prophet.”

We have reported on the authority of ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālīb that he said, “He was a righteous servant from the early centuries from the descendants of Yāfīth ibn Nūh.”

Ja‘far ibn Muḥammad al-Ras‘ānī mentioned in his Tārikh upon the authority of Ibrāhīm that ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālīb said, “Dhū al-Qarnayn was black.”

Abū al-Ḥusayn al-Munādī said, “Dhū al-Qarnayn lived during Ibrāhīm al-Khāli’s era and he passed away during that period.”

In terms of him being called Dhū al-Qarnayn there are ten opinions regarding why:

The first: “He called him [Dhū al-Qarnayn] during his lifetime and he carried this title even after his death. The description [Dhū al-Qarnayn] is a virtue for him.”

34 See al-Bidāyat wa al-Nihāyat of Ibn Kathīr (2/103).
35 This view was deemed as preponderant by Ibn Kathīr. See al-Bidāyat wa al-Nihāyat (2/103).
One. He called his people to Allāh and they struck him upon his horn, causing him to die. This time period passed and Allāh resurrected him and so he again called them to Allāh and they struck him on another horn, causing him to die. These are his two horns, and this was stated by ‘Ali ibn Abī Ṭālib.

الثاني: أنه سمي بذلك لأنَّه سار إلى مغرب الشمس وله مطلاعها. رواه أبو صالح عن ابن عباس.

Two. He travelled to where the sun sets and to where it rises. This was reported by Abū Šāliḥ on the authority of Ibn ‘Abbās.36

والثالث: لأن صحتي رأسه كائنا من نحاس.

Three. The sides of his head [had horns] made from copper.

الرابع: لأنَّه رأى في الليل كأنَّه امتدَّ من السماء إلى الأرض فأخذ بقرني الشمس فقضى ذلك على قومه فسمي بدي القريني.

Four. He saw himself in a dream and it was as if he extended (i.e. fell) from the sky to the earth and so he held onto the sun by its two horns. He subsequently informed his people about this and so he was named Dhu al-Qarnayn.

الخامس: لأنه ملك فارس وروم.

Five. He was king of both the Persians and Romans.

السادس: لأنه كان في رأسه شبه القرنين.

Six. There was something on his head which resembled two horns.

36 This view was deemed as preponderant by Ibn Kathir. See Al-Bidayat wa al-Nihayat (2/103-104).
The latter four opinions were reported upon the authority of Wahb ibn Munabbih.

Seven. He had two braids of hair. This was stated by al-Hasan. Ibn al-Anbârî said, “The Arabs intend through ‘dafiratay al-sha‘r’: ‘two braids’ and ‘two horns’.

Eight. He was from a noble and eminent family on both sides.

Nine. The people of two centuries during his time passed whilst he remained living.

Ten. He would travel during the darkness and the light.

These latter three views were mentioned by Abû Ishâq al-Thâ’labî.

Mujâhid said, “The rulers of the earth were four, two of them were believers and two of them were disbelievers. The believers were Sulaymân ibn Dâwîd (the Prophet of Allâh) and Dhû al-Qarnayn. The disbelievers were Namrud and Bukhtu Naşsar.”
Samak ibn Ĥarb reported upon the authority of Ĥabib ibn Ḥazim, “A man stated to ‘Ali ﷺ, ‘How did Dhû al-Qarnayn reach the east and the west?’

‘Alî replied, ‘The clouds were subjected to him, the means were laid out for him and the light accompanied him at all times (i.e. the day and the night were the same for him).’”

Al-Ḥasan al-Bāṣrî said, “Dhû al-Qarnayn rode amongst a million, he was preceded by six hundred thousand, and he was followed by one hundred thousand.” And exalted is al-Ḥayy (the Everlasting), al-Baqli (the Ever Remaining).

ذكر صفة بنائه السد

In mention of how he built the barrier

37 See al-Bidâyat wa al-Nihâyât of Ibn Kathîr (2/106).
Illuminating the Darkness: The Virtues of Blacks and Abyssinians

It was reported by Abū al-Ḥusayn ibn al-Munāḍī, “When Dhū al-Qarnayn resolved to travel to the place where the sun rises he took the route through Kabul, Hind and Tibet, and the kings greeted him with ornaments and wealth. He reached a place where there were ruined fortresses of which some remained, and he was asked to help rebuild the ruins. So he went to do this alongside some craftsmen, taking copper cauldrons, large pieces of iron and iron trowels.

He ordered his subjects to place each four pots upon a base the measurement of which its length was fifty cubits. Then he ordered the craftsmen to smite the iron to produce iron bricks, and the length of each brick was one and a half cubits, and the thickness was a hand-span. Thus, they built the barrier and placed in the middle of it a great door of which there were two panels—of which each was fifty cubits—and upon it was a lock which was approximately ten cubits. When the building of the barrier was completed, fire was kindled upon it and so it set together as if it was a single stone.
Abū Ḥusayn ibn al-Munādī said that it reached him from Ibn Khurdādbih upon the authority of Sallām al-Tarjamān, “When al-Wāthiq saw in a dream that the barrier which Dhū al-Qarnayn had built opened, he dispatched a message to me, ‘Observe this and bring me news regarding it.’ He provided me with fifty men, five thousand dinars, and gave me my blood money should I die in this journey, which was ten thousand dirhams, he ordered me to give each man with me one thousand dirhams, and six months’ provisions. He also provided me with two hundred mules to carry the provisions and water. We embarked from [a town called] Surra Man Ra’ā (it has been said that this refers to a city in Iraq) with a letter from al-Wāthiq to Abī Ishāq ibn Ismā‘īl from Armenia which detailed our duty. Ishāq then wrote a letter for us to [the leader known as] Ṣāḥib al-Sarlīr (holder of the throne), he wrote for us to Lab, who wrote for us to Filā Nashāh, who wrote for us to Khazr, and we spent a day and a night with the king of Khazr. He then sent
with us fifty guides and we embarked from him for twenty-five days, then we reached the Black Land where there was a putrid smell. We had prepared ourselves before entering it with perfume to smell, so as to combat the bad smell. We marched ten days within there and then we reached ruined towns. We marched for twenty-seven days there and we enquired about the towns, and we were informed that they were the towns which Ya'juj and Ma'juj use to descend into during the night and lay ruin to. Then we travelled to some fortresses close to the mountain within which the barrier was present in one of its passes. In these fortresses were a group of people who spoke Arabic and Persian and they were Muslims who recited the Qur'an and they had kuttāb (schools for learning to read and write, and to learn the Qur'an) and masājid. They inquired from us, 'From where did you come from?' We informed them that we were envoys sent by the Commander of the Faithful and they became surprised at this, saying, 'The Commander of the Faithful?' We replied affirmatively and they said, 'Is he a shaykh (i.e. mature in age) or is he a youth?' We replied, 'He is a youth.' They stated, 'Where is he situated?' We replied, 'He is in Iraq in a town known as Surra Man Rāā.' They said, 'We have never heard of this before.'
After this, we embarked to a mountain which was smooth and bereft of plantation. There was a mountain cut with a valley which was one hundred and fifty cubits wide, there were two posts built following the mount, one on each side of the valley and the width of each post was twenty-five cubits—from underneath it ten cubits were visible outside the door. There was building work upon it constructed from bricks of iron which was covered by copper, the depth of which was fifty cubits. Between the posts there was an iron hinged flat section—the length of which was one hundred and twenty cubits—which was built over the two posts, the measurement of each side on each post was ten cubits in length by five cubits in width. Above the hinged flat section was a construction made from the iron which was covered by the copper, and it ascended to the highest point of the mountain—going as far as the eye could see. Above this was a balcony constructed of iron, and upon each balcony were two horns—each bent towards its counterpart. There was a door made of iron upon which there were two closed panels, each being fifty cubits wide and fifty cubits high. Their supports were round and similar in size to the hinged flat section and upon the door was a lock—the length of which was nine cubits and its thickness was one cubit. The height of the lock from the ground was twenty-five cubits. Five cubits above this lock there was a fastening which was longer than the lock, and the measurement of each was two cubits. Upon the fastening there was a hanging key which was one and a half cubits long and which had twelve small slots, this is a Farsi word.
the largest of all mortars hinged in a chain that was eight cubits in length and the distance around a circle-shaped pot was four hand spans. The ring through which the chain was placed was similar to the ring of the catapult, and the doorstep was ten cubits by one hundred cubits excluding the area underneath the two posts, but only five cubits of it was visible. All of these measurements are based upon the black cubit measurement (i.e. one black cubit equals 26.33 finger lengths).

Every Friday, the head of this fortress would ride with ten horsemen and every horseman would carry an iron hammer—each one being one hundred and fifty mannan (an old measurement). The lock was hit with these hammers on a number of occasions during each day so that those behind the door would hear the sound, and so that they would know that it was being guarded, and so that the ones [on this side] would know that the door had not been tampered by them. When our companions would strike the lock, they would place their ears against it so as to hear the echoing voices. Close to this location there was a large fortress which was ten farsakhhs by ten farsakhhs, divided into one hundred farsakhhs. Next to the door there were two fortresses, each of which was two hundred cubits by two hundred cubits, and in front of their doors there were two trees, and there was a spring of fresh water between the two fortresses. In one of the fortresses were the tools
used to construct the barrier, including the iron cauldrons and the trowels.

[There were stones to hold up the cauldrons] and upon each stone there were four cauldrons, similar to soap pots. In this location we found the remainder of the bricks and they had conjoined together due to rust. Each of them was one and a half cubits with the thickness of a hand-span. We asked those present if they had seen anyone from Ya’juj and Ma’juj. They mentioned that they had seen them on a few occasions on the roof but they were blown back by the black wind. The size of each individual from them from the distance they viewed them was one and a half hand-spans.”

Sallām al-Tarjaman continued, “When we exited from there, the guides took us towards the direction of Khurasān and we marched towards it until we were seven ārba’īn behind Samarqand. The inhabitants of the fortresses had provided us with sufficient provisions. Then we went to ‘Abdullah ibn Tahir.” Sallām said, “He gave me ten thousand dirhams, and he provided each of the men accompanying me with five hundred dirhams. He allocated

96
each horseman with five dirhams and three dirhams to those on foot for each day until we reached the city of al-Ray. We returned to Surra Man Rāā twenty-eight months after we left.”

Ibn Khurdādhbih said, “Sallām al-Tārjamān narrated this story to me in a general manner, and then he dictated to me that which he wrote for al-Wāthiq.”

\[\text{وفي حديث آخر أنه سمع بإبراهيم قزل في مكة}: \text{قال: ما كنت لأركب في بلد فيه إبراهيم.}\]

Another narration states that he heard about Ibrāhīm and so he dismounted and walked to him. He said, “Indeed I would not ride a mount within a city wherein Ibrāhīm is located.”

39 This narration and the one before it were mentioned by Ibn Kathīr in \textit{al-Bidāyat wa al-Nihāyāt} (2/103).
It was reported by the great fable-tellers that Dhū al-Qarnayn ordered the construction of many cities. Amongst them were al-Dahrasiyyah, Juhudan, Sayral, Burj al-Hijarah and then when he reached al-Hind he constructed the city Sarandib, and a great soothsayer stated to him, “You will not die except upon a ground made of iron and [under] a sky made of wood.” Dhū al-Qarnayn would bury treasure in every land [he visited], and he would record it alongside the amount. When he reached Babylon, he suffered from a nose bleed and subsequently fell from the animal he was riding. His armour was opened for him and he slept upon it. He became annoyed by the sun and so those around him provided him with shade with a shield. It was after seeing this that he noted, “This is the ground made of iron and the sky made of wood,” and he ascertained that he was to die. So, he died and he was one thousand six hundred years old.

The author said: They differed in regards to Luqman, however the majority are of the view that he was a wise man and not a prophet.  

Sa‘īd ibn al-Musayyib asserted, “He was a prophet.”

40 See al-Bidayat wa al-Nihayah (2/123).
Ibn Ishaq said, “Luqman was black.” Others said, “He was an Abyssinian and he was the slave of a bleacher from the tribe of Israel who purchased him for thirty dinars.” [And they said,] “One day his master ordered him to slaughter a sheep with the instruction to remove its best two parts, and so he removed its tongue and heart. After some time, his master said, ‘Slaughter a sheep for us and take out the vilest of its parts.’ So, he removed its tongue and heart from it. Upon this his master said, ‘Explain this.’ He replied, ‘There is nothing in the sheep better than its heart and tongue (if they are sound), and there is nothing viler than them (if they are vile). Likewise, is the case for the descendants of Ādam, there is nothing better than his heart and tongue, and nothing worse than them if they are vile.’”

Al-Hasan said, “Luqman detached himself from the people and he resided between al-Ramlah and Bayt al-Maqdis, not mixing with their people.”
Sa’id ibn ‘Amir reported upon the authority of Hasan ibn Ja’far, “Luqman al-Ḥabashi was the slave of a man who took him to the marketplace so as to sell him.” He continued, “Whenever someone came to purchase him, Luqmaan would say to him, ‘What would you make me do?’ The reply would be, ‘I would make you do such and such.’ Luqmaan would thus say, ‘I request that you do not purchase.’ This was the case until a man came and was asked, ‘What would you make me do?’ His reply was, ‘I would utilise you as a gatekeeper of my door.’ So, he said, ‘Purchase me,’ and the man took him to his home.” He said, “His master had three daughters who were promiscuous in the village. Once when the master desired to go to his farm, he said, ‘I have provided them with their food and that which they need, so
when I leave, lock the door and sit behind it. Do not open it until I return.’”

He continued, “The daughters came out to the door as they would normally do so and they said to him, ‘Open the door.’ He refused and so they caused him injury. He washed the blood and sat in his place until his master returned. He did not inform him of what took place. His master left again and said to him, ‘I have provided them with their needs so do not open the door for them.’ When he left, they again went to him and demanded the door to be opened. He resisted and so they caused him injury and returned back. He sat in his place whilst crying. However, when his master returned, he did not inform him of anything.” He continued, “The eldest of them said, ‘How is it that this Abyssinian slave is superior in obedience to Allah than me? By Allah I will repent.’ And so she repented. The youngest of them stated, ‘How is it that this Abyssinian slave and [my] elder [sister] can be superior in obedience to Allah than me? By Allah I will repent.’ And so she repented. The middle one said, ‘How is it that these two and this Abyssinian slave can be superior in obedience to Allah than me? By Allah I will repent.’ He continued, “The sinful of the village [saw this] and stated, ‘How is it that this Abyssinian and the daughters of this individual can be superior in obedience to Allah than us. We will repent to Allah, and become the devout worshippers in the village.’”
'Abdullāh ibn Ziyād reported upon the authority of Makhūl, "Luqmān was a black slave, and Allāh bestowed him with wisdom. He was owned by a man from Banī Isrā'īl who brought him with thirty mithqāl and a half. His master would play backgammon and place wagers upon it, and there was a river that flowed near his door. One day he was playing backgammon with a wager set that the loser drinks all of the water in the river or he pays a ransom. Luqmān’s master was defeated and it was said to him, ‘Drink that which is in the river or pay a ransom.’ He replied, ‘Inform me of the ransom.’ The man said, ‘I will remove your eyes and take everything you own.’ His master stated, ‘Give me a respite of a day [to think]’ and he agreed to this. He thus became despondent and sad. Luqmān entered upon him whilst carrying a bundle of firewood upon his back. He greeted him and put down the load he was carrying, then he said to his master, ‘Why is it that I see you so, despondent and sad? His master turned away from him. He repeated his question and his master turned away again. This took place a third time and so Luqmān stated to him, ‘Inform me and maybe I can find for you a positive outcome.’ His master then said to him, ‘What is your solution?’ He replied, ‘If the man tells you to drink the water in the river, say, ‘I will drink the water which is between the river banks or its length.’
he tells you to drink the water between the banks, say to him, ‘Confine the water of the length until I drink what is between the banks.’ The man will not be able to do this so you will free yourself from your liability to him.’

The master realised he was right and so he became pleased. When the man [who won the backgammon game] arrived on the next morning he said, ‘Now, fulfil the terms we have agreed on.’ The master of Luqman replied, ‘Yes, shall I drink that which is between the banks or the length?’ The man replied, ‘That which is between the banks.’ So he said, ‘So confine the length for me.’ The man replied, ‘How will I be able to do this?’ And the master gained respite through this.” He continued, “Thus his master emancipated him and Allâh blessed him.”

He used to visit Dâwûd, taking wisdom from him and he did this for a year.

[On one occasion] Dâwûd was crafting armour and Luqman did not ask regarding this until he had completed it, and neither did Dâwûd inform him until he had finished. Then Dâwûd put it on, and when he saw this he said, “Silence is wisdom.”
يَهِ وَشَاعُ ذَكْرَهُ بِالحَكْمَةِ وَأَجَمَّعَ بَعْدِ ذَلِكَ النَّاسَ إِلَّا يَقْتَبَسُونَ بِنَةٍ وَيَسَمَعُونَ بِنَةً الْحَكْمَةِ.

Al-Qurashi said: We were informed by Khalid ibn al-Nadr upon the authority of Makhul, “The first occasion upon which Dawud heard a wise statement from Luqman was when he witnessed people debating whilst Luqman remained silent. So Dawud said to him, ‘Why do you not speak like the rest?’ He replied, ‘There is no good in speech except the mention of Allah and neither is there good in silence except in pondering about the resurrection. A religious person contemplates [about his hereafter] and thus he becomes overwhelmed with serenity. He is thankful and so he has humility, he is content, so he is sufficed, and he is pleased [with his affair] so he does not live in a state of distress. He is detached from this world and so he escapes from its evil, denying his desires and so he becomes free. He secludes himself, and so he is protected from worries, and he drives off envy, so love is displayed [for him.] He is of excellent mind and adept at foreseeing consequences, so he is safe from regret thereafter. The people are at ease with him whilst he is tirelessly focusing on himself (i.e. he keeps pushing himself to do better every day as he does not find a limit to improvement).’ Dawud said, ‘You have spoke the truth O Luqman.’ He admired Luqman and his reputation for wisdom became widespread. After this the people would congregate around him to take knowledge from him and to hear his wisdom.”

قَالَ الْقُرَشِيُّ: وَحَدَّثَنَا إِبْنُ سَمْعَانٍ عَنْ زَبِيدَ بْنَ أَسْلَمَ أَنَّ لُقْمَانَ لَمْ يُظْهِرَ حَكْمَتَهُ لِلنَّاسِ جَاءَهُ رِجَالٌ مِنْ عَظِيمِاءٍ بِنِي إِسْرَائِيلٍ قَالَ لَهُ: يَا لُقْمَانَ أَلَمْ تَكُن عِبَادَةَ نُوبيَّةً لَفُلُانٍ؟ قَالَ: بَلَى، قَالَ: فَمَنْ أَيْنَ بَلَغَتْ هَذِهِ الْمَسْلِةَ؟ قَالَ: صَدِقُ الحَدِيثُ وَتَرَكَةَ مَالًا يَعْنِي وَيَعْقُبَ.

Al-Qurashi said: It was reported to us by Ibn Sam'an upon the authority of Zayd ibn Aslam, “When Luqman’s wisdom became apparent to the people, one of the great men from Banu Isra’il came to him and said, ‘O Luqman, were you not a Nubian slave?’ He replied affirmatively. So, the man said, ‘So how did you attain this level?’ He replied, ‘Through truthfulness in speech
and leaving that which does not benefit me.”

Al-Qurashi said: Ibn Sam‘an reported upon the authority of Makhul, upon the authority of Ka‘b. “Luqmān stated to his son, ‘O my son, this world is like a wide sea within which many people have drowned. If you make your ship within it īmān (faith) in Allāh, tawakkul (reliance) on Allāh as its sail, taqwā (God-consciousness) as your provision, then your success will be through the mercy of Allāh and your destruction will be through your sins.’”

He said: ‘Uthmān ibn ‘Ata’ reported upon the authority of his father that Luqmān stated to his son, “O my son, take little from this world, and do not jostle for its delights. For indeed a little from them will suffice you. The best of knowledge is the beneficial. O my son, know that the most knowledgeable of people are those from them with the most humility.”
Al-Qurashi said: Ibrāhīm ibn Adham said, “It reached me that Luqmān, when he was close to death, began to cry. His son asked him, ‘O father, what causes you to cry?’ He replied, ‘O my son, it is not for the world that I cry, rather I am crying because of the journey I will have to embark upon. It is a lengthy toil, [akin to an] endless wilderness, an insurmountable obstacle, with little provisions and a burdensome load. I do not know whether this load will be lifted when I reach my destination, or whether it will remain upon me whilst I am driven to hell with it.’ Then he died.”

Al-Qurashi said, “It reached me that the grave of Luqmān was between the masjid of Ramlah and where the market stands today. The graves of seventy prophets are there, all of them died after Luqmān and they all died during a single day due to starvation. They had been driven to Ramlah by Banū Isrā‘il and were barricaded [within the city] by them. Thus, they all passed away.”

The author said: Just as people utilise Luqmān as a paragon of wisdom, they utilise ‘Abūd as a paragon of [heavy] sleeping. ‘Abūd was a black man and

---

41 There is no established location for a grave of a prophet except our Prophet. This was stated by Ibn al-Jawzi and al-Qārī in al-Asrār al-Marfū‘ah.
a gatherer of firewood. On one occasion he spent an entire week gathering firewood without sleeping, then he left and slept for a week. Thus he was used as an example of a heavy sleeper.

Al-Sharqi ibn Qatami said, “Abūd feigned death to his people. He said, ‘Mourn me so that I can see how you would do so if I passed.’ Thus, they covered him with a sheet and started to mourn him, but then noticed that death had subsequently struck him.”
Chapter Sixteen

In mention of the major kings of the Ħabash

Their master was the Najāshi to whom the Companions emigrated to his land, to whom the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ wrote to and that accepted Islām.

The kings of Abysinnia were all named as the Najāshi (Negus), just as the kings of Persia were all named as the Kisra (Khosrow).

Ibn Ishaq said, “The name of al-Najāshi is Aḥṣamah. This corresponds to ‘Atiyyah (gift) in Arabic.”

42 [T] The following quote has been paraphrased. Al-Suyūṭī said in Ṣaḥīḥ al-Ḥubshān (p. 88), “There are eight different views on his name. [The above] is the famous view and which is found in the Ṣaḥīḥ. The other variations are: (ii) صحة, as narrated by al-Qādi ʿIyyād, (iii) صحة, as narrated by Ibn Abī Shaybah in his Musnad, (iv) صحيح, as narrated by al-Rāfiʿī in Sharḥ al-Musnad, (v) صحيح, as narrated by al-Ḥākim in al-Mustadrak upon the authority of Ibn Shihāb, (vi) صحيح, as narrated by al-Īsmāʿīlī, (vii) صحيح, as narrated by al-Kirmānī in Sharḥ al-Bukhārī, and (viii) مكحول بن صحة, as narrated by al-Zarkashī upon the authority of Muqāṭīl.”
Tanwīrū 'l-Ghabashi fī Faḍlī 's-Sūdānī wa 'l-Ḥabashi

Ibn Qutaybah said, “Al-Najāshī is a name designated for a king, similar to the terms Hirqil and Qaysar.” He continued, “I am not aware whether this word is an Arabic word or whether it is a word between which there is concordance in the Arabic language with another language. [Analysis of the word linguistically:] al-najāshi means al-nājish, and al-najsh means to incite something, e.g. the person who [incites a potential buyer during the course of pre-sale negotiations or who builds hype] through insincere bidding is called a nājish or a nājjāsh.”

Ibn Yudhayf said: "The Messenger of Allah ﷺ sent Amr ibn Umayyah to al-Najāshī. With him was sent the following letter:

raisul allāh - ṣallā lāhu ʿalayhi wa sallam - ʿumuru bin ʿumayyad al-ṭabari - obb - al-najāshī - wākāt muʿeen -

Ibn Ishāq said, “The Messenger of Allah ﷺ sent ‘Amr ibn Umayyah to al-Najāshī. With him was sent the following letter:


43 Al-Suyūṭī quotes al-Muhib al-Ṭabarī in Rafʿ Shāb al-Hubshān (pp. 88-89/a), “[Al-Najāshī] is a title used for every king of the Abyssinians, just as the Khalifah of the Muslims is termed as Amīr al-Muʾminīn, the king of the Romans is termed as Qaysar, the king of the Turks is termed as Khāqān, the king of the Persians is termed as Kiswa, the king of the Coptics is termed as Fīrāwn, the king of the Egyptians is termed as al-ʿĀzīz, the king of the Yemenis is termed as ʿTurba’, the king of the Himyarite Kingdom is termed as al-Qayl, the king of al-Hind is termed as Yasūʿ, the king of the Sabeans is termed as al-Nimruḍ and the king of the Berbers is Jaloot.”
‘In the name of Allah, al-Rahmân, al-Rahîm. From Muḥammad, the Messenger of Allah, to al-Nâjâshî, king of Abyssinia. I praise Allah, the King, the Pure, the Perfect, the Bestower of Faith, the Overseer. I bear witness that ‘Īsâ ibn Maryam is the spirit of Allah and His word which He placed into Maryam, the virgin maiden, thus she bore ‘Īsâ. I call you to Allah alone without any partner [to Him,] and to follow me and believe in that which has been revealed to me, for I am the Messenger of Allah. I have sent my cousin Ja’far to you with a party of Muslims. Peace be upon those who follow the [true] guidance.’

Al-Nâjâshî wrote back to the Messenger of Allah stating:

‘In the name of Allah, al-Rahmân, al-Rahîm, to Muḥammad from al-Nâjâshî. Peace be upon you O Prophet, and [upon you] be the mercy and blessings of Allah, the one Whom besides there is no deity worthy of being worshipped and Whom guided me towards Islam. To proceed: Your letter reached me O Messenger of Allah, and that which you mentioned in regards to ‘Īsâ—by the Lord of the heavens and the earth—‘Īsâ ibn Maryam is not more than what you stated by a cupule. Indeed, he is as you have stated.

من اتبع الهدى}}

Illuminating the Darkness: The Virtues of Blacks and Abyssinians
We were already aware of that which you have presented to us, and your cousin and his companions have reached us. I bear witness that you are the Messenger of Allāh, I have given bay'ah (the pledge of allegiance) to you and to your cousin, and I have accepted Islam, submitting to Allāh, the Lord of the worlds. I have despatched my son to you, and if you wish me to come to you then I will do so, O Messenger of Allāh. I testify that what you state is the truth. May peace be upon you and the mercy and blessing of Allāh.”


Ibn Ishāq said, “It was mentioned to me that he despatched his son with sixty Abyssinians in a vessel and they drowned.”

وقال الواقدي عن أشباخه: كان أول رسول بعثه رسول اللّه - صلى اللّه عليه وسلم - عمو بن أمية إلى النجاشي، وكتب إليه كتابين يدعوه في أحدهما إلى الإسلام ويشتول عليه القرآن، وأخذ كتاب رسول اللّه فوضعه على عينيه، ونول عن سريه فجعله على الأرض توافعا، ثم أمّل وشهد شهادة الحق، وقال: أو كنت أستطيع أن آتيه، وكتب إلى رسول اللّه [صلى اللّه عليه وسلم] بإجابته وتصديقه وإسلامه.

Al-Waqidi stated upon the authority of his shaykh, “The first messenger sent by the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ to al-Najashi was ‘Amr ibn Umayyah. He wrote two letters to al-Najashi, calling to him in one of them towards Islam and citing the Qur’ān. Al-Najashi took the letter and placed it before his eyes, descended from his chair and sat upon the ground in modesty. Then he accepted Islam and testified the testification of truth. He said, ‘If it was possible for me to go to him then I would do so.’ Then he wrote to the Messenger of Allāh with his response and to attest his Islam.
In the other letter, he ordered him to conduct his marriage to Umm Ḥabibah bint Abī Sufyān—who had emigrated to Abyssinia with her husband (‘Ubaydallah ibn Jaḥsh, who became a Christian there)—and he also ordered him in this letter to return his companions who were with him and provide them with what they needed for the trip. And he actioned this.”

In mention of the request of the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ to al-Najāshi to give his marriage proposal to Umm Ḥabibah bint Abī Sufyān ibn Ḥarb:

Umm Ḥabibah had emigrated to the land of Abyssinia with her husband ‘Abdullāh ibn Jaḥsh, he had became a Christian there, whilst she remained a Muslim.
Ismā’il ibn ‘Amr ibn Sa‘īd ibn al-‘Āṣ reported upon the authority of Umm Ḥabībah, “I saw in my sleep as if my husband ‘Abdullāh ibn Jaḥsh had the vilest and most deformed form. Thus, I became frightened and said, ‘Allāh has altered his ḥal (state).’ Then in the morning he stated to me, ‘O Umm Ḥabībah, I pondered in regards to religion and did not see a religion better than Christianity, thus I took it as my religion and then I entered the religion of Muḥammad. Now I have returned back to Christianity.’ I said, ‘By Allah there is no good for you [in it.]’ Then I informed him of what I saw during my sleep but he did not pay heed to it. He took to alcohol until [the time] he died. Then I saw him during my sleep as if he came to me whilst saying, ‘O Umm al-Mu’minīn (Mother of the Believers),’ I became frightened and interpreted it to mean that the Messenger of Allāh would marry me.”

She continued, “Once my iddah (waiting) period had finished, an envoy
of al-Najashi had come and was seeking permission to enter. It was a slave girl of his named Abrahah, who was charged with his oiling and clothing. She entered [my room] and stated, ‘The king states to you that the Messenger of Allâh wrote to him to propose marriage to you.’ I said, ‘May Allâh cause you happiness through this good [news.]’ The king said, ‘Appoint a representative for your marriage.’ So I sent a message to Sa'id ibn al-'Âs and he was appointed as my representative. I gifted Abrahah two bracelets made from silver, and two anklets I wore, and silver rings worn upon my toes due to the happiness I felt due to this good news. When evening fell, al-Najashi ordered [the presence of] Ja'far ibn Abî Talib and the Muslims who remained there and so they attended. Al-Najashi delivered a speech stating, ‘All praise be to Allâh, the King, the Most Holy, the Provider of Peace, the Guardian of Faith, the Preserver, the Almighty, the Compeller. I testify that there is no deity worthy of being worshipped except Allâh and that Muhammad is His slave and messenger, and that he is the one whom 'Isa ibn Maryam gave glad tidings of. To proceed:

فَإِنْ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ ﷺ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ - كَتَبَ إِلَيْنَا أَنَّ أَرْوَاحَ أَمِّ حَبْيَةَ بنت أبي شِفِيَانَ، فَأُجِبَتْ إِلَيْنَا مَا دَعَاهُ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ ﷺ، وَقَدْ أَصْدَفَتْهَا أَرْبَعَ مَلَاةَ دِينَارٍ، ثُمَّ سَكَبَ الْذَّنَائِيرِ لِثَنَى يَدِ الْقُوُّمِ.

The Messenger of Allâh wrote to me [requesting] that I conduct his marriage to Umm Ḥâbibah bint Abi Sufyân. Thus, I have acceded to the request of the Messenger of Allâh and he gave her a dowry of four hundred dinars.’ Then he poured forth the dinars in front of the people.
Khalid ibn Sa'id said, 'All praise be to Allah, I praise Him, seek His aid and forgiveness. I bear witness that there is no deity worthy of being worshipped except Allah and that Muhammad is His slave and messenger, He sent him with the guidance and the true religion for him to make it prevail over all other religions, even if the polytheists detest it. To proceed: I accede to that which the Messenger of Allah has requested and I marry him to Umm Habibah bint Abi Sufyân. May Allah bless the Messenger of Allah.' Then al-Najâshî gave the dinars to Khalid ibn Sa'id who accepted them. Then the attendants wished to stand up [so as to leave,] but al-Najâshî stated to them, 'Sit, for the Sunnah of the Prophets is that when they get married, food is eaten [in celebration of the marriage.]' So, he called for some food to be served and they ate and then dispersed.
Umm Ḥabībah said, “When the money reached me I requested the presence of Abrahah who brought be the good news. I said to her, ‘Indeed I gave you what I had on a day upon wherein there was no money in my possession. Here are fifty dinars, take them and utilise them. She refused and took out a bag in which there was all that I gave to her. She returned everything to me and said, ‘I have been strictly ordered by the king that I do not take anything, and I am the one charged with his clothing and oiling. I have come to follow the religion of Muḥammad the Messenger of Allāh, and have submitted to Allāh the Lord of the worlds. Furthermore, the king has ordered the women to send to you everything they possess from perfume.’” She continued, “During the next day she came to me with ʿud, wars, anbar and an abundance of fragrance. I brought all of this when I came to the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ. He used to see them upon me and with me but he did not rebuke this. Then Abrahah stated, ‘My requirement from you is that you convey my salām to the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ and that you inform him that I am a follower of his religion.’” She said, “She was the one who prepared me [for the journey back,] and each time she entered my presence she would say, ‘Do not forget my need.’ Thus when I came to the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ I informed him in regards to the speech and also regarding how Abrahah treated me. He became happy at this, and I conveyed her salām to him, to which he replied, ‘And peace be upon her, and the mercy and blessing of Allāh.’”

‘Abdullāh ibn Abī Bakr ibn Ḥazm said, “This occurred during the seventh year.”

Al-Zuhrī said, “Al-Najāshī provided her with provisions and sent with her Shurḥabil ibn Ḥasanah. When Abū Sufyān came to know of the Messenger of Allāh’s marriage to Umm Ḥabībah he said, ‘He is indeed an honour-

44 Reported by Ibn Sa’d in Tabaqāt al-Kubrā (77).
able man who is highly esteemed and generous.'

"Al-Zuhri said, "When Abū Sufyān ibn Ḥarb entered Madinah, he went to the Messenger of Allah and addressed him in regards to an extension of the Treaty of Hudaybiyyah. However, the Messenger of Allah did not accept this. So, he went to his daughter Umm Habibah. When he was about to sit upon the carpet of the Prophet she took it and folded it. He stated, ‘O daughter, do you covet this carpet over me, or vice versa?’ She replied, ‘Indeed this is the carpet of the Messenger of Allah. You are a person who is impure [spiritually] and a polytheist.’ He stated, ‘O daughter, verily you have been stricken with evil after you left me.’"

"'Ā'ishah said, "Umm Habibah called for me when she was in the throes of death and she said, ‘We both had [frictions which often] occur between co-wives, so I ask Allah to forgive me and you.’” She (‘Ā’ishah) said, “May Allah forgive you for everything therein and overlook [your sins] and absolve you from that.” “She said, ‘You have brought me happiness, may Allah reciprocate for you happiness.’ She then sent for Umm Salamah and stated something similar to her. She passed away in the year forty-four during"
In mention of the Messenger of Allah informing the people of the death of al-Najāshī and his performance of the funeral prayer for him:

In the month of Rajab in the ninth year after the hijrah, Al-Najāshī passed away. The Messenger of Allah announced the passing of al-Najāshī on the day he died. Thus, he went out to the musallā beside the masjid and ordered his Companions to stand in rows behind him. He [performed the funeral prayer for him,] making the takbir (Allāhu akbar) on him four times.

‘A'ishah said, “When al-Najāshī passed away, we were told that a light

\[
\text{On the seventh day of Rajab, the Prophet (ﷺ) announced the passing of}
\]

\[
\text{of al-Najāshī, and he performed the funeral prayer for him, making the}
\]

\[
\text{of this news to the people, he ordered his Companions to stand behind}
\]

\[
\text{him. He performed the funeral prayer for al-Najāshī, including the}
\]

\[
\text{four takbirs.}
\]

\[
\text{Al-Suyūtī,} \text{ Azbār al-'Urūb} \text{ (p. 17/a), “This was reported by Malik, al-}
\]

\[
\text{Shāfi'ī, al-Bukhārī, Muslim, Abū Dāwūd and al-Nasā'ī.”}
\]
remained showing upon his grave.”

***

ذكر ملك كبير من ملوك الحبشة

In mention of one of the major Abyssinian kings

Ibrāhīm ibn ‘Isā ibn Abī Ja‘far al-Manṣūr said, “I heard my uncle, Sulaymān ibn Abī Ja‘far say, ‘I was standing with al-Manṣūr one night when Ismā‘īl ibn ‘Alī, Shāliḥ ibn ‘Alī Sulaymān ibn ‘Alī and Isā ibn ‘Alī were with him. They were recalling the collapse of the kingdom of the Umayyads, what ‘Abdullāh did to them, and how he fought some from them in the river of Abī Fuṭrus.

فقال المنتصر: ألا منعلقهم ليروا من دولتنا ما رأينا من دولتهم ويرغبوا إلينا كمما

Rugina إلينا، فقد لعمري عاشوا سعداء وما وا فقراء.

Al-Manṣūr stated, ‘Is it not possible that we can be considerate with them so that they see from our reign what we saw from theirs, and that they ask from

46 Al-Suyūṭī said in Azbār al-Urūb (p. 17/b), “This was reported by Abū Dāwūd.” [T] Shaykh ‘Abd al-Muḥsin al-‘Abbād said in his commentary upon this report (255/11) that it is a mawqūf narration of ‘Aṭīshah and not marfu’ (raised) to the Prophet ﷺ. Her statement indicates that this news reached them or its occurrence was a rumour. Proof supporting it has not been established and al-Albānī graded it as da‘if. [End]
us what we used to ask from them. For—indeed—they lived in fortunate circumstances and died in poverty.'

Then Ismā'īl ibn 'Alī stated to him, 'O Commander of the Faithful, 'Ubaydullāh ibn Marwān ibn Muḥammad is currently incarcerated by you, and he had a strange story [concerning his interaction] with the Nubian king. So, send for him and ask him.'

قَالَ: ﴿يَا مُسِيِّب، ﻋَلَّيْهِ﴾

He stated, 'O Musayyib, bring him before me.'

فَأَخْرَجَ فَقَبِيلَهُ، وَقَالَ: ﴿وَرَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ وَبَرَكاتِه﴾

Then a youthful man was brought forth, he was constricted by heavy chains and heavy shackles on his feet, and the like upon his hands. He said, 'Peace be upon you O Commander of the Faithful, and Allāh’s mercy and blessings.'

قَالَ: ﴿يا عَبْدُ اللَّهِ، رَدْ السَّلَامُ أَمَنَ، وَلَمْ تَسْمَحَ لَكَ تَقْبِيَهُ بَعْدَهُ، وَلَكِنَّ اقْتَعَدٌ﴾

He (i.e. al-Manṣūr) said, 'O 'Ubaydullāh, replying to your greeting of peace shall assure your safety and I do not find myself yet inclined towards giving you protection, but you may sit.'

فِجَأَوْا بِوَسَادَةٍ فَثَبَتَ فَقَعَدَ عَلَيْهَا، فَقَالَ ﴿لَهُ﴾

So, they brought a cushion, it was folded and he sat upon it. Then he said
to him, 'I have come to know that you have a strange story concerning the Nubian king. What is it?'

He replied, 'O Commander of the Faithful, I am not—and I swear on this by the One who honoured you with the Caliphate—capable of breathing due to the heaviness of the iron. My chain has become rusty due to me urinating upon it, and due to water being poured upon it during the times of prayer.'

He said, 'O Musayyib, remove the iron from him.'
He then said, 'That is right O Commander of the Faithful, when 'Abdullāh ibn 'Aţāli headed towards us, I was the one sought within the group as I was to have the rule after my father. So I entered his treasury and took ten thousand dinars. Then I called ten individuals from my young slaves and gave them each a ride, and to each of them I gave one thousand dinars. I also loaded five mules and tied to my waist some valuable jewels and one thousand dinars. I then fled to the land of Nubia. I proceeded through it for three days, and then I reached a town called Kharāb. I ordered my slaves to stop there and clean the area and so they went to it, and they swept the dirt from it, then they laid some carpets down. I then called one of the slaves in whom I could put trust in his intelligence, and I said to him, 'Go to the king, convey to him my greetings and take from him a guarantee of safety. Also purchase provisions for me.' He continued, 'So he went and he was delayed [to the extent that] I started to have bad thoughts. Then he returned and he was accompanied by another man. When he entered, he bowed to me, then he sat before me and said, 'The king sent his greetings to you and asks you, 'Who are you? What brings you to my land? Are you antagonistic to me, seeking to change your religion to the religion I am upon or seeking asylum with me?''

قلت: ترد على المملك السلام، وقول: أما مصرب لك فمعاذ الله، وأما راغب في دينك فما كنت لأبغي بديني بدلاً، وأما مستجير بك فلمري، قال: فذهب ثمّ رجع إليّ فقال: إن المملك يقرّ علىك السلام، وقول لك: أنا صائر إليك غداً، فلًا تحذن في نفسك حديثًا ولا تتخذ شيئًا من ميرة، فإنها تأتيك ومالك تحتاج إلىه.

I said, 'Reciprocate my greetings to him, and say: As for me being antagonistic to you then I seek refuge in Allah. As for me wishing to change to your religion then I do not seek a substitute for my religion. As for seeking refuge with you, then yes [I do so].' He continued, 'He left and then returned to me, stating, 'The king sends his greetings to you and says, 'I am coming to you tomorrow, so do not do anything and do not take any provisions as they will be sent to you and your needs will be provided.'
I received the provisions and I ordered my slaves to lay all the carpets, and I ordered them to lay one carpet for him and the like for me. On the next day I awaited his arrival when one of my slaves came and stated that the king had come. I stood between two balconies of the palace to see him. I saw a man wearing two garments, wearing one as a lower garment and the other as an upper garment. He was walking barefoot with ten companions who were armed, three preceded him and seven followed him, and I viewed him disparagingly, when I saw his lowly state it was to the extent that I thought to kill him. When he began to draw close to the abode, I saw a great crowd.

So, I asked what this was, and it was said, 'It is horses drawing close O Commander of the Faithful, approximately ten thousand horses with their riders.'
The horses arrived at the abode at the time that the man entered, and as he entered, they had encircled it. When he looked at me, he said to his translator, ‘Where is this man?’ The translator beckoned with his head towards me. Then he looked at me again and so I rushed to embrace him, but he was too humble to accept it so he took my hand, kissed it and placed it against his chest. He began to remove the carpets with his foot, rolling up the carpet—I thought that they considered this too luxurious to walk upon—until he reached the cushions where he and I were supposed to sit. Then I stated to his translator, ‘Subhanallah, why does he not sit upon the place specially prepared for him [to sit upon.]’

He replied, ‘I am a king, and it is incumbent upon every king to show humility to Allah Who raised him in rank.’ Then he stuck his finger in the sand for quite some time, and he then raised his head and stated to me, ‘How is it that your people were deprived of leadership when you are the closest people to your Prophet?’

I replied, ‘A group of people arose who were closer in proximity to the Prophet than us, they robbed us, slaughtered us and expelled us. Thus, I fled to you, seeking aid firstly with Allah and then with you.’
He said, ‘Did you people drink alcohol though it is prohibited in your book?’

I replied, ‘This was done by the slaves, followers and foreigners who entered our lands and they did it without our permission.’

He said, ‘Do you not sit on silk cloth when you mount your rides, and have your horses decorated with gold and silver though this is forbidden for you?’

I replied, ‘This was done by the slaves, followers and foreigners who entered our kingdom.’

He said, ‘Why is it that when you would go hunting you would place force upon the villages, imposing upon their people that which they could not bear with severe beatings? Furthermore, you would not be satisfied until you walked over their crops and damaged them in seeking a *duraj* (a type of bird)—worth half a dirham—or a bird of no value, and this is despite damaging [property] being prohibited in your religion.’

I said, ‘This was done by the slaves and followers.’
He said, ‘Nay, rather you made lawful that which Allâh made unlawful, and you performed that which He prohibited. Thus, He took your honour from you and adorned you with abjectness. And [it may be that] Allâh’s course for you has not yet reached its end point, and I fear that a punishment is to befall you if you were among the transgressors, and it will consequently fall upon me as well. This is because when punishment descends it is wide and encompassing. I order you to leave after three [days,] and if I find you here after [this time limit] indeed I will take all of your possessions and kill you alongside your entire party.’

فَمَّا وَبِئْبٌ فَخَرَجَ فَأَقَمَتْ ثَلَاثًا وَخَرَجَتْ إِلَىٰ مِصْرٍ فَأَخْذَيْنِوَلِيْكَ فَبَعُثْيَ بِهِ إِلَيْكَ وَهَا أَنَا إِذَا أَلْمَعْتُ أَحْبَيْنِ أَنَّيْ مِنَ الْحَيَاةِ.

He then leapt up and left. I remained there for three days and then exited towards Egypt. Your vassal apprehended me there and sent me to you. So here I am, and death is more beloved to me than living [in this state.]’

فَهُمُ أَبُو جَعْرَةٍ بِإِطْلَافِهِ، فَقَالَ لَهُ إِسْمَاعِيلٌ بْنِ عَلِيٍّ: فِي عَنْقِيَ بِيْعَةٌ لَّهُ قَالَ: فَمَا تَرَى؟ قَالَ: يَنْبِلُ فِي ذَٰلِكَ مِنْ ذُو رَأْيٍ ثُمَّ إِخْرَاجٍ عَلَیْهِ مَا يَخْرَجُ عَلَیْهِ مَثَلُهُ. قَالَ: فَفَعَلَ ذَٰلِكَ بِهِ، فَوَزَّلَهُ مَا أَذْرَى أَمَامَ فِي حِبْسِهِ أَمْ أَطْلَقَهُ الْعَشَّرُ.

Abû Ja’far intended to release him then Ismâ’il ibn ‘Ali said to him (i.e. Abû Ja’far), ‘I have given a pledge to him.’ He said, ‘What is your view?’ He (i.e. Ismâ’il ibn ‘Ali) replied, ‘He will stay in one of our prisons and his fate will be that of his likes.” Sulaymân ibn Abî Ja’far said, ‘And this is what happened to him, and by Allâh I do not know if he died in his prison or whether
al-Mahdi released him.’”

***

ملك آخر

Another King

Abū al-Qāsim al-Nakha‘ī reported on the authority of Muḥammad ibn Yūsuf, the judge of San‘ā’, “A king of the Zanj wrote to me. At the end of his letter it was written:

لا أسأل الناس عن ما في نفوسهم، ما في ضميري للهم من ذلك يغتنمي
ولا أقول لعرس الجار في لطف في عقلة من عيون الحسي أربوني
لا يغتنمي وصل من يغتنمي مفاقي، ولا أرى لمن لا يغتنمي ليني
والأله أو كرهت كفتي مصاحبي بوأمة أقلت لها من ساعد بيبي
ثم ألغفت إلى الأخرى وقلت لها، مهلا عليكم ونافوا مثلها كوني

I do not ask people about what they think of me, I suffice with what I think of them.
I do not ask my neighbour in his wedding, away from the eyes of the people to let me in.
I do not go after who does not wish to be with me, and I do not show kindness to who does not want my kindness.
By Allah, if my hand disliked being with me, I would ask it to leave my arm.
And I would look at my other hand and say to it, be at ease or you can leave like my other hand.
Chapter Seventeen

In mention of the esteemed blacks amongst the Companions

Salām, the mawlā (freedman) of Abī Ḥudhayfah

He used to lead the Muhājirin in prayer from Makkah until they reached Madīnah because he was the most competent with the Qur'ān. Those who prayed behind him included Abū Bakr and ʿUmar.

[72] أخبرنا مُحَمَّد بن عبد التَّنَابِقِي بن أَحْمَدُ قالَ أَنَّا حَمَدَانَ أَنَا أَحْمَدَ قَالَ أَنَا أَبُو نعيم أَحْمَدُ بن عبد الله الحَفَاظُ قَالَ: نَأَبُو حَامِدُ بن جَبِيلَة قَالَ نَا مُحَمَّدُ بن إِسْحَاق السِّرَاجُ قَالَ نَا مُحَمَّدُ بن خَدَاش قَالَ نَا مُرْوَانُ بن مُعاَيْيَةٍ قَالَ نَا سَعِيدُ قَالَ سَمِعْتُ شَهِرٍ بن حُوْضْب يَقُولُ: قَالَ عَمَّرُ بن الْخُطَابِ (رَضِي الله عَنْهُ): نَأَنْفَسْلُ سَالِمًا مُوْلِيِّ أَبِي حُذَيْفَة فَسَأَلْنِي عَنَّهُ رَبِّي عِنْدَهُ وَجَلَّ: مَا حَمَلْتَ عَلَى ذَلِكَ لَقُلْتُ: رَبِّ سَمِعْتُ نِيَبَكَ - صَلِّي الله عَلَيْهِ وَسَلِّمَ - وَهُوَ يَقُولُ: (رَبِّ يَحْبُبُ اللَّهِ عِنْدَهُ وَجَلَّ) مِنْ قَلْبِهِ}}.

Shahr ibn Ḥawshab reported upon the authority of ʿUmār ibn al-Khaṭṭāb, ‘If I were to anoint Sālim, the mawlā of Hudhayfah, as the Caliph, and my
Lord asked regarding it, I would reply, ‘My Lord, I heard your Prophet state, ‘He loves Allah truly from his heart.’”

Abū Nu‘aym said, “On the Day of al-Yamāmah Salim took hold of the banner of the Muslims with his hand, and then it was cut off. He thus took hold of it with his left hand and it was also cut off. Then he embraced the banner with his arms and recited, {Muhammad is not but a messenger. [Other] messengers have passed on before him} And then he was killed.”

---

Bilāl ibn Rabāḥ

And then he was killed.”

---

48 Al‘Imran: 144
He was named after his mother i.e. Bilāl ibn Ḥamāmah, and there were numerous individuals amongst the Companions who were attributed to their mothers, and this was widely known. They include: Mu‘ādh and Mu‘āwidh ibnā (the two sons of) ‘Afrā—i.e. their mother—and their father was al-Hārith ibn Rif‘ah; Suhayl and Sa‘wān ibnā Bayda‘—i.e. their mother—and their father was Wahb; Mālik ibn Numilah—i.e. his mother—and his father was Thābit al-Muzni; Shurābil ibn al-Ḥaṣanah—i.e. his mother—and his father was ‘Abdullāh ibn al-Mutā‘; Bishr ibn al-Ḥaṣāṣiyah—i.e. his mother—and his father was Ma‘bad ibn Shurāḥabil; Ibn Umm Makṭūm, and his father was ‘Amr ibn Qays; ‘Abdullāh ibn Buḥaynah—i.e. his mother—and his father was Mālik al-Azārī; al-Hārith ibn al-Barsā—i.e. his mother—and his father was Mālik ibn Qays; Ya‘lā ibn Siyyābah—i.e. his mother—and his father was Umayyah; Ya‘lā ibn Siyyābah—i.e. his mother—and his father was Murrah; Sā‘d ibn Ḥatbah—i.e. his mother—and his father was Buḥayr ibn Mu‘āwiyyah and amongst his sons was Abū Yūsuf al-Qādī; Badīl ibn Umm Aṣram—i.e. his mother—and whose father was Salamah; and Khaffāf ibn Nudbah—i.e. his mother—and his father was ‘Umayr. All of those mentioned are Companions.

And amongst the Tābi‘īn (the generation after the Companions) and those after them were many individuals who were famously referred to with the names of their mothers. Examples are Ismā‘īl ibn ‘Ulyah, and his father’s name was Ibrāhīm; Muḥammad ibn ‘Utmah—i.e. his mother—and his father’s name was Khālid; Sulaymān ibn Qattah; Manṣūr ibn Ṣafīyyah, and other than them.
As for Bilal’s story:

He was one of the earliest people to embrace Islam and his people would abuse him and say, “Your lords are al-Lat and al-‘Uzza.” To which he would reply, “Ahadun, ahad (One [Lord], One).” Then Abu Bakr al-Siddiq came to him, purchased him for seven awqaf and emancipated him. He witnessed the Battle of Badr, ’Uhud and all the other battles. He was the first one to perform the adhān (call to prayer) for the Messenger of Allah, and he would perform it at home and whilst travelling. He was also [appointed by him] as the treasurer of the Bayt al-Mal. In appearance he was extremely dark, thin, tall, with a curved nose and a full head of hair, and a little dark and grey hair on his cheeks.
Muhammad ibn Abī Tāhir al-Bazzāz reported upon the authority of Muḥammad ibn Abl al-Qasim al-Baghdādī informed us upon the authority of Hishām ibn ‘Urwah ibn al-Zubayr’s father, “Waraqah ibn Nawfal passed by Bilāl whilst he was being tortured and whilst he was stating, ‘‘Āḥadun, abād.’’”
Then Waraqah approached Umayyah ibn Khalaf and said to him, ‘I swear by Allāh that you should show him compassion.’ Until Abū Bakr passed by him one day whilst he was being tortured and stated to Umayyah, ‘Are you not fearful of Allāh in treating this poor man in such a manner? How long will you continue?’ He replied, ‘You corrupted him so rescue him from what you see.’ So Abū Bakr said, ‘I have a young black slave who is stronger and sturdier than him, and more steadfast in your religion, so I will exchange him for Bilāl.’ He replied, ‘I accept.’ Abū Bakr then said, ‘Here he is for you.’ Thus Abū Bakr exchanged his slave with Bilāl.”

Muḥammad ibn Ishaq said: Umayyah would take him out when the heat of the afternoon sun became scorching and make him lie down upon his back in the valley of Makkah. Then he would order a large rock to be collected and placed upon his chest, and he would say to him, “This state of yours will not cease until you die or you reject Muḥammad and worship al-Lāt and al-‘Uzza.” Bilāl would respond in the face of this anguish. “Aḥadun, aḥad.”

Jābir ibn ‘Abdullāh reported upon the authority of ‘Umar, “Abū Bakr was our master, and he emancipated our master (i.e. Bilāl).”

50 Reported by al-Ḥākim in al-Mustadrak (3/285) and he said, “It is sabīb but Mus­lim and al-Bukhārī did not report it.” Al-Dhahabī concurred with him. It was also reported by Ibn Sa‘d in al-Tabaqāṭ (3/175).
Thabit reported on the authority of Anas that the Messenger of Allah said, “Bilal preceded the Abyssinians [to Jannah].”

Zayd ibn Salâm reported upon the authority 'Abdullâh al-Hawzañî that he met Bilâl and stated to him, “O Bilâl, inform me of the finances of the Messenger of Allah.” He replied, “He did not have anything, I was the one who would inform him about his finances from the time he was despatched by Allah until he passed away, and whenever he would see a Muslim come bereft of clothing he would order me [to handle the affair] and I would go and borrow some money to buy a garment for him, cover him and feed him.”

51 Reported by al-Ĥâkim in al-Mustadrâk (3/284-285 and 402). Al-Ĥâkim did not mention anything further, however al-Dhahâbî stated, “I say: The narrator 'Amârah is very weak, and he was declared to be da'îf by al-Dâraquṭnî.” And Ibn Abî Ḥâtim mentioned it in al-’Ilal from the route Muhammad ibn Ziyâd—Abî Amâmah and said, “I heard my father and Abu Zur’âh state, “This hadîth is bâtil (baseless), there is no basis for it with this isnâd.” It was also reported by Ibn Sa’d in al-Tabaqât (3/175).
Abdullāh ibn Buraydah reported upon the authority of his father that the Prophet ﷺ arose one day and called Bilāl, stating, “O Bilāl, with what have you preceded me into Jannah? For I have never entered it except that I hear your footsteps in front of me. Indeed, I entered Jannah yesterday and heard your footsteps.” He replied, “I do not do anything [particular] except that when I perform ablution, I pray two units.” The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ thus stated, “It is due to this.”

Hishām ibn ‘Urwah reported upon the authority of his father that ‘Ā’ishah ﷺ said, “The Messenger of Allāh entered Madīnah during an epidemic, and whenever Bilāl would suffer from a fever he would say:

Volante Shurri ḥal Abīyi ‘l-Ṭābi’ī
Wāḥel ‘addin ‘a’mā Mīyāh Maqīṭa
Wāḥel yibdun Li Shāma Waṭīfīl

I wish I could know if I would live a night, in the valley [of Makkah] surrounded with its scented grass and plants.

52 Reported by Imām Ahmad in al-Musnad (5/354 and 360) and al-Ḥākim in al-Mustadrak (3/285). Al-Ḥākim said, “It is sabīb upon the conditions of the two shaykhs and they did not report it.” Al-Dhahabī concurred with him.
And whether I will be to drink from the waters of Majannah, and see the two mountains of Shamah and Tafil.

اللَّهُمَّ الْعَنْ عَنْهَا بِنَ رَبِيعَةٍ وَسَنَبَيَّةٍ بِنَ رَبِيعَةٍ وَأَمْيَةٍ بِنَ خَلْفٍ كَمَا أُخْرِجُونَا مِنْ مَكَّةُ.

[Continued...] O Allah curse 'Utbah ibn Rab'ah, Shaybah ibn Rab'ah, and Umayyah ibn Khalaf, as they expelled us from Makkah.”

Muḥammad ibn Ibrāhīm al-Tamūmī said, “When the Messenger of Allah ﷺ passed away, Bilāl called the adhān whilst he had not yet been buried. Whenever he would say, ‘I bear witness that Muḥammad is the Messenger of Allah,’ the people would begin to weep. When the Messenger of Allah had been buried, Abū Bakr stated to Bilāl, ‘Perform the adhān.’ He replied, ‘If you emancipated me so as to make me subservient to you then I will do so, however if you emancipated me for Allah ﷺ then leave me [to serve] the one you emancipated me for.’ Abū Bakr said, ‘I did not emancipate you except for Allah ﷺ.’ Thus, he said, ‘I will not perform the adhān for anyone after the Messenger of Allah ﷺ.’ [Abū Bakr] replied, ‘It is as you wish.’” He said, “He remained there until the expedition set off to al-Shām and he travelled with them.”

53 This was reported by the author in Muthir al-'Azm, and he attributed it to al-Bukhārī and Muslim (1/103-104). It was also reported by Imām Aḥmad in al-Musnad (6/56 and 65).
The author said, “Bilal passed away in Damascus in the year eighteen when he was over sixty-three years of age.”

**Muhujj Mawli ‘Umar ibn al-Nakhtab**

Mahja’, the Mawla (freed slave) of ‘Umar ibn al-Khattab

He was amongst the first of the Muhajirun, and he was the first of the Muslims to be killed during the Battle of Badr. He was killed by ‘Amir ibn al-Hadrami.

[Sadaqah ibn Khalid reported upon the authority of ‘Abdul Rahman ibn Yazid ibn Jābir, “It reached me that the Messenger of Allah s.w.t. said, ‘The masters of the black people are four, Luqmān, Mahja’, Bilal and al-Najashi.’”](54)

---

54 Reported by Ibn ‘Asākir in [his Tārikh](https://example.com). This was stated by al-Suyūtī in [Raf’ Shān al-Ḥubshān](https://example.com) (p. 79/b) and [Azhār al-‘Urūsh](https://example.com) (p. 5/a).
Usāmah ibn Zayd ibn Ḥārithah ibn Sharāḥīl

During the era of Jāhiliyyah (i.e. pre-Islam) the horsemen of Banī al-Qayn raided the dwellings of the Banī Maʿn, and they took Zayd—who at that time was a young boy—and brought him to the marketplace of ‘Ukāz so as to present him for sale. He was purchased by Ḥakīm ibn Hizām on behalf of his aunt Khadījah for four hundred dirhams. When the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ married her, she gifted Zayd to him and he adopted him as a son before the advent of Islam. Zayd was a short man, extremely dark and he had a flat nose. The Messenger of Allāh then emancipated him and married him to his mawldh (freed woman) Umm Ayman, the nurse of the Messenger of Allāh. She bore a child for him named Usāmah, who was given the kunyā (nickname) Usāmah Abā Muḥammad. He was also called, al-Hībb ibn al-Hībb (the beloved, son of the beloved). He was dark skinned.

[56] أخبرنا أَبُو يَكْرَمُ بن أَبِي طَأْهِرُ الْبُخَارِيُّ قَالَ أَنَّا أَخْبَرْنَا أَبُو إِسْحَاقَ الْبُرْزِيمِيُّ قَالَ أَنَا أَبِي حَيْيَةُ قَالَ أَنَّا إِبْنَا مُعَوْفٍ قَالَ أَنَا إِبْنُ الْقَاَسِيُّ مَعْمَحُ بْن سَعْد قَالَ ثُمَّ نَأْمَرَ بِن حَارُونْ قَالَ نَأْمَرْتُ نَأْمَرْتُ بِن سَلْمَةٍ عِنْ هِيْثَمَ بْن عُثْمَانَ بْن عُثْمَانَ فَهَوَّا عَنْ أَبِيهِ أَن رَسُولَ اللَّهِ ﷺ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ أَخْرَ الأَفْقَاحِ ۖ أَنْ أَعْجَبْ بِأَنْ أَعْجَبْ بِأَنْ أَعْجَبْ بِأَنْ أَعْجَبْ بِأَنْ أَعْجَبْ بِأَنْ أَعْجَبْ بِأَنْ أَعْجَبْ بِأَنْ أَعْجَبْ بِأَنْ أَعْجَبْ بِأَنْ أَعْجَبْ بِأَنْ أَعْجَبْ بِأَنْ أَعْجَبْ بِأَنْ أَعْجَبْ بِأَنْ أَعْجَبْ بِأَنْ أَعْجَبْ بِأَنْ أَعْجَبْ بِأَنْ أَعْجَبْ بِأَنْ أَعْجَبْ بِأَنْ أَعْجَبْ بِأَنْ أَعْجَبْ بِأَنْ أَعْجَبْ بِأَنْ أَعْجَبْ بِأَنْ أَعْجَبْ بِأَنْ أَعْجَبْ بِأَنْ أَعْجَبْ بِأَنْ أَعْجَبْ بِأَنْ أَعْجَبْ بِأَنْ أَعْجَبْ بِأَنْ أَعْجَبْ بِأَنْ أَعْجَبْ بِأَنْ أَعْجَبْ بِأَنْ أَعْجَبْ بِأَنْ أَعْجَبْ بِأَنْ أَعْجَبْ بِأَنْ أَعْجَبْ بِأَنْ أَعْجَبْ بِأَنْ أَعْجَبْ بِأَنْ أَعْجَبْ بِأَنْ A
Hishām ibn 'Urwah reported upon the authority of his father, "The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ delayed his descent from 'Arafah due to waiting for Usāmah ibn Zayd. Then a dark-skinned young man with a flat nose came. The people of Yemen said, 'You delayed us due to him?' He (i.e. the father of Hishām) said, 'It is due to this that the people of Yemen disbelieved.' I asked Yazīd ibn Hārūn (he is one of the narrators in the chain, i.e. he was asked by the one who reported it from him), 'What did he mean by 'the people of Yemen disbelieved'? He replied, 'Their apostasy when they apostatised during the time of Abī Bakr. This was due to their belittlement of the Prophet ﷺ.'"

Nāfi' reported upon the authority of Ibn 'Umar, "The Prophet ﷺ sent out a detachment within which was Abū Bakr and 'Umar, and he placed the detachment under the command of Usāmah ibn Zayd. And it was as if the people were contesting this [decision] due to his young age. This reached the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ and so he ascended upon his pulpit, glorified Allāh and praised Him. Then he said, 'The people have contested the leadership of Usāmah ibn Zayd and they contested that of his father before him. However, both befit leadership and they were befitting for the roles. Indeed he (Usāmah) is from the most beloved of people to me, and likewise his fa-
ther was from the most beloved of people to me. Thus, I exhort you to treat Usāmah well.”

Ibn Sa‘d said: Al-Faḍl ibn Dukayn reported upon the authority of Ḥanash [ibn ‘Abdullāh al-San‘ānî], “I heard my father stating that the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ appointed Usāmah as a leader when he was eighteen years of age.”

Ibn Sa‘d said: Muslim ibn Ibrahim [...] reported upon the authority of Muḥammad ibn Sirīn, “The price of date palms during the rule of ‘Uthmān ibn ‘Affān reached one thousand dirhams.” He continued, “[During this time,] Usāmah went to his date palm, pierced it and took out palm pith—feeding his mother with it. He was asked, ‘Why do you do this when you can see that the price of the date palm has reached one thousand dirhams?’ He replied, ‘My mother asked me for it, and whenever I am asked by her do something which I am capable of, I fulfil her request.’

Al-Wāqīḍī said, “Usāmah was twenty years old when the Prophet ﷺ passed

---

56 Reported by Ibn Sa‘d in al-Ṭabaqāt (4/49) and the second report (4/52).
away. He resided in Wādī al-Qurra after the Prophet’s death. He passed away in al-Jurf during the end of Mu‘āwiyah’s caliphate.”

قال الزَهْرِي: حمل أسامة جين مات من الحرف إلى المدينة.
Al-Zuhri said, “Usāmah’s body was transferred from al-Jurf to Madīnah.”

أبو بكره واسمه: نفيع
Abū Bakrah, whose name was Nufayr

لما حاصر رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم - الطائف نادى مناديه: أبي بكر، نزل من الỠضن وخرج إليه نقل، فخرج جماعة منهم أبو بكرة، نزل في بكرة، فأبي بكره، فقال: أيها عبد الله صلى الله عليه وسلم.

When the Messenger of Allāh besieged the city of al-Ta‘if, his herald called out, “Any slave who leaves the stronghold and joins us will be set free. A group came to them, within which was Abū Bakrah. He descended within a pulley (bakrah) and so was named Abū Bakrah. He was considered as one of the mawālī (pl. of mawla, freedman) of the Messenger of Allāh.

أسلم الأسود
Aslam al-Aswad

كان غلاما لرجل من بني يهود من طين، واسمه ورد علي بن أبي طالب بلادهم أخذ أصحبه هذا العبد وأوقفه وخوفه النقد، فأسلم وشهد ماحاليد الإسلاميّة.
He was a slave belonging to a man from Bani Nabhān of Tay—who was assigned to monitor the movement of the Muslims as they arrive. When ʿAlī
Ibn Abī Talib arrived in their land, his comrades detained this slave, binded him and made him fear that he was going to be killed. He embraced Islam and witnessed al-Yamamah alongside Khalid.

---

Mughīth, the husband of Barīrah

[10] روى البخاري في صحيحه من حديث عائشة عن ابن عباس قال: كان زوج بيرة عبداً أسود يقال له: مغيط عبدا لبني فلان كأنه أنظر إلى الهوى يطوف وزرعًا في سKEEP THE MIDDLE\, ودموه تسيل على لحيته، فقال النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم للعابس: ((يا عباس، ألا تعجب من حب مغيط بيرة ومن بعض بيرة مغيتاً)).

Al-Bukhārī reported in his Sahih upon the authority of 'Ikrimah from Ibn 'Abbās, “The husband of Barīrah (the freed slave of 'Āishah) was a black slave named Mughīth the slave of such-and-such a tribe. It is as if I can [still] see him now pacing behind her in the pathways of Madīnah and his tears would stream down into his beard. The Prophet ﷺ said to 'Abbās, ‘O 'Abbās, is it not amazing the extent of Mughīth’s love for Barīrah and her hate of him?’

فقال النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم: ((أو راجعته)). فقالت: يا رسول الله، تأمرني؟

The Prophet ﷺ said to Barīrah, ‘Will you not go back to him (as she had terminated the marriage upon being freed)?’ She said, ‘O Messenger of Allāh, are you ordering me?’

قال: ((إِنِّي أَشَفَعَ)). قالت: فَلا حَاجَة لِي فِيهِه.

He said, ‘I am merely mediating.’ She said, ‘Then I have no need for him.”

‘Ikrimah reported upon the authority of Ibn ‘Abbas, “The husband of Barirah was a black slave, the mawla of Banî Mughfrah. By Allah it is as if I am with him now in the outer part of Madinah and its suburbs, with his tears streaming into his beard. He would pursue her, attempting to persuade her to choose him. However, she would not do so.”

١٤٤

سعد الأسود
Sa‘d al-Aswad

[22] أخبرنا أبو مُصْور مُحَمَّد بن عبد الملك قال: أنا إِسْتِحْيَالْ أَبِي مُسْتَعِدَةً قال: أنا حَمْرَاةَ بن يُوسُف قال: أنا أبو أَحْمَد بن عدي قال: أنا بهِلَول بن إِسْتِحْيَالَ عَنْ بهِلَولِ الْأَنْتَابِرِي وَعَبِيدُ اللَّهِ بَن مُحَمَّد بن عبد الْغَفِّر قال: أنا سُوِّيدُ بن سعيدِ (حِ) وأَبِي أبو بكر مُحَمَّد بن أبي طَاهِرُ الْبَبِّازَ قَالَ أَبْنَانِي أَبُو الْقَلاَسِمِ عَلَيْهِ الْمَحْسُونُ. التَّنْوِيْنِي قَالَ أَبُو طَاهِرُ مُحَمَّد بن عبد الرَّحْمَنِ بن الْعَبِّاسِ قَالَ نَا عَبِيدُ اللَّهِ بَن مُحَمَّد بن عبد الْغَفِّر قَالَ نَا سُوِّيدُ بن سعيدِ قَالَ نَا مُحَمَّد بن عمر بن صَالِحِ بَن مُسْتَعِدَةِ الْكَلاَمِيِّ قَالَ خَدْرَتِي الْمَحْسُونَ وَقَافَةَةَ عِنْ أَسَنَ بَن مَالِكٍ قَالَ: جَاءَ رَجْلٌ إِلَى رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ. قَالَ: يَمْنُعُ سَوَادِي وَدَمَامِي دَخُولٍ الْجَنَّةِ؟
Al-Ḥasan and Qatādah reported upon the authority of Anas ibn Malik, "A man came to the Messenger of Allāh ∥ and said, ‘Does my darkness and ugliness prevent me from entering Jannah?’

He answered, ‘Nay, by the One in whose hand is my soul, [you will not be prevented from entering it] if you fear Allāh and believe in that which came with his Messenger.’

He replied, ‘By the one whom honoured you with prophethood, I have testified that there is no deity worthy of being worshipped besides Allāh, alone and without partner, and that Muhammad is his slave and Messenger, and I affirmed [my belief] in that which he came with eight months before this meeting. So, what will come to me O Messenger of Allāh?’

He replied, ‘You have the same responsibilities of the people and the same rights as them, you are their brother.’

He said, ‘Indeed I have asked everyone present with you and those absent [for a woman to marry] but they have rejected me due to my darkness and the poor appearance of my face. However, I am a nobleman amongst my people from Bani Salim, and my father and grandfathers are well-known, but the dark skin of my maternal uncles prevailed over me.’
The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, ‘Is ‘Amr ibn Wuhayb present in this gathering?’

[‘Amr] was a man from Thaqif who had embraced Islam close to the time [of this narration.] Those present replied, ‘No.’

He said, ‘Do you know where he lives?’

He replied positively.

He said, ‘Go to his abode and knock softly upon his door and then greet him. When you enter it, say, ‘The Messenger of Allah ﷺ has given me your daughter’s hand in marriage.’
He had a freeborn daughter who possessed a great amount of beauty and intelligence. And when the man reached the door, he knocked and gave the greeting. They welcomed him as they heard him speaking Arabic so they opened the door. However, when they saw how dark the man was and the bad appearance of his face, they drew back from him. He said, ‘The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ has betrothed me to your daughter.’ In response to this they turned him away in a rough manner, so the man left. The girl then exited the area within which she was concealed and stated, ‘O ‘Abdullāh return, for if the Messenger of Allāh has betrothed me to you then I am pleased deep within myself with what Allāh ﷺ and His Messenger have approved for me.’

He went to the Messenger of Allāh and informed him of what took place, and the girl said to her father, ‘O father, save yourself, save yourself before the revelation exposes you. If the Messenger of Allāh has betrothed me to him then I am pleased with what he has assented.’

The shaykh (old man) then left to see the Messenger of Allāh, he came to him and found him sitting in his assembly, so he sat at the furthest point in the sitting, and then he said, ‘Are you the one who rejected that which the Messenger of Allāh has approved?’

He said, ‘Yes I did so, and so I seek forgiveness from Allāh. I thought that he was lying, [otherwise] I would have married her to him. Thus, I seek refuge with Allāh from His anger, and that of His Messenger.’
The Messenger of Allah then said [to the man], 'Go to your wife and settle down with her.'

He replied, 'By the One who despatched you with the truth, I will not take anything until I ask my brothers [to pay the dowry].'

The Messenger of Allah said to him, 'The dowry of your woman [will be paid] by three from the believers. Go to 'Uthman ibn 'Affān and take from him two hundred dirhams.' He was given this amount and more. 'Go to 'Ali ibn Abī Ṭalīb and take from him one hundred dirhams.' He was given this amount and more. 'And go to 'Abd al-Rahmān ibn 'Awf and take from him one hundred dirhams.' He was given this amount and more.

However, one should know that this amount is not a prescribed Sunnah and it is not mandatory, so one could marry with a small dowry or a large one.
When the man was in the market with the money looking to purchase for his wife what she needed for the wedding, he heard a voice calling, ‘O steed[s] of Allâh, ride and rejoice.’ Thus he placed his vision upon the sky and said, ‘O Allâh, the God of the heavens and the earth, the Lord of Muhammad, I will not use this money today except in that which Allâh, His Messenger and the believers love.’ Upon this he sought for a well-bred horse, and so he purchased a sword, spear and a horse. He also purchased a *jubbah* and tied his turban around his abdomen, veiling himself with the other garment so that nothing could be seen of him except his eyes. He was veiled to an extent that when he came amongst the Muhâjjîrîn they said, ‘Who is this unknown horseman?’

‘Ali ibn Abî Ta'lib said to them, ‘Leave this man for he may have been from those who recently arrived from the direction of al-Bahrayn or al-Shâm so as to inquire from you about matters of his religion, and he wishes to support you in battle today.’ Then he was seen by the Messenger of Allâh who
said, ‘Who is this horseman who did not present himself to us?’ He was ardent in participating in *jihad*, so when the two sides clashed he fought with his sword and spear, advancing forward fiercely. His horse could no longer move (i.e. it was exhausted due to the intensity of the battle) so he dismounted the horse, baring his arms. When the Messenger of Allah saw the darkness of his arms he realised who it was and stated, ‘O Sa’d!’ Sa’d replied, ‘I sacrifice my parents for you, O Messenger of Allah.’ He said, ‘Sa’d exert yourself.’ He did not cease striking with his sword and stabbing with his spear until it was said, ‘Sa’d has been struck down.’ The Messenger of Allah went to him, raised his head and placed it within his lap. He then wiped the dust from his face with his garment and said, ‘How a good a smell is your scent, how beautiful is your face and how beloved you are to Allah and his Messenger.’
They said, 'O Messenger of Allah, we saw you crying and smiling, then we saw you turning your face.' He replied, 'As for my weeping, it was due to my longing for Sa'd. As for my laughter, it was due to my happiness at his station from Allah and His generosity to him. As for my turning away, I saw his wives from al-Hur al-'In hastening towards him, displaying their legs and exposing their anklets, thus I turned due to modesty towards them.'

He said, "He ordered [the gathering of] Sa'd’s weapons and belongings and then said, ‘Take them to his wife and state to her, ‘Verily Allah has married him to maidens better than yours. Here are his possessions (i.e. his estate).’ By the One who holds Muhammad’s soul in His hand, I will separate [the bad] from the Hawd as the mangy camel is pushed away from mixing with the [healthy] camels. Verily none will be present at my Hawd except the pious.’"

57 This was reported by Ibn ‘Adi, Ibn Hibbân and al-Mukhaliṣ in chapter two of his Fāwa’id. All of them report it from the route of Suwayd ibn Sa‘îd—Muhammad ibn ‘Umar ibn Salîh—Qatadah—Anas. Al-Ḥāfîz Ibn Hajar said this in al-Isâbah (2/39). As for the narrator named Suwayd ibn Sa‘îd: Al-Bukhârî said that he had issues. He was blind and so he would dictate hadith which were not his. Al-Nasâî said that he was da‘if. Ibn ‘Adi said, "He is closer to being weak." See Mukhtasar al-Kâmîl fi al-Dnâfâ (399) and al-Taqrib (26). As for the narrator named Muhammad ibn ‘Umar ibn Salîh al-Kalâqî: Ibn ‘Adi said, “His hadith are rejected (munkar) [even though they are] reported from the thiqât (trustworthy) of the people, and he is not well-known.” See Mukhtasar al-Kâmîl (p. 675).
Abū ‘Abdullāh al-Ṣūrī said, “This hadith is gharīb (strange) as it is reported by both al-Ḥasan and Qatādah. I am not aware of a hadith reported by both of them except from Muḥammad ibn ‘Umar al-Kalā‘ī, and I have not seen it reported from him except from the hadith of Suwayd ibn Sa‘īd.”

Thābit al-Bunānī reported upon the authority of Abū Hurayrah, “I entered into the presence of the Prophet ﷺ. He said to me, ‘O Abā Hurayrah, a man will enter my presence through this door in a moment whom is one of the seven people that Allāh ﷺ protects the people of the earth with [due to their virtue and high rank.]’

إذا حبيسي قد طلع من ذلک الباب، أجدع على رأسه جرة من ماء فقال: رسول الله ((هُوُّ هَذَا)).

58 He is the mawla of al-Mughirah ibn Shu'bah. Ibn al-Athīr said, “He passed away during the time of the Prophet.” See Rāf Shān al-Ḥubshān (120/a).
Thereafter an Abyssinian man came through the door. He was carrying a container of water upon his head. The Messenger of Allah said, “This is him.”

قَالَ: وَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ ﷺ مَرَّاتَثَ مَرَّاتَ: (مَرْحَبَةً بِبِسْرَاءِ).

He said, “The Messenger of Allah said thrice, ‘Welcome Yasar.’”

قَالَ: وَكَانَ يَرْشُ المَسْجِدَ وَيَبَنِسَهُ.

He said, “He would sprinkle water in the masjid and sweep it.”

59

Jālibīb

The author said: It has been mentioned that he was black.

[24] أَخْبَرَنَا أَبُو بْكَرُ بْنَ أَبِي طَأْهِرٍ الْبَيْتَارُ قَالَ أَنَّا أَبُو مُحَمَّدٍ الْجَوْهَريَّ قَالَ أَنَّا أَبُو عُمِّرُو بْنَ حَيْبَةٍ. قَالَ أَنَّا أَحْمَدٍ بْنُ مُغْرُوفٍ. قَالَ اِنَّا الْحُمَّسَنُ بْنُ الْفُهْمِ. قَالَ أَنَّا مُحَمَّدٍ بْنُ سَعْدٍ. قَالَ أَنَا غَاثٍ. قَالَ أَنَا حَمَادٍ بْنُ سَلِمَةٍ. قَالَ أَنَا ثُمَتْبُ عَنْ كَانَةُ بْنِ نُعَيمِ. وَكَانَ أَصْحَابُ النَّبِيِّ عَلَى اللَّهِ وَسَلَّمَ. إِذَا كَانَ أَخْدَهُمْ أَيْمَ لَمْ يُبْتَغَهُمْ حَتَّى يُعْلَمَ أَرْسَلَ اللَّهُ فِيهِمْ خَاجَةً. أَمْ لَا، فَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ ﷺ ذَاتُ نَيْمَ لَرَجُلٌ مِنَ الأَنْصَارِ. (يَا فِلَانِ، زَوْجَانِي أَبْنِيَ). (يَا فِلَانِ، زَوْجَانِي أَبْنِيَ). قَالَ: فَلِيْمَنَّ؟ قَالَ: (لِجَلِيبِيّ). قَالَ: يَا رَسُولُ اللَّهِ، حَتِّى أَسْتَأْمِرَ أَمْهَ، فَأَتَاهَا. قَالَ:

59 Reported by al-Khalal in Karāmāt al-Awliyā. Al-Suyūtī said this in Aẓhār al-ʻUrūsh (p. 20), and he mentioned it with this isnād in Raṣ Shān al-Ḥubībān (p. 80).
Kinânah ibn Nu'aym al-'Adawi reported upon the authority of Abû Barzah al-Aslami, “He was a man from the Ansâr. The Companions of the Prophet would not marry the women under their guardianship until they knew if the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ had a requirement for her or not. So, one day the Messenger of Allâh said to a man from the Ansâr ﷺ, ‘O so-and-so, give me your daughter to marry.’ He said, ‘Yes, I agree for your sake.’ He replied, ‘It is not for myself that I request her.’ He said, ‘Then for whom?’ He said, ‘Julaybîb.’ He replied, ‘O Messenger of Allâh, allow me to consult with her mother.’ He went to her and said, ‘The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ seeks your daughter.’ She replied, ‘Yes, we will not object for the sake of Allâh’s Messenger, marry her to the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ.’ He said to her, ‘He does not seek her for himself.’ She asked, ‘Then for whom?’ He said, ‘For Julaybîb.’ She replied, ‘What! For Julaybîb? Never, by Allah, I will not marry her to Julaybîb.’

When the father stood up to go to the Prophet ﷺ, the daughter stated to her parents from her chamber, ‘Whom asked you for my hand?’ They replied that it was the Messenger of Allâh, and she said, ‘You reject the order of the Messenger of Allâh ﷺ? Present me to the Messenger of Allâh, for indeed he will not cause me harm.’ Thus, her father went to the Prophet ﷺ and said, ‘The decision is yours,’ and so he married her to Julaybîb.”
Ishaq ibn ‘Abdullah ibn Abi Talhah said to Thabit, “Do you know what the Prophet prayed for her? He replied, ‘O Allah, pour upon her goodness time after time, and do not make her life one of difficulty.’”

Thabit said, “So he married her to him. Then during the midst of a war, the Messenger of Allahﷺ said, ‘Have we lost anyone?’ They said, ‘We are missing so-and-so and so-and-so.’ Then he asked again and they said, ‘We are missing so-and-so and so-and-so.’ He asked again and they said, ‘No.’ He said, ‘However, I am missing Julaybib. Look for him amongst the dead.’ They searched for him and found seven bodies surrounding him, he had killed them before he was killed.’ Then the Messenger of Allahﷺ said, ‘He is from me and I am from him. He killed seven before he was killed. He is from me and I am from him.’

The Messenger of Allahﷺ placed him between his forearms, then they dug a grave for him. His body was leaning upon the forearms of the Messenger of Allah until he was lowered into the grave.”
Thābit continued, “There was not from the Anṣār a previously married woman who was as sought for in marriage as her.”

Ibn Sa’d said, “I have heard it said that Julaybib was a man from Bānī Tha’labah, an ally of Anṣār, and that the woman whom the Prophet married him to was from Bānī al-Ḥārith ibn al-Khazraj.”

**صحابي جنبي**

An Abyssinian Companion

[15] أَنْبَأَنَا مُحَمَّدَ بن عبد الملك قال أَنْبَأَنَا الجُرُّوْرِي عن الدَّارَقُطْنِي عن أبي حاتِم الشهَّابي قال أنا الحسن بن سُفيان قال أنا مُحَمَّد ابن عبد الله بن عمر قال أنا عَفَيْف بن سلَّام عن أَبُوك عن عَبْتَة عن عَطَاء عن ابن عَبَّاس قال: جاء رجل من الخُبيثة إلى النبي - صلى الله عليه وسلم - فقال: إن الله عَلِيَّ - صلى الله عليه وسلم -: (سل واستفهم)، فقال: يا رسول الله، فضَلَّتُم علينا بالصوموع والألوان واللبوة، أفْرَأَيْتِ إن آمَنتُم بمثل ما آمِنتِي به وعملتم بمثل ما عملت به أَيُّكُم مَعَكُ في الجَنَّةِ؟ قال: (نعم). ثم قَالَ النَّبِيِّ - صلى الله عليه وسلم -: ((ولَلَّذِي فَضَّلَّ مَعَهُ إِنَّهُ لَهُ بِيضُ الأَشْوَدُ في الجَنَّةِ مِسْرَةُ أَلفٌ عَامٍ)). ثمَّ قال رسول الله - صلى الله عليه وسلم -: (ومَن قال: لا إِلَه إِلَّا اللَّهُ مَعَهُ)، وَمَن قَالَ: سِيْحَانَ اللَّهِ وَحَمِيدُهُ كُبُبُ له مائة ألف حَسَنَةٌ وَأَرْبَعَةَ وَعَشَرُونَ ألف حَسَنَةَ.

‘Atā’ reported upon the authority of Ibn ‘Abbās, “A man from the Abyssinians came to the Prophet ﷺ to pose a question to him. The Prophet
said to him, ‘Ask and inquire.’ He said, ‘O Messenger of Allāh, you are better than us in appearance, in colour and due to prophethood. Is it the case that if I believe in the manner that you believe, and act in the manner that you act, that I will be alongside you in Jannah?’ He replied, ‘Yes.’ And the Prophet continued, ‘By the One who holds my soul in His hand, the whiteness (i.e. purity of colour or saturation) of the black person will be seen in Jannah from the distance of one thousand years.’ Then the Messenger of Allāh said, ‘The one who says la ilāha illallāh has a covenant with Allāh. The one who says subhānallāh wa bihamdīhi has written for him one hundred and twenty-four thousand good deeds.’

The man said, ‘What if one dies after saying this O Messenger of Allāh?’ The Prophet replied, ‘A man could come on the Day of Judgement with deeds which if placed upon a mountain would overburden it, however a single blessing of Allāh would outweigh them except through His mercy.’

He said, “Then the following sūrah was revealed: {Has there [not] come upon man a period of time...}60 until Allāh’s statement: {And when you look there [in Paradise], you will see pleasure and great dominion.}61 The Abysinnian said, ‘You mean to say that my eyes will see what yours see

60 Al-Insān: 1
61 Al-Insān: 20
in Jannah?’ The Prophet ﷺ said, ‘Yes.’ He wept until his soul left his body.’” He continued, “I witnessed the Messenger of Allah lowering him into his grave with his hands.”

62 Reported by al-Suyūṭī in Raf’ Shān al-Hubshān (pp. 76-77). He said in Aṣbār al-‘Urūš (pp. 7-8), “It was reported by al-Ṭabarānī in al-Awṣaf and Ibn Ḥībbān in al-Du‘afā‘; he said: “Ayyub (one of the narrators in the chain) makes plentiful mistakes. Al-Ṭabarānī said this narration was only reported from the way of ‘Afff.” Al-Haythami mentioned it in al-Majma‘ al-Zawā‘id (10/420) on the authority of Ibn ‘Umar and he said after it, “This was reported by al-Ṭabarānī and one of its narrators is Ayūb ibn ‘Utbah who is da‘if.” Aṣbār al-‘Urūš (p. 20), and he mentioned it with this isnād in Raf’ Shān al-Hubshān (p. 80).
Chapter Eighteen

In mention of the noble black women from the female Companions

Umm Ayman, the mawālih of the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ and his nurse.

Her name was Barakah and he inherited her from his father. She was a black woman and he manumitted her when he married Khadijah. Then she wed ‘Abdullah ibn Zayd and bore for him a child named Ayman. After him she wed Zayd ibn Ḥarithah and bore for him a child named Usāmah.
Jarir ibn Hazim reported that he heard 'Uthman ibn al-Qasim narrate, “When Umm Ayman emigrated, she arrived at the Munṣaraf (i.e. a place that is close to the area of Badr) near al-Rawha (i.e. both locations are on the pathway between Makkah and Madina). She was extremely thirsty and then a container of water with a white rope descended to her from the sky. She took it and drank from it until her thirst was quenched. She would say, “I have not suffered thirst after that incident. I used to feel thirst whilst fasting in the midday heat, however I did not feel thirst again after that drink.”

The author said: The Prophet would honour her and jest with her. She said to him on one occasion, “Find me a ride to carry me.” He replied, “I will carry you upon a child of a camel.” She replied, “It will not be able to bear [the weight of] me.” He said [jokingly], “No, I will not carry you except upon a child of a camel.” She used to gesture to the Messenger of Allah [playfully], and dispute with him but he would be patient with her.

Abu Bakr and 'Umar would visit her after the Messenger of Allah had passed away. She would weep and say, “Verily, that which I weep regarding is how the revelation from the heavens has been cut off from us.”

63 [E] The joke was that she thought it is a little child while the Prophet intended to play with words because the child of a camel is actually a camel.
64 See al-Tabaqat al-Kubra of Ibn Sa'd (8/179).
She was present during the Battle of Uhud. She would provide water and treat the wounded. She also witnessed the Battle of Hunayn. She passed away during the Caliphate of 'Uthman, and it was also said that she passed during the caliphate of Abū Bakr.

Umm Zufar

Al-Bukhari and Muslim reported in the Sahihayn the following hadith upon the authority of 'Atā ibn Abī Rabāh, “Ibn 'Abbas stated to me, ‘Would you like me to show you a woman from the Ahl al-Jannah (people of al-Jannah)?’ I replied, ‘Of course.’ He said, ‘This black lady came to the Prophet and said, ‘I suffer from epileptic fits wherein I uncover myself, so pray to Allāh for me.’ He said, ‘If you wish, bear it with patience and you will have Paradise. Or if you wish I can supplicate to Allāh that he cures you.’ She replied, ‘I will bear it with patience, however I uncover myself, so pray to Allāh that I cease doing so.’ He subsequently supplicated for her.”
A female slave from among the Companions

[68] أخبرنا عبد الأول قال أننا ابن المظفر الداودي قال لنا ابن أمي قال فأني المغيرة قالت أن ملاك الله نزلت في حائط رضي الله عنها وقالت: أسلمت امرأة سيدة لبعض العرب، وكان لها حفظ في المسجد قالت: فكانت تأتينا فتحدث عندنا، فإذا فرغت من الحديث، قالت:

Hishām reported from his father upon the authority of ʻA‘ishah, “A black woman who belonged to some Arabs embraced Islam. She had a small room in the masjid.” She continued, “She used to come and have conversations with us. When she would finish talking, she would say,

وَيَوْمُ الْوَشَاحُ مِنْ تَعَاجِبِ زَيْنَةُ أَلاَّ إِنِّي مِنْ بَلَّادِ الْكُفَّارِ أَنْجَاني

On the day of the scarf I saw some wonders from my Lord,
When He saved me from the disbelievers.

فَقَالَتْ: كَيْفَ يَوْمُ الْوَشَاحُ؟ قَالَتْ: خَرِجَتْ جَوْزِيَّةً لِبَعْضِ أَهْلِي وَعَلَّيَّهَا وَشَاحٌ مِنْ أَمْدَادٍ مُّقَسَّمٍ مِنْهَا، فَانحَلَّتْ عَلَيْهِ الحَدِيدَاءَ وَهُدَّاهَا تَحْسَبُهَا لَحُمَا فَاخْتَذَتهُ فَاتَّهِمْتُهُ بِهِ فَعَذَّبْتُهُ بَلْغَ مِنْ أُمُورِي أَنْهُمْ طَلَبُوْهُ فِي قَبْلِي، فَيَبْنِيَهَا هُمْ خَوْلِي وَأَنَا فِي كَرِيبٍ إِذَا أَقْبَلْتُ الحَدِيدَاءِ حَتَّى وَالت رَّوْئِيْسُ ثُمَّ أَقْلَفْتُهُ فَاخْتَذَهُ، فَقَلَتْ لِهُمْ:

As she would say this frequently, I asked her, ‘What is this day of the scarf that you refer to?’ She replied, “One day a girl from the family whom I belonged to went out with a luxurious scarf made from leather and it fell from her. A glede (a type of bird) descended and took it, as it thought that it was meat. The family accused me [of stealing it] and they dealt with me harshly, to the extent that they searched my private parts. Then, whilst they surrounded me and I was agonised by my distress, the glede returned and flew
over our heads. It dropped down the scarf and they took it. I said to them, ‘This is what you accused me of whilst I was innocent of it.”’

ذكر صاحبة سوداء

In mention of a black female Companion

Shahr reported upon the authority of 'Abdullāh ibn Shaddād, “The Prophet ﷺ went to a basin-shaped flat land in al-Madinah, and noticed that many people were heading to the house of one of the high-esteemed people of Madinah, visiting him due to his illness. As he went with his Companions, they reached a flat land. There they saw a black woman, some youths of Madinah tied a rope to her foot and were dragging her. [Upon seeing this,] the Prophet ﷺ said, ‘Do you see this black woman? By the One in whose hand lays Muḥammad’s soul, she is better than everything within the earth, similar to the one whom you are travelling to see.’”
In mention of the illustrious scholars from amongst the black people

From amongst the people of Makkah:

‘Aṭā’ ibn Abī Rabāḥ

The name of Abī Rabāḥ was Aslam. He took knowledge from Ibn ‘Umar, Abī Sa‘īd, Abī Hurayrah, Ibn ‘Abbās and others. He excelled in terms of knowledge and asceticism.
Tanwiru ‘l-Ghabashi fi Faḍlī s-Sūdānī wa ‘l-Ḥabashi

Al-Faḍl ibn Ziyād reported that he heard Abū ‘Abdallāḥ—i.e. ʿAhmad ibn Ḥanbal—say, "Knowledge is a treasure which Allāh gives shares of to those whom He loves. ‘Aṭāʾ ibn Abī Rabāḥ was an Abyssinian."

Abū Ayyūb Sulaymān ibn Ishaq al-Jallāb reported upon the authority of Ibrāhīm al-Ḥarbl, "‘Aṭāʾ ibn Abī Rabāḥ was a black slave who belonged to a woman from the people of Makkah. His nose was like a bean. Sulaymān ibn ʿAbd al-Malik and his two sons went to ‘Aṭāʾ, and they sat facing towards him whilst he was praying. When he had finished his prayer he turned to them, and whilst they were asking him a question about the rites of Hajj he turned his back to them. Sulaymān then said to his sons, ‘Stand up.’ They did so and he said, ‘O my sons, never spare an effort in the seeking of knowledge, for indeed I will never forget how we were humiliated at the hands of this black slave.’"
mad al-Shāfi‘ī, “The circle of fatwā in Makkah took place in Masjid al-Harām and they were given by Ibn ‘Abbās, and after Ibn ‘Abbās they were given by ‘Aṭā‘ ibn Abī Rabāh.”

Sufyān reported upon the authority of Salamah ibn Kuhayl, “I did not see anyone who sought this knowledge for the Face of Allāh besides these three: ‘Aṭā‘, Ṭāwūs and Mujāhid.”

Sufyān reported upon the authority of Ismā‘īl ibn Umayyah, “‘Aṭā‘ was known for lengthy silences. And when he spoke it would appear to us as if he was being inspired.”
Ishaq ibn Ibrahim reported upon the authority of Ya'la ibn 'Ubayd, “We entered into the presence of Muhammad ibn Sawqah and he said, ‘I will tell you a narration so that Allah might allow you to take benefit from it, as indeed I benefited from it [before you.]’ He said, ‘Ata’ ibn Abi Rabah said to us, ‘O nephews, indeed those before you used to detest needless speech. And they used to consider needless speech to be anything besides the recitation of the Book of Allah, enjoining the good and forbidding the evil, and speaking about matters which are necessary for one’s life. Do you deny that you are with two noble preservers, the scribes sitting upon one’s right and left, and that everything one says is recorded by a prepared observer? Would one not feel ashamed if his book of deeds was opened—it being an account of one’s days—to find that it is replete with content not relevant to his religion or life?’”
Illuminating the Darkness: The Virtues of Blacks and Abyssinians

When my father returned, I asked him, ‘Inform me of what took place between you.’ He replied, ‘When it was said to Hishām that ‘Atā’ ibn Abū Rabāh [had come to see him,] he gave him permission to enter. By Allāh, I would not have been able to enter except through [being with] him. When Hishām saw him, he said, ‘Welcome, welcome, come here. He then embraced him until their knees touched. Some notable people were present with Hishām and they were speaking, then they fell silent. Hishām said, ‘What do you need O Abā Muḥammad?’
He replied, ‘O Commander of the Faithful, the people of the Haramayn, the people of the Haramayn, [they are the] people of Allāh and the neighbours of the Messenger of Allāh. [I am asking for you to provide them with] financial aid and their provisions.’ He said, ‘Yes. O ghulām (boy), write for the people of Madīnah and the people of Makkah a financial allotment and provisions for a year.’ Then he said, ‘Do you have any other need, O Abā Muḥammad?’

He said, ‘Yes. O Commander of the Faithful, the people of al-Hijāz and the people of Najd. They are the origin of the Arabs and their leaders, let the surplus of their charity be spent on them.’ Then he said, ‘O ghulām, write for them that their benefits be given to them.’ Then he said, ‘Do you have any other need, O Abā Muḥammad?’

He replied, ‘Yes, O Commander of the Faithful. The people of the frontier towns, they stand as a shield between the Muslims and their enemies, repelling their advances. You used to give them a stipend for their livelihood, without which they would be ruined and as a result your enemies will attack the Muslims. Indeed, if they were to be destroyed your lands would be in-
Illuminating the Darkness: The Virtues of Blacks and Abyssinians

vaded.' He said, 'Yes, write for their stipend to be given to them O ghulām. Do you have any other need besides this, O Abā Muḥammad?'

قال: نعم، يا أمير المؤمنين، أحل ذمتمكم لا تحبس صغارهم، ولا تتعت كبارهم، ولا يكلفون ما لا يطيقون فإن ما تجبونه مغونة لكم على عدوكم، قال: نعم، أكتب يا علام، لا يحملون مالا يطيقون، هل من حاجة غيرواها؟

He replied, 'Yes O Commander of the Faithful. In regards to the Ahl al-Dhimmah under you, do not levy the toll upon their young and do not disturb their old. Do not burden them beyond their means, for what you take from them is just used to aid you against your enemies. He replied, 'Yes, write O ghulām, do not burden them beyond their means. Do you have any needs besides this?'

قال: نعم أمير المؤمنين، اتق الله [عز وجل] في تفسك فإنك خلقت وحدك، وتنموت وحدك، وتحاسب وحدك، ولا والله ما يعك من ترى أحدا، قال: فأكب همام، وقام عطاء، فلما كان عند أئله إذا رجل قد تبعه بكيس ما أذري ما فيه أدره أم ذنابير، وقال: إن أمير المؤمنين أمر لك بهذا، قال: لا أسألكم عليه أجر إلا على رب العالمين، قال: ثم خرج عطاء، ولا والله ما شرب عند هذه حضوة من ماء فما فوقه.

He replied, 'Yes O Commander of the Faithful. Fear Allāh in yourself, for verily you were created alone, you will die alone, you will be resurrected alone and you will face your accounting alone. There will not—by Allāh—be any of those present with you.' Upon this Hishām looked down to the earth and so 'Ata' stood up. When we reached the door, a man followed 'Ata' [and presented him with] a pouch—within which I am not sure what was placed, dirhams or dinars. The man said, 'The Commander of the Faithful ordered these to be given to you.' He said, 'I did not ask you for any reward, as my reward is from the Lord of the worlds.' Then 'Ata' left, and by Allāh, he did not so much as drink a sip of water—let alone take for himself any-
thing more than that.

Yahyā ibn Ma'īn reported upon the authority of Ibn Abī Laylā, “Atā’ performed the Ḥajj seventy times, and he lived for a hundred years.”

---

Habīb ibn Abī Thābit

His name: Qays ibn Dinār, Abū Yahyā, the mawlawā of Bānī Asad Kūfī. He was a major scholar. He heard (i.e. oral transmission) from Ibn ‘Abbās and Ibn ‘Umar. Those who heard from him included al-A‘mash and al-Thawrī. He was exceptional in his piety and generosity, and he spent one hundred thousand [dirhams] upon the poor. His skin colour was black.

---

Yazīd ibn Abī Ḥabīb

66 See Siyār al-A'Lām al-Nubalā (5/288), he was considered to be thiqah (a reliable narrator).
67 See Siyār al-A'Lām al-Nubalā (6/31). He was a major imām and a hujjah (an au-
He was a major scholar.

Al-Faḍl ibn Ziyād reported upon the authority of Ahmad ibn Ḥanbal, “Knowledge is a treasure which Allāh gives shares of to those whom He loves. Yazīd ibn Abī Ḥabīb was a black Nubian.”

مکحول الشامي
Makḥūl al-Shāmī

أبو عبد الله، كان عالماً فقيهاً، وكان ممّلوكاً لعمر بن سعيد بن العاص، فوّهبه رجل من هذين بتمّ، وأنعم عليه بها، قال: فما خرجت من مصر حتّى طننت أنه ليس بها علم إلا وقد سمعته، ثمّ قدمت المدينة، فما خرجت منها حتّى طننت أنه ليس بها علم إلا وقد سمعته.

[His kunya (nickname)] was Abu ‘Abdullāh. He possessed vast knowledge and was a jurist. He was in servitude to ‘Amr ibn Sa‘īd ibn al-‘Āṣ, who gifted him to a man from the tribe of Hudhayl in Egypt, which was a favour that he appreciated. Makḥūl said, “I did not leave Egypt until I was certain that there was no knowledge present therein except that I had heard it. Then I went to Madīnah, and I did not leave there until I was certain that there was no knowledge present therein except that I had heard it.”

68 See Siyar al-A’lām al-Nubalā (5/155). He was a scholar of Ahl al-Shām.
He saw Anas ibn Malik, Wāthilah ibn al-Asqā', Abā 'Umāmah and others. He passed away during the year 116.
Illuminating the Darkness: The Virtues of Blacks and Abyssinians

There is a valid reason for punishment to be dealt to me, however to pardon is closer to taqwā (God-consciousness). One who allows himself to become deluded with what has been given to him which would make him wishful will not be safe from the pitfalls of time. Allāh has placed the Commander of the Faithful over those deserving of pardon, just as He has placed him over the sinful. So, if he chooses to pardon, it is from his grace and if he chooses to punish then it is within his right.

Qawwūl al-maʾāmūn ʿalā fiṣṣīh Aḥsānī, waʿallā fihih: al-qadrat tazhib al-hifzītah, wa-kafī bīn al-nam bāb el-anībā. Fadhal ʿallīhī in ṭalāʾihīm Fqālān:

Al-Maʿmūn wrote on the same letter, “Power diffuses wrath, and remorse is an adequate repentance.” Then Ibrāhīm entered his presence and said:

Inq anī amīnī ma ṣanī ḥaṣṭātāt fiḍ du ʿallīk kāṭrā tānaṣīb qal kānā qal yūṣuf bīnī ṣīḥqūb lamā aṭtīwā lā ʾṭīṣīb

If I am sinful then I have procured my mistakes, so, leave off excess castigation.

State, as was stated by Yusuf to the sons of Yaʿqūb, when they came to him: there will be no castigation.

[79] Aḥwān ʿAbd al-rūḥān bīn muḥammad qal: ana ʾaḥmad bīn ʿuṣnī bīn qabīt qalān: ana ʿalā ṣāḥīh bīn al-aṣārī bīn ṣuṣūnī ʿabd allāh bīn ʾaḥmad al-mawḍūdī qalān: Aʾṣūd al-ṭalāʾī ʿabī bīn ʾaḥmad al-maḥdī qalān: ʿUbaydallāh bīn Aḥmad al-Marūradī rāḥīm reported from Ibrāhīm bīn al-Maḥdī the following lines of poetry:
My head has become grey but the head of greed has not, indeed, whoever is greedy for worldly things is in a perpetual toil.

It is incumbent by what I have took from knowledge, that I not take up that which degrades me.

If my mind’s thoughts were truthful to me, I would have not been bothered or troubled over worldly matters.

I strive and exert for that beyond my reach, while death pierces my vigour and nerves.

By Allāh, how many are the houses which you have passed by, wherein was pleasure and glee.

The eagle of death flew over them, thus, there became therein woe and affliction.

So, grasp hold of your reigns and do not go after it (the dunyā), by your life, sustenance is not attained [simply] through [man’s] seeking it.

Furthermore, I note the presence within people of one trait, wealth and foolishness are connected through a rope.

And there is one trait that no one can dispute with me, wealth is far from those who possess manners.
Illuminating the Darkness: The Virtues of Blacks and Abyssinians

O sharp minded, how many times have you seen the fool, wealth is stuck to him like scabies.

Ibrāhīm ibn Mahdī passed away during the year 224, and al-Mu’tāṣim led his funeral prayer.

‘Abdullāh ibn Ḥāzim al-Sulamī

He was a major amīr of Khurāsān, and many wars took place during his rule. He possessed knowledge.
In mention of their poets and those amongst them who recited some poetry to express a meaning

From their major poets: 'Antarah ibn Shaddād. His mother was a Zanjī and he was black. He crafted many outstanding poems, from the most notable of them being his statement in his famous qasidah:

"هل غادر الشعراء من مرتدم أَمْ هل عرفت الدَّار بعد توهِم"

The poets have not left any hole in a garment for me to patch,
Have you come to know the house [of your love] after doubting her?

It has also been narrated with the wording “mutarannim” (tunes) [instead of mutaraddim.] Al-Asma’ī said that radama (the third person singular verbal root of mutaraddim) thawbaka (your garment) means it was patched. So, the meaning is: Have the poets left me anything to patch i.e. they have made poetry about everything, leaving me with no new topic to make poetry about.

[Further examples of his poetry are:]
O House of ‘Ablah at al-Jawa, tell about your dwellers, good morning O House of ‘Ablah, and be safe from all harm.

Greeting is meant for you in particular from all other ruins, the house has become deserted after Umm al-Haytham left it.

Ask the horsemen about me in battles O daughter of Malik, if you were ignorant of how I am therein.

Those who have witnessed the battles would inform that I, envelop the battlefield and do not take war booty.

---

From among their poets: Suḥaym, a slave of Banī al-Ḥashās.

‘Abdullāh ibn ‘Āmir purchased Suḥaym and gifted him to ‘Uthmān ibn ‘Affān, who subsequently returned him and said, “I have no need for him.” He had many poems and stories.

Muḥammad ibn Khalaf reported upon the authority of Ibn al-Aʿrābī, “Sūḥaym was an Abyssinian and he was alive during the time of Jāhiliyah.”
Illuminating the Darkness: The Virtues of Blacks and Abyssinians

...
Al-Zubayr said: Mawhūb ibn Rashīd al-Kulābī reported to me upon the authority of Abū Sulṭān al-Faqāsī, “He was a slave of Banī al-Ḥāshās, and he was an Ḥabashi poet. He was besotted with the daughter of his master, ‘Umayrah bint Abī Ma’bad, and would implicitly express his love. Then an occasion came when his master, Abū Ma’bad, set forth upon a journey and took him with him. Abū Ma’bad longed for his daughter and so he stated,

O ‘Umayrah, bid me farewell when you prepare for travel.

He would repeat this and not add to it.

Then he said, ‘O Suhaym, help us’, which enticed his hidden emotions to arouse, and so he said,

O ‘Umayrah, bid me farewell when you prepare for travel, grey hair and Islām are sufficient for man as prohibition.

Then he continued it until he made of it a complete poem, and for it he became famous. The poem includes couplets that talked about her in an inappropriate manner; he said:

وِجْعَتُنا وِسَادَانَ إِلَى عَلَجَانَةٍ وَحَقَّفْ تَهَاذَاهُ الرَّياحَ تَهَاذَا
We and her slept on two pillows next to a tree, and the wind was causing the sand to whirl strongly.

My head rested in her palms with her arms wrapped around me, and her legs enveloped me from behind.

The northerly wind brought chilliness to the late night, and there was no cover for us except her garment and mine.

My garment did not lose the fragrance of her scent, for a year, until it became worn out."

The reporter continued, "Then Jandal Abū Ma'bad took Suhaym to the city so as to sell him there, and he said upon a day when he was taken out:

I am not fearful of Jandal selling me, for any price, even if his hands became empty (i.e. empty of money).

[I am] your brother, your free slave, and your fosterling, the one who settled amongst you and lived with you for a long period.

I am longing already, though I have only spent away a single night, so how would it be if the steed took us away for ten nights?"
He said, “Thus Jandal softened in his view to him and took him back. This was to the disdain of his people, who admonished him and wished that the slave be executed. However, Jandal resisted their call and went with him to the sultan of the city, and Suhaym was subsequently jailed and flogged eighty times. Then Jandal returned with him to his land and Suhaym recited:

O Abū Ma'bad, how evil are the wants of the youth, eighty [strikes] did not remove your confederate from slavery.

They draped me in brown on the morning of the infraction as if they were, devils, leaving neither spirit or a pledge.

The prison is naught but a shade of an abode under which I stayed, and the whip is naught but leather which is fused with skin.

O Abū Ma'bad, by Allāh, the love for her will not dissipate, by eighty lashes, rather the passion will increase through this.

If you kill me you would have killed a son of a female slave, and if you spare my life, you would have released a standing lion.

Tomorrow many eyes will cry from amongst my [people] and yours, and my abode will become greater in distance from yours.”

He continued: ‘Abd al-Malik ibn ‘Abd al-‘Azīz informed me that this last couplet was composed by al-‘Arajl.
The end of Suhaym’s affair was that he desired after a woman from his owner’s family, so they apprehended him and burned him.

From them was Nusayb ibn Mihjan

Abū Mihjan the poet was the *mawla* of ‘Abd al-‘Azīz ibn Marwān. He was black.

Muḥammad ibn al-Mu‘mmal ibn Ṭalūt’s father reported upon the authority of al-Dāḥḥāk ibn ʿUthmān al-Ḥuzāmī, “I went out during the final days of Ḥajj and came across a woman in al-Abwā who caused me to be stunned due to her beauty, and so I mentioned the words of Nusayb:
If I could visit Zaynab before the caravan sets off, and say, 'If we stayed together for a long time, my heart would never grow weary.'

O my dear friends from Ka'b, if you were to find Zaynab, may you never be lost by Ka'b.

Then say to her that distance has no impact upon the lovers, contrary to how it causes distance between [normal] people.

So, he who wishes to stigmatise, forsake or call a wrongdoer, his companion for a fault when he was not at fault.

When she heard me mention these couplets, she stated to me, ‘O youth, do you know the one who stated this poetry?’ I replied, ‘It belongs to Nuşayb.’ She said, ‘Yes, it is as you stated. However, do you know who Zaynab is?’ I replied, ‘No.’ She said, ‘By Allâh, I am Zaynab.’ I replied, ‘May Allâh preserve you.’ She said, ‘Today is the day of his appointment with the Commander of the Faithful. He travelled to him during the previous year and promised to meet me today, and it is possible that you will see him before you leave.’”

He said, “And so I saw a rider before I left that place approaching us from afar, [his figure was] flickering with the mirage [of the heat.] She then said, ‘Do you see that incoming rider? I think that may be him.’”
Illuminating the Darkness: The Virtues of Blacks and Abyssinians

He continued, “Then the rider approached us and set down until his camel kneeled down close to the tent, and indeed it was Nuşayb. Then he moved his feet from his saddle and descended. Then he came and greeted me, and sat besides her, greeting her and then they inquired about each other with joy. Then she asked him to recite for her any new poetry he had composed. Thus, he began to recite and I said to myself, ‘These are two lovers who have been separated for a long time and they must have a need for each other.’ Upon this I stood and went to prepare my ride. He then said to me, ‘Slow down, I will be with you [shortly.]’ I then sat until he rose, and I rose alongside him. We walked together for a while and then he turned to me and said, ‘You must have said to yourself that these are two lovers meeting after a long time of praise [without meeting], and that they must have a need for each other?’ I replied, ‘Yes, those were my thoughts.’ He said, ‘No, by the Lord of the building towards which we face [in prayer,] I have never sat with her closer than what you just saw, and no indecency has ever occurred between us.’”

The author states: It has been reported to us that Zaynab was also black.
Muḥammad ibn Muʿādh reported upon the authority of Ishaq ibn Ibrāhīm, "It was narrated to me by a man from the Quraysh upon the authority of the one whom he had narrated to him: 'I was performing the Ḥajj and amongst my convoy was a man whom I did not know and had never seen before. He had with him howdahs, heavy items, young boys, slaves and luggage. We stopped at a designated place to find that a large carpet and cushions had been prepared there. A Zanjī woman subsequently exited a hawdah (carriages on the backs of animals) and sat upon the carpet. Then a Zanjī man came and sat to her side. I stared for a while in surprise and whilst I was staring at her, a man passed by us leading a camel whilst singing:

[Could I] not be with Zaynab before the caravan sets off, and tell her, 'If we stayed together for a long time, my heart would never grow weary.'

He continued, 'The Zanjī woman suddenly pounced upon the Zanjī man and struck him. She said, 'You have exposed me to the people, may Allāh expose you.' I then asked, 'Who is this?' They replied, 'Nuṣayb the poet and she is Zaynab.'"
Muhammad ibn 'Abdullah reported upon the authority of Mu‘adh the Sahib of al-Harwi, “I entered the masjid of al-Kufah and I saw a man of whom I have never seen anyone else with cleaner clothing than him, also I have never seen anyone with a darker complexion than him. I said to him, ‘Who are you?’ He replied, ‘I am Nuṣayb.’ I said, ‘Tell me about yourself and your companions.’ So, he said, ‘Jamil is our leader. And ‘Umar is the best of us at descriptive [poetry] regarding women. Kuthayr is the best of us at moving [poetry] regarding tragedies and allegory. As for me, you have heard what I recited.’ I said, ‘The people claim that you are not good at satire.’ He replied, ‘Would you agree that I am good at eulogising?’ I replied, ‘Yes.’ ‘So, do you view that I cannot utilise both ‘may Allah guard you’ and ‘may Allah debase you’ [in my poetry?]’ I said, ‘Of course [you are able to do so.]’ He said, ‘However, I see that men fall into two groups: (i) the man whom I ask nothing from and thus I have no need to make satire of him, and (ii) those whom I seek from and they reject me, and in this case my own self is the one deserving of satire, for it made me ask from him.”
Ayyūb ibn ‘Abāyah reported upon the authority of a man from Bānī Nawfāl ibn ‘Abd Manaf, “When Nuṣayb gained wealth—before which he had a wife named Umm Mihjan, a black woman—he married a white woman. Umm Mihjan became angry and envious, so he said to her, ‘O Umm Mihjan, I am not one to be the target of jealousy, for I am an elderly man. Furthermore, the like of you should not suffer from envy, for you are an elderly woman. None is dearer to me than you and none worthier of their rights from me than you. So be easy with me and [I urge] you not to deny it from me.’ Thus, she became pleased and approved. He said to her after this, ‘Would you be fine with me bringing my new wife to meet you? It is better for reconciliation and a means of bringing all of us together, and to prevent people from gloating’ She replied, ‘That is fine.’ Then he gave her a dinār and stated to her, ‘I would disdain that she sees in you a shortcoming that
would make her feel better than you, so prepare something for her arrival tomorrow with this dinar.' Then he went to his new wife and said to her, 'I would like you to meet Umm Mihjan tomorrow, and she will bestow honour upon you, and so I would dislike her to appear more generous than you. So take this dinar and gift it to her when you meet tomorrow, to prevent her seeing you as being unable [to gift money,] however do not mention to her [that I gave] the dinar.'

Then he went to his companion to seek his advice and said to him, 'I want to take my new wife to Umm Mihjan tomorrow, and I would like you to pass by tomorrow and I will ask you to sit for lunch, and after you eat, ask me which of the two is more beloved to me. I will refuse to do this and will exaggerate in my refusal to do so. Upon this, you should take an oath that you must know.' During the next day his new wife met Umm Mihjan, and his friend came and was asked to sit. After they ate, the man turned to him and said, 'O Abu Mihjan, 'I would like to know which wife is more beloved to you.' He said, 'Subhanallāh! You ask me this whilst both are listening?! None have asked me this before.'
Then he said, ‘I ask you by Allah to inform me, and by Allah I will not excuse you, and I will not accept less than this.’ He replied, ‘If you insist, I will tell you; the one most beloved to me is the possessor of the dinār. And by Allah I will not increase upon this.’ Upon this each of the wives displayed smiles, as each was pleased due to thinking that she was the one he meant.”

Yazīd ibn Muḥammad al-Muhallabī reported upon the authority of Muḥammad ibn Sallām, “Nūsayb entered the presence of Yazīd ‘Abd al-Malik on an occasion, and ‘Abd al-Malik stated to him, ‘Inform me of some of your experiences.’ He replied, ‘O Commander of the Faithful, I fell in love with a red slavegirl (i.e. a white one). She kept me wishful for her with false promises for some time, and so I sent her these couplets:

وَإِنَّكَ حَالَاكَ الفَلْسَمُ أَحْوَى
وَالسُّوَادُ جَلَدِي مِنْ ذَوَاء
وَلِي كَرِمٍ مِنَ الفَحْشَاءِ نَاتِي
كِيَبَعُ الأَرْضِ مِنْ جُوْهُ السُّمَاء
وَمثْلِيْ فِي رِجَالِكَ قَلِيل
مِثْلِيْ لاَ يُزَمَّرُ عَنَّ النَّسَاء
فَإِنَّ تَرْضَى فَرْدِي قُولَ رَاحُت:
لَبِّيْ فَنَحْنُ عَلَى السَّوَاء

Even though I am dark-skinned, musk is darker, and there is nothing that could change the darkness of the skin.
I have nobility that places a great distance between me and obscenity, as the distance between the earth and sky.
The like of me amongst your men would be a rarity, and the like of
me is not a person who is kept away from women.
If you are satisfied with me then reply to confirm your approval, and
if you refuse me then we are in concurrence.

When she read these couplets she said, ‘Wealth and intelligence overwhelm
everything else.’ She then married me.’”

Ibrāhīm ibn Zayd ibn ‘Abdullāh al-Sā‘dī reported to me upon the authority
of his great-grandfather from his grandfather, “I saw a black man with a
white woman, and I became surprised at his darkness and her whiteness. I
approached them and said, ‘Who are you?’ He replied, ‘I am the one who
stated:

ألا أنت شعري ما الّذي يحدثن لي
إذا ما عدا النادي المفرق والبعد
أنصرمني عند الألّى فهم العدا
فتشمهم بي أم تدوم على المنهد
O, what would happen to me, if remoteness separates and distances
us.

Would you cut off from me so the enemies, gloat upon me, or would
you remain faithful?’

قال: فصاححت: بلّي وَالله تدوم على المنهد. فُسّالت عنها، فقيل: هذّا نصيب،
وهذه أم بكر.

He continued, ‘She cried out, ‘Indeed, by Allāh I would remain faithful.’’ I
asked regarding them and it was said, ‘He is Nuṣayb and she is Umm Bakr.’”

Al-Riyāshi reported upon the authority of al-ʿUtblī, “Nuṣayb entered the presence of ʿUmar ibn ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz ibn Marwān on an occasion and he said to him, ‘Have you fallen in love O Nuṣayb?’ He replied, ‘Yes, may Allah make me a ransom for you.’ ʿUmar then asked him with whom, and he replied, ‘With a slavegirl from the Banī Mudlaj. She was shielded from me constantly by informants and so I was not able to speak to her except through indicating with my eyes and gesturing. So, I would sit upon the road hoping for her to pass so that I could see her, and I wrote the following in regards to this:

أجلس إليها على الطريق حتى تمر بي فأراها، وفي ذلك أقول:

I sat waiting for her, hoping for her to pass me, so that I could secretly persuade her if she does not greet me.

When she saw me whilst [enveloped by] informants, her eyes shed tears, remaining fearful and unable to speak.

Those in love are pitiful, and I would not purchase, the lives of all lovers [even] for a dirham.’


[ʿUmar ibn] ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz then asked him, ‘And what happened to this girl
Illuminating the Darkness: The Virtues of Blacks and Abyssinians

from the Mudlaj? He replied, ‘She was purchased and bore a child.’ He then asked, ‘Do you still have any feeling in your heart for her?’ He replied, ‘Just extreme heartache.’"

Abu Dulamah the Poet

His name was Zand ibn al-Jun, the *mawla* of Banu Asad. He was an Abyssinian slave to a man from the people of Kufah named Fusas ibn Lahiq, who was from Banu Asad. This man emancipated him. Then he became the companion of al-Saffah, al-Mansur, and then al-Mahdi (i.e. Abbasid caliphs). He had beautiful poetry and anecdotes that were mesmerising and funny.

Abu Sahl Ahmad ibn Muhammad ibn Ziyad reported upon the authority of Thalab, “When Hamadah bint ‘Isa—the wife of Mansur—died, Mansur stood surrounded by the people at her grave-site, in wait of her body, and Abu Dulamah was with them. Mansur then turned to Abu Dulamah and said, ‘O Aba Dulamah, what have you prepared for this end?’ He replied,
The nephew of al-Asma‘î reported upon the authority of al-Asma‘î, “Al-
Manṣûr ordered Abâ Dulâmah [to lead] a military campaign against
‘Abdullâh ibn ‘Alî. Abû Dulâmah said to him, ‘I implore you by Allah O
Commander of the Faithful, provide me with more of your soldiers, for I
have bore witness to the defeat of nine military campaigns and I fear it be­
ing the tenth.’ Al-Manṣûr laughed due to this and discharged him from his
duty.”

Tha‘lab reported upon the authority of Muḥammad ibn Sallâm, “Rûḥ ibn
Hātim was participating in a battle and he asked Abū Dulāmah to step forward, after a man from the enemy asked for an opponent in a dual. But he said, ‘I am not battle hardened.’ Rūḥ again said, ‘You must.’ He replied, ‘I am hungry so feed me.’ Then he provided him with bread and meat. [After he ate], the man then proceeded to the dual and prepared to attack Abū Dulāmah who said, ‘Be patient. Do you know me?’ He replied, ‘No.’ Abū Dulāmah then said, ‘Do I know you?’ He replied, ‘No.’ Abū Dulāmah said, ‘There is no one more foolish than us in the world,’ then he invited him for lunch, they ate together and then left. Then Rūḥ inquired from him in regards to what took place. He gave an account of what took place and he laughed and joked about it with him. He was later asked about this story and he said:

أني أعود بروح أن يقدمني
إلى الбитال فيجيري في بين أسد
الملقب حب المموت إرثكم
إذ لا أورث حب المموت عن أحد

I besought Rūḥ that he not put me forward, to fight, so it would not start to be a custom for Banū Asad.

Ālī al-Mihlab, the love of death is your legacy, for I will not inherit from anyone the love for death.

قأل المصنف: توفى أبو دلامة سنة إحدى وسبعين وثمانية.

The author said: Abū Dulāmah died in the year 161.

[92] أَنْبَأْنا مُحَمَّد بن عبد الدُبَّاقيم فَقَالَ أَنْبَا جَعْفَر بن أَحْمَد فَقَالَ أَنْبَا أَبُو بَكْر مُحَمَّد
بن عَلِي الديبَارِي فَقَالَ: سَمِعْتُ أَبَا الْفَضْل بن عَلِي الْبَاهِي نَافِعًا مَعْذَرًا فَقَالَ: سَمِعْتُ أَبَا الصَّفْر يَقْوَلُ: سَمِعْتُ جَمَاعَةٌ مِنْ أَصْحَابِي يَقْوَلُونَ:

Abū al-Ṣaqī said that he heard a group of his companions report upon the authority Abū Zayd al-Baṣrī, “I saw a Zanjī man grasping hold of the cloth of the Ka‘bah whilst speaking something in the Zanjī language. Then I asked a Zanjī man who was fluent in the language to explain to me [what he was saying] and he translated it as,
My eyes are wounded from excessive tears they shed for you, and due to you my inner contains that which must be hidden.

Glad tidings for one who died and his bodyparts, from sins they refrained.

Muhammad ibn al-Hasan reported upon the authority of Fahirah ibn Murrah, “I had a black slave boy who was leading the ride whilst [I was] with my companions, and he would state in the Zanjī tongue some words which resembled poetry. Then we came across a man who understood the tongue.

I listened to him and said that he was saying:

I said to her that I was guided to some young men, and I made a great number of young camels kneel down easily.

She said that this is the case for the lovers, and whoever fears, the eyes of enemies, will make the night noiseless.
Illuminating the Darkness: The Virtues of Blacks and Abyssinians

Al-Qahtabī reported upon the authority of a narrator, ‘One day I was sitting next to a well during scorching hot weather, when a black slave girl came whilst carrying a pot. When she reached the well, she placed her pot down, sighed deeply and said:

The heat of farness, the heat of love, and the heat of both are mixed, neither of which I can escape.

And then her pot became filled and she left. I did not remain there long when a black man came with a pot, and he placed it where the black woman placed hers. A black dog passed by him and he threw a piece of bread to it and said,

I love because of her everything that is black, to the extent that I even love black dogs due to her.
أبى "أمر بن ال"أمل" reported upon the authority of "السارِ" بن "جَبِر"، "أنا وقعت في بلاد الزنوج ورأيت زنجية سيدة رشاقته وتنكر في نسيمها، فسألت لي مالك الذي ينفثها وየبان طالما فأدِمك لا تخفى و "{أنا} طالما ونعمة نعمة في الشرق والمغرب.

أنا رأيت نظرتي إلى اليمين واليسار، ولم اجد فيها إلا الله الذي رأيتني به ونعمة ونعمة.

أنا جاءتني في تحتية" أنvat" أنatitis: كنت يوما في تحتية إذا ما مارى مارى أن فكك مكشوف، وكان الله بيني له ما لبسه وناعثه، وصار وجهه كدارة النجم، ورمال السوداء، فقدلت له نعمه، فإني أرى مكان عجب، قال: وما الذي رأيت؟ فقلت: أراك كنتا؟ كنتا ذكرت لله عر وجل حالت بستك وناعث لونك، فقلت: ومن هذا نعمة؟ كنتا أو ذكرت لله عر وجل حقتقنة ذكره لحلت بستك وناعث لونك، ثم جاء ذلك الزنجية يخطو في تحتية ونَّفَّذ:

"It reached us upon the authority of "ذو النون" المغربي" that he said, "There was a day when I was walking through a wild-land area of "الشام" when I came across a Zanj man with pepperish hair. Whenever he would mention "الله" his clothing would change and his [colour] would change. His face would become like the full moon, and his darkness would lighten. I said to him, 'O black man, I see something strange about you.' He replied, 'What
is it that you see?' I said, 'I have seen that whenever you mention Allāh your clothing moves and your colour changes.' He replied, 'And where is the strangeness? Are you not aware that if you mention Allāh truly, your clothing will move and colour will change.' Then the Zanjī paced around the wilderness and said:

We remembered Allāh and what we did not forget so we remember, but the breeze of being close [to Allāh] arrives and it dazzles.

I live by Allāh far from myself and I live by Allāh for Him, for He has informed us about Him and expressed it.

It reached us upon the authority of one of the Salaf that he said, "I came across a black man in the wilderness, and whenever he would mention Allāh his complexion would turn white. I said to him, 'What is this?' And he replied by reciting,
In mention of a group of discerning, intelligent and generous black men and women

Al-`Utbi reported upon the authority of al-Asma`i, “One day when Sulaymān ibn `Abd al-Malik was travelling with his convoy, a black man presented himself to him. He was wearing two burdāhs, one used as an izār (lower garment) and one as a rīdā’ (upper garment). He took hold of the reigns of Sulaymān’s animal and said, ’O Commander of the Faithful, fear Allāh and remember the calling.’ Sulaymān asked, ’And what is the calling?’ The man replied, ‘Allāh stated: {Then an announcer will announce among them, “The curse of Allāh shall be upon the wrongdoers.”}’
Upon this Sulaymān cried excessively, then he raised his head to him and said, 'Woe unto you, what is your complaint?' He replied, 'Your administrator in Yemen has oppressed me O Commander of the Faithful. He seized my estate and consolidated it within yours.' He continued, "Sulaymān immediately called for ink and paper. He wrote by his own hand to his representative in Yemen, that he return the seized estate of this individual in addition to a similar sized plot from his (i.e. Sulaymān's) estate, and that he not treat anyone oppressively."

[96] أَبْنَا أَبِي الْعَيْنَةَ ﺑِنْ أَحْمَدَ قَالَ: أَبْنَا عَبْدُالْعَزِيزُ أَبِي الْحَسَنُ الْبَضَرَابُ قَالَ: أَنْبِئَ أَبِي أَحْمَدَ قَالَ: تَأْتُوهُمَا الْحَرْبِي. قَالَ: أَنْبِئَ أَبِي عَمْرُوبَ بِنْ مُحَمَّدٍ الْأَنْدَلُسِيِّ قَالَ: تَأْتُوهُمَا أَبِي قَيْسُ قَالَ: خَرَجَ عَلَيْهِ النَّارُ الْجَبَّيْنُ إِلَى حِيْطَانَ الْمُدِينَةَ فَمَا وَقَعَ مِنْهُ مُحَمَّدُ يُبْنِي، فَكَذَلِكَ إِذْ نَظَرَ إِلَى أَسْوَدٍ عَلَى بَعْضٍ الْجَبَّيْنِ وَهُوَ يَأْكُلُ، وَيَبْنِيَ كَلْبَ رَابِضَ، كَلِمَا أَكَلَ لَقَهِمْ رَمَيَ لِلْكَلْبِ مِثْلَهَا، فَقَالَ يَلَى كَذَلِكَ حَتَّى فَغَرَّ مِنْ أَكْلِهِ وَأَكَلَ الْلَّهُ بِنْ جَعْفَرٍ وَقَدْ فَرَغَ عَلَى رَأسِهِ يَنْظُرُ إِلَيْهِ، فَلَمْ يَفْرَغَ دَا مِنْهُ، فَقَالَ لَهُ: يَا عُلَامَ، لَمْ تَأْتِيّ لِقَدْ رَأَيْتَ مِنْ عَقَافٍ. فَقَالَ لَهُ: نَقْلَ مِنْكَ عَجَباً فَقَالَ لَهُ: وَمَا الَّذِي رَأَيْتَ مِنْ الْعَقَافِ؟ فَقَالَ لَهُ: بَا مُولَايِ، قَالَ: رَأَيْتَ تَاكُلَ كَفَلَمَا أَكْلَتْ لَقَهِمْ رَمَيَ لِلْكَلْبِ مِثْلَهَا، فَقَالَ لَهُ: يَا مُولَايِ، هُوَ رَفِيقُ مِنْذُ سَيْبِينَ، وَلَا بُدَّ أَنْ أَجَعَلَهُ كَأْسِوَتَيْنِ فِي الطَّلَعَمِ. فَقَالَ لَهُ: فَدُونَ هَذَا الجَرِيلِ. فَقَالَ لَهُ: يَا مُولَايِ، وَاللَّهُ إِنِّي لَا أَشْتَحِي مِنْ اللَّهِ [عَرِجَ وَجِلَ] أَنْ أَكُلُ وَعِينٍ تَنْظُرُ إِلَيْهِ لَا تَأْكُلُ.

'Uthmān ibn Muḥammad al-Anmāṭī reported upon the authority of 'Amer ibn Abī Qays, "‘ʿAbdullāh ibn Ja‘far went out one day to the walls of
Madīnah. Whilst he was there, he came across a black man [sitting] upon one of the walls and he was eating, and a dog was sitting in front of him. Whenever he would take a bite, he would throw the same amount to the dog, and he did not stop doing so until he finished his food. ‘Abdullāh ibn Ja‘far stood close to him whilst watching him, and when he finished, he approached him and said, ‘O ghulām, to whom do you belong?’ He replied, ‘I belong to the heirs of ‘Uthmān ibn ‘Affān.’ He said, ‘I saw you do something strange.’ He replied, ‘What did you see as strange O sire?’ He said, ‘I saw you eating and whenever you ate a morsel you would throw an equal amount to the dog.’ He replied, ‘O sire, he has been my close companion for years and so I feel obliged to treat him as my equal in food.’ ‘Abdullāh ibn Ja‘far said to him, ‘Even less than this is plenty.’ He replied, ‘O sire, by Allāh I would feel shame if Allāh saw me eating whilst eyes of the hungry watched on.’

Then he left, and he went to the heirs of ‘Uthmān and met them. He said, ‘I come with a need.’ They replied, ‘What is your need?’ He said, ‘That you sell to me a specific property.’ They replied, ‘We will gift it to you.’ He said, ‘I will not purchase it except if I pay double [its price.]’ So, he brought it and said to them, ‘And [I request] you to sell me the black slave boy.’ They replied to him, ‘Indeed we raised him and he is like one of us.’ He did not
Tanwiru 'l-Ghabashi fi Fadli 's-Sudani wa 'l-Habashi

leave from them until they sold him and then he left. During the next morn-
ing when he was with the slave boy in the property, he stated to him, ‘Are
you aware that I purchased you and this property from your masters?’ He
replied, ‘May Allāh bless you in that which you have purchased. However,
I feel dejected at being separated from my masters for they raised me.’ Then
it was said to him, ‘You are now free and this property belongs to you.’ He
said, ‘If you are truthful, O my master, then I testify that I endow it to the
heirs of ‘Uthmān ibn ‘Affān.’ ‘Abdullāh ibn Ja’far was amazed at this and
said, ‘I have never seen such a thing [as I have on] this day.’”

‘Abdullāh ibn al-Haytham reported upon the authority of al-Asma‘ī, “A
man was chasing after a black woman and she said to him, “If you have no
piety to refrain from that which is prohibited, do you not have an intellect
sound enough to make you stop?” He said, ‘Who sees us except the stars?’
She replied, ‘Then what about the Creator of the stars?’”

Sa‘īd al-Madīnī reported upon the authority of one of his companions, “A
man from the people of al-Hijāz visited Mālik and stayed over at his house.
My father asked, ‘Who is this man?’ It was said to him, ‘He is Mālik.’ Besides
him, there was a young black girl picking up date-stones. Mālik said, ‘May
Allâh strike the one who stated:

واي شئ كان يتعشق من مالك، إنما هي جرة سوء، قال: تقول الصبيحة: أي
بابي إله ومالك كان له بها شجح لم يك لك.

[I said,] ‘I cannot see what Malik loves in her; she is just a black pot.’ The young black girl replied, ‘By Allâh, and truly he is in love with her, that you never experienced.’”

Abî Muḥammad al-‘Āmirî reported upon the authority of Isma‘îl ibn Jâmi‘, “My father used to admonish me for singing and he would bear down heavily upon me, and so I fled from him to my uncle in Yemen. He settled me in a room which had a balcony overlooking a river flowing through a garden. On one occasion I was on the balcony when a black woman with a water-skin appeared. She descended to the water hole, sat down, placed her water-skin down and sang:

إلى الله أشكو بخلها وسماحتي
فدي مصاب القلب أنت قعلته
لها عسل مني وتبذل علقما
ولأ تركي هائم القلب مغرما
To Allâh I complain about her miserliness while I am generous, I gave her honey and she retorted with wormwood.

Rectify the broken heart which you killed, and do not leave this heart to wander while being in love.

And then her eyes shed tears and I could not hold my feelings. I hoped that she would continue, however she did not do so. She filled her water-skin and rose, and then I went down and hurried after her. I said to her, ‘O girl, I sacrifice my father and mother for you, repeat the song.’ She replied, ‘I have no obligation to you.’ I said, ‘With what [can I persuade you?]’ She replied, ‘There is a tax upon me, two dirhams for each day.’ So I gave her two dirhams and she sat until I had memorised her words. She then left and I spent the rest of the day in leisure, and so by the next morning I could not remember a single part of it. Then the black woman appeared again and did as she had done previously, however this time she sang something else. She rose to leave and I followed after her. I said to her, ‘I have forgotten a part of the rhythm [from yesterday.]’ She replied, ‘The like of you does not forget a rhythm, try to find it out whilst you sing the other parts.’ She refused to repeat it except for two dirhams, and so I gave her. She then repeated it and
I remembered, so I said to her, ‘That is sufficient.’ She said, ‘It seems that you view four dirhams to be excessive. By Allâh, I foresee that you will make four thousand dinâr from it.’

Ibn Jâmî‘ continued, “Then on one occasion I was singing for al-Râshîd and in front of him were four sacks, and within each sack there was one thousand dinâr. He said, ‘Whoever entertains me will have a sack, so sing a song for me.’ So, I sang him a song and he threw a sack towards me, and then he asked me to repeat it. I repeated it and he threw another sack towards me. This repeated again and he threw a third sack towards me upon which I laughed. He said to me, ‘Why do you laugh?’ I said, ‘O Commander of the Faithful, there is a strange story behind this song.’ I related the incident to him and he laughed and threw a fourth sack towards me. He subsequently said, ‘We will not let the black woman’s words become untrue.’ Thus, I left there with four thousand.”

Ibn Khâlaf said: It was reported by al-Asmâ‘î upon the authority of ‘Amr ibn al-‘Âlî, ‘I came to Jarîr and said to him, ‘Inform me of the most offensive couplet which was composed to ridicule you.’ He said that it was the statement,
You are the stagnant water of the source of (all) evil, as every flowing water shall eventually become stagnant.  

وَعَلَى رَأْسِهِ جَارِيَةً سَوْدَاءً حَلْوَةٌ فُيَالْتَ: كَذَّبَ وَاللهُ، أَصْعَبُ مَا هَجَّى يَهُ قُوُّهُ:

And behind him was a pretty black girl who said, ‘He has lied to you, by Allah.’ The most offensive satirical couplet to him was his statement,

لَيْسَ الْكَرَامُ بِنَاحْلِيْكَ أَيَاً حُسْنًا حَتَّى يَرَى إِلَى عَطْيَةٍ تَعْتَلَّ

Noble men will not attribute you to their fathers, for you will always be attributed to ‘Atiyyah (i.e. his father).

Jarîr said, ‘This mean girl has spoken the truth.’

[1 1] قال ابن خلف: وَحَدَّثَيْ حَمْدُونَ بْنَ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ قَالَ: حَدَّثَيْ أَبُو حَشْيَةَ قَالَ: كَانَتُ بِذِلِّلِ أَّهَامَ النَّاسِ وَجَهَّا، وَكَانَتْ أَسْتَاَذَةً كُل مَحْسُونٍ وَمَحْسُنة، وَكَانَتْ صَفْراً مَدِينَةً، وَكَانَتْ أَرْوَى النَّاسِ لِلْغَنَا، وَكَانَتْ لِجَعْفَرَ بْنَ مُحَمَّدٍ الدَّهَادِي كُفْوَتُ لِلْمَحْمُّدَ بْنَ زِيَادَةَ، فَبَعَثْ إِلَى جَعْفَرِ بِشَأْنِهِ أَنْ لُبْدَ إِيَّاهَا فَأَبَي، فَوَارَ مُحَمَّدٍ فِي مَنْزِلَهُ قُسْمَةَ مَا لَا يَسْمَعُ مَثْلَهُ، قَالَ: يَا أَخِي، بِعْنِي هَذِهِ الْجَارِيَةُ، فَقَالَ: يَا سَيِّدِي، لَيْسُ مَثْلِي مِنْ بَعْضِ الْجَارِيَةَ. قَالَ: فِهِمْهَا لِي، قَالَ: هِيَ مَدِيرَةٌ. قَالَ: فَأَحَتَّلَ لَهُ مُحَمَّدٍ حَتَّى أَسْكَرَهُ، فَقَامَ جَعْفَرُ، وَأَمَّرَ مُحَمَّدٍ بِذَلِكَ فَحَمَلَ مَعَهُ.  

71 [T] To translate this couplet, a different wording of the statement of al-Farazdaq to Jarîr was considered:

أَنَّمُ قَرَاءَةُ كُل مَعَدِن سَوْءَةٍ وَلَكِنْ سَائِلَةً تُسِيبُ قَرَارَ

They had a famous rivalry, which was documented in the book Naqā‘id Jarîr wa al-Farazdaq. The reason for it being considered to be such a belittling form of satire is because stagnant water has seeped through the soil and gathered at the lowest part of the ground. And it is at the same time the source of evil yet stagnant i.e. useless. And Allah knows best.
Ibn Khalaf said: Ḥamdūn ibn ‘Abdullāh reported to me upon the authority of Abū Ḥashishah, “Badl had the prettiest of faces, she was a teacher of the earnest, she was yellow skinned from al-Madinah, and she was the best of the people at singing. She belonged to Ja’far ibn Mūsā al-Ḥādī, and when she came to the attention of Muḥammad ibn Zubaydah he sent a message to Ja’far requesting to purchase her, to which he refused. Muḥammad then visited Ja’far at his abode and he heard [songs] the like of which he had not heard before. He said, ‘O my brother, sell me this slavegirl.’ He replied, ‘O sire, I am not the type to sell a slave.’ He said, ‘Then gift her to me.’ He replied, ‘She is free after I die (i.e. a mudabbirah).’ Muḥammad then duped Ja’far into getting drunk and Ja’far fell asleep. Muḥammad subsequently commanded that Badal be taken away to his ship, and then they left. When Ja’far became sober he asked in regards to Badal, and when he was informed of what took place, he fell silent. Muḥammad sent for him the following day, and when he went, he found Badal sitting and singing. However, he did not say anything, and when he was preparing to leave, Muḥammad said, ‘Load my cousin’s ship with dirhams.’ It was loaded and the amount reached twenty million dirhams. Badal remained in the abode of Muḥammad ibn Zubaydah until that which took place to them occurred.”
أبا صاحب الخيمات من بطن أرثد إلی النخل من ودان ما فعلت نعم
أسائر عنها كل ركب لفيهم وعالي بها من بعد مكتنها علم
O tent dweller from the heart of Irthid, travelling to the date palms of Wudân. What did Nu‘m do?
I asked every rider I met in regards to her, however, I know nothing about her since she left.”

Muḥammad ibn al-Faḍl reported upon the authority of his father that al-Qahdāmi said, “Dhū al-Rummah entered al-Kūfah and whilst riding through its streets upon his high-bred camel he saw a black slave girl standing at the doorway of an abode. He became attracted to her and his heart was affected by this. He approached her and said, ‘O girl, provide me with some water.’ She provided him with a jug and he drank. Then he intended to jest with her in order to provoke her to enter into a conversation, thus he said to her, ‘How hot is your water?’ She replied, ‘If you wished you would have paid heed to the defects of your poetry, instead of the temperature of my water.’ He said, ‘Inform me which of my poems have such defects?’ She replied, ‘Am I not speaking to Dhū al-Rummah?’ He said, ‘Indeed that is so.’ She replied,

You are the one who compared your love to a goat, does your love,
Umm Sālim have a tail above her behind.
You envisaged for her [with such a comparison] two horns upon her forehead, and gave her two black hoofs.
And two legs, if they can get hold of you, O Ghaylān, your cheek will be scarred like a cauterisation.
O female deer standing on the soft land with great beauty, yet you are nothing compared to Umm Salim.

قَالَ: نَشَدَتِكَ بِاللهِ أَلَا أَخْذِتِ رَاتِجَتَهُ هَذِهِ وَمَا عِلْيَهَا، وَلَمْ تَظْهَرِي هَذَا وَلَا تَذَكَّرِي لَأَحَدِ مَا جَرِيٍّ. [وَزَلَّ عَنْ رَاتِجَتِهِ، فَدَفْعَهَا إِلَيْهَا، وَذَهَبَ لِيْمَشِي فَدْفَعَهَا، وَضَمْنَتَ أَلَا تَذَكَّرِي لَأَحَدِ مَا جَرِيٍّ].

213
He replied to this, 'I beseech you by Allah that you take my ride and everything loaded upon it, and do not expose this to anyone nor mention what took place.' He then descended from his ride and passed it to her, he left on foot but she returned his ride and promised that she will never inform anyone of what took place.

Abū al-Qāsim 'Abdullāh ibn Muḥammad al-Kātib reported from one of the noblemen of al-Kūfah, "There was a man within it from the descendants of al-Ḥasan, known as al-Adra', and he was known for being stout-hearted. In a dilapidated area of al-Kūfah something strange would appear to those passing within it. It gave out light and sometimes it would appear tall whilst at other times it would appear short. It was said that this was a spectre and so the people became frightened of it. One night al-Adra' went out riding to deal with some issues. He said to me about this, 'I was confronted by something dark yet light and it appeared that a tall figure was before me. I rejected what I saw, and when I regained my senses I said, 'As for this being a devil or a spectre then this is falsehood, this is naught but a man.' I made
Illuminating the Darkness: The Virtues of Blacks and Abyssinians

dhikr of Allah and sent salat upon the Prophet, then I gathered the reigns of my horse tightly and charged at him and hit him. The effect of this was that it increased in height and brightness of its light. My horse became frightened due to this and so I had to restrain it. The person then attempted to climb upon the horse, and his height reduced to that of a standing person. When the horse was about to trample him, he fled and I pursued him.

قَانَتَهُ إِلَى خَرِبةٍ فَدَخَلَهَا، فَدَخَلَتْ خَلْفَهُ، فَإِذَا هُوَ قَدْ نُزِلَ سَرِدابًا فِيهَا، فَنُزِلَ عَن
 فَرُسِي وَشَدَّتْهُ، وَنُزِلَتْ وَسِيفٌ مُّجَرَّدٌ، فَخَلَصَتْ هُنَّ فِي السَّرِداب، أَحَسُسَتْ
 بِحِكْرِهِ يُرِيدُ الرَّئَاسَةَ مَنِي، فَطَلَّبَتْ فَرُسِي عَليّهِ، فَوَقَعَتْ بِيَدِي عَلَى بَدنِ إِسْرَائِيل،
 فَقَبَضَتْ عَلَيْهِ فَأخْرَجَهُ فَإِذَا هُوَ جَارٍةٌ سَرِدابٌ، فَقَلَتْ: أَيْ شَيْءَ أَنْتُ وَإِلَّا قَبَلَتْ
 الْسَّاعَةَ؟ قَالَتْ: قَبْلَ كُلْ شَيْءٍ إِنْسَي أَنْتُ؟ أُجِينِي؟ فَمَأ رَأِيتُ أَقْوِى قَلْبًا مَنْكَ
 [قَفْتُ] فَقَلَتْ: أَيْ شَيْءَ أَنْتُ؟ قَالَتْ: أُمَّةٌ لَّا لَّا فَلَانٍ - قَمِّ مِنْ الْكُوْفَةِ - أَبْقِ مِنْهُمْ
 مَنْدَ سَيِّئٍ، فَتَغَرَّبَتْ فِي هَذِهِ الْخَرِبةِ، فَوَلَّدَ لَيْلَةً أَنَّ أَحَاثَ بِهِذِهِ الْخَلَاءِ، وأُوْهُم
 الْتَّأْسِ أَنْيَ غَيْلَةٌ حَتَّى لا يَقْبُرُ الْمَوْضُعُ أَحَدٌ، وَأَعْتَرَضَهُ لَيْلَةٌ لِلْأَحَدَاثِ، فِي فَوْزُوْنِهِ،
 وَرُيَّمَا رُمِيَ أَحْدَهُمْ مَنْدِيًا أَوْ إِزَارًا، فَأخْذهُ، وأُبيَعَهُ نَهَارًا، فَأَفْتَهُ أَيُّهَا.

He reached a dilapidated building and entered within it, so I followed him in. He had descended within a cellar therein, I then dismounted my horse and tethered it, and descended with my sword drawn. When I reached the cellar, I anticipated that he wanted to flee from me based upon his movement, so I hurled my self on him and my hand touched the body of a human. I grasped hold of it and dragged it out. I found then that it was in fact a black woman. I said to her, 'What are you? If you do not inform me, I will strike you down this very moment.' She replied, 'Before anything, are you human or a jinn? I have never seen one as stout-hearted as you before.' I said again, 'What are you?' She replied, 'I am the slave of the people of so-and-so, a tribe from Kufah. I fled from them many years ago and isolated myself within this dilapidated building. I had an idea that I could hide myself behind this allusion and beguile the people into thinking that I am a spectre, thus no one would approach this place. On some nights I would come out
to the young people there and they would become frightened and refrain from coming here. On occasion they would throw their handkerchiefs and garments to me. I would pick them up and sell them on the next day, using the proceeds to feed myself for the following days.’

I said, ‘Then what was this presence which would sometimes appear tall and sometimes short, and the light that could be seen?’ She replied, ‘I have a long, black garment which I took from the cellar and also a number of solid tubes. I joined the tubes together in the garment and when I would raise it, it would appear tall. When I wanted it to appear shorter, I would remove the tubes one by one so as to make it shorter. As for the light, I would hold the thread of a candle in my hand, and I would only show the tip of the candle, enough to illuminate the garment.’ She then showed me the candle, garment and the tubes. She then said, ‘By Allāh, this illusion has worked for twenty odd years. I have rebuffed the horsemen of Kūfah and the valiant people therein. None came forward to me except you. I have not witnessed one more stout-hearted than you.’ Al-Adra’ took her to Kūfah and returned her to her masters. She used to mention this story, and none saw a sign of this spectre after this, so it seems that it is true.”
Chapter Twenty Two

In mention of the worshippers and ascetics amongst the black people

From those whose names are known, besides those mentioned previously from the Companions and the Tābi‘īn, are:

أبو معاوية الأسود
Abū Mu‘āwiyyah al-Aswād

His name is al-Yamān, and he resided in Tarsus.

72 His biography is in Siyar A‘lām al-Nubalā (9/78). Al-Dhahabi said, ‘He is amongst the major awliyā‘ of Allāh. He was the companion of Sufyān al-Thawrī, Ibrāhīm al-Adham and others. He would give exhortations and wise adages.'
‘Abdullah ibn Sulaymān ibn al-As‘āth reported upon the authority of Abā  Ḥamzah—i.e. Ibn al-Faraj al-Aslāmī the servant of Abū Mu‘āwiyah al-Aswad—, “Abū Mu‘āwiyah, the mawla of Abū Ja‘far the Commander of the Faithful, would state to the people, ‘Make use of me for I am your slave. For indeed I was purchased with the spoils of war.’ He had in his possession a pure-bred horse upon which he had rode during incursions. He was offered seventy dinārs for it. He saw a young man in the house go out to perform ghusl; he did it three times during the same night. The following morning Abū Mu‘āwiyah took his horse and gave it to the youth. He said to him, ‘This is yours O youth, use it to attain a bondmaiden.’”

He continued, “He would supplicate to Allah to make tasty anything he put in his mouth. He would go out to the wilderness and gather herbs, drying them within his abode. He would circulate the mazābil (dumps) and pick out bones from which the meat had been boiled off or removed, and he would mix them with the herbs.
Ahmad ibn Ibrāhīm reported upon the authority of ‘Abdāl al-Khurāsānī, “When Abū Mu‘āwiyyah al-Aswād fell ill he would place down a bowl and put honey to its side. If someone came to visit him, he would be asked, ‘O Abā Mu‘āwiyyah, do you not desire to eat?’ And he would reply, ‘I am too full to eat the little honey left in the pot. There is nothing else I desire to eat that would keep me away from people.”'

Ahmad ibn Abī al-Hawārī reported upon the authority of Ahmad ibn Wadī, ‘Abū Mu‘āwiyyah al-Aswād said, ‘My brothers are all better than me.’ It was subsequently said to him, ‘How is that O Abā Mu‘āwiyyah?’ He replied, ‘All of them view me as superior to them, and he who views me as superior to himself is actually better than me.’”
Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥasan al-Rāmahurmuzī reported upon the authority of his father, “I heard Abū Muʿāwiyah al-Aswād—whilst he was upon the border of Tarsūs deep within the night—crying, whilst saying, ‘Indeed, he who places this worldly life as his main concern will face a lengthy standing [on the Day of Judgement] due to this. He whom fears that which awaits him will not be able to find a way out, and he whom fears the recompense will abstain from that which he desires from this worldly life. O destitute, if you desire abundant reward, reduce your sleep in the night to the minimum and accept the intelligent counsellor when he provides you with clear advice. Do not concern yourself with the livelihood of those who you will leave behind, as you are not burdened with this. Be prepared to present answers for when you stand before the Majesty of your Lord. Do good deeds and leave alone the many distractions, hasten in doing so before that which is warned about takes place. [This is] when your soul will reach your throat, and that which you love will be cut off from you. I am envisaging the soul reaching up to the throat and you are in the throes of dead and in distress, your need for your family then ceases whilst you see them around you. Your final destiny there depends upon your deeds. Patience is the most enveloping of deeds, and it has a lofty reward. Make the remembrance of Allāh the predominant part of your deeds, and withhold your tongue from anything else.’”

Then Abū Muʿāwiyah cried heavily and said, ‘Woe [to me] for the day upon
which my colour will change, my tongue will stammer, my saliva will dry and my provisions will be minute.”

‘Uthmān ibn al-Sakan heard from the mu’adhdin of Gaza on the authority of Abū al-Zahrā’, “I arrived at Turşus and entered the presence of Abī Mu’āwiyah. He had become blind and in his house was a hanging mushaf (copy of the Qur’ān). I said to him, ‘May Allah have mercy upon you, [you have] a mushaf though you are blind?’ He replied, ‘My brother, will you keep what you have witnessed a secret until I die?’ I replied, ‘Yes.’ He said, ‘Verily, when I desire to recite the Qur’ān my vision becomes restored.’”

‘Abdullāh ibn Khubayq reported upon the authority of ‘Abd al-Rahmān ibn ‘Abdullāh, “A man transgressed against Abū Mu‘āwiyah al-Aswād. A man said to him, ‘Cease this.’ Abū Mu‘āwiyah then said, ‘Let him take it all out on me until he is satisfied.’ Then he said, ‘O Allāh, forgive the sin which caused You to impose this man upon me.’”
Al-Husayn ibn Muḥammad ibn al-Fahm reported upon the authority of Yahyā ibn Maʿīn, “I witnessed Abū Muʿāwiyyah al-Aswad collecting torn clothes from a dumping ground and he would sew them and wash them. It was said to him, ‘O Abū Muʿāwiyyah, why do you dress so?’ He replied, ‘What befalls a person in this life is not of consequence, for Allāh will compensate the unfortunate with Jannah.’”

Dhū al-Nūn Thawbān ibn Ibrāhīm Abū al-Fayḍ al-Māṣrī

He was of Nubian origin.

Abū ‘Umar stated in the book Aʿyān al-Mawāli (The Elite of the Mawāli), “Amongst them was Dhū al-Nūn ibn Ibrāhīm al-Ikhmīmī. His father was a Nubian named Ibrāhīm.”
The author says: Ibrāhīm had a number of sons: Dhū al-Nūn, Dhū al-Kifl, 'Abd al-Hādī and al-Humaysa'. Dhū al-Nūn was once incarcerated, then food was brought to him and it was given to him by his jailer. He refused to eat it, and said, 'Verily it has passed through the hand of an oppressor.'

Ibn Jalla said, "I met six hundred shaykhs, four amongst them were unparalleled. Dhū al-Nūn was one of them."
Fāris al-Baghdādi reported upon the authority of Yūsuf ibn al-Ḥusayn, “I said to Dhū al-Nūn as I left him, ‘Whom should I frequent?’ He replied, ‘It is upon you to make as your companion the one who will remind you of Allāh Ṣ just through looking at him. The one whose religiosity moves you from deep within, conversations with him increase you in knowledge, his deeds make you tread through this earth as an ascetic, and you will not infringe against Allāh Ṣ whilst you are in his proximity. He is the one who exhorts you through his actions and not through his words.’

I also heard Dhū al-Nūn saying, ‘The body ails with pain and the heart ails through sin. So just as the body does not attain the pleasure of food during an ailment, the heart does not attain the sweetness of worship in the presence of sin.’

I also heard him saying, ‘The one who does not comprehend the true extent of Allāh’s blessings will have it taken away in a manner which he cannot foresee.’

Bakrān ibn Ahmad reported upon the authority of Yūsuf ibn al-Ḥusayn, ‘I heard Dhū al-Nūn say, ‘Allāh Ṣ has not rewarded his slaves with a robe greater than the intellect, a necklace more beautiful than knowledge, nor an ornament superior to prudence. The perfect result of their combination is
Illuminating the Darkness: The Virtues of Blacks and Abyssinians

"tağwā (God-consciousness).

Ahmad ibn Muhammad ibn Maṣqalāh reported upon the authority of Saʿīd ibn ʿUthmān, "I heard Dhū al-Nun say, 'Whomsoever slits the throat of avarice with the sword of abstinence and fills with [soil] the trench of attachment [to the worldly,] he will gain the pleasure of servitude. He who seeks water with the rope of asceticism attached to the pail of good deeds will drink from the well of wisdom. He whom treads through the valleys of despondency will surely gain the everlasting life. The one who cuts down the grass of sins with the sickle of devoutness will have the gardens of uprightness illuminated for him. He who cuts his tongue with the blade of silence will gain the pleasantness of bliss. He who armours himself with truthfulness will find strength when combating the army of falsehood. However, he who becomes happy due to the praise of the ignorant will be clothed by the Devil in the garment of the fool."
Yūsuf ibn al-Ḥusayn reported that al-Fath ibn Shahraf said, “I entered the presence of Dhū al-Nūn whilst he was in the throes of death, and I said to him, ‘How do you feel?’ He replied by saying:

أموت وما ماتت إلّيّك صبايبي
ولأ روت من صدق حبك أوطاري
وأتيت الغني كل الغني أنت لي مني
وأتيت مدى سؤالي وغايتي رغبت
وإن طال سري فيك أو طال إظهاري
وئتي ضلوعي ملك ما لا أبه
ولم أبد بادية لأهل ولأ جار
وإن لم أبح حتي التنادي بأسراري
سراي لا يخفى علّيّك خفيها
وجد لي بيسر ملك يطرد إعسري
فَهَب لِي نسِيماً ملك أحبي بقربي
أنت الأُهِدَى للمهتدين ولم يكن
أنت لهوم مَنْهَة مَعَالِم أسرار
وعلمتهم علماما فبانوا بائده
غاب عنّها بُناة حاضِرة الدّار
وجَنَّمَت لَهَا أَلْهُم المفرَق والتقي
وعلّى قدر والهم يجري يعَقدار
أَلْسِت دَلِيل الركِب إن هم تحيروها
وعصمة من أمْسِي على جرف هار

I am dying but my intense love for you (referring to Allāh) will not pass away, and my thirst for truthful love for you will not be quenched nor will my hastiness.

Towards indulging in my desires, all of which [revolve around] you, I experienced sufficiency in all aspects when I was in need.

You are the utmost that I seek and the end point of my desires, and the focus of my hope, the protector of my secrets.

My heart is certain of you, what you have manifested.
Between my ribs there are [feelings] for You which I do not reveal, and of which I never showed a hint, even to my family and neighbours.

My secrets are not hidden to you, though I do not make these known, let alone announce them.

So bestow upon me your breeze which breathes life into me when it draws close, and provide me with ease from you to repulse my hardships.

You have illuminated [the path to] guidance for the guided though they, did not possess from knowledge even one hundredth of it.

You provided them with knowledge and they were directed by its light, and through this they became aware of deep, intricate matters.

[They pierced] the meanings of the unknown to the extent that it was as if, the unknown was something present in a house.

Their information was limited but their hearts saw you, mentally yet like [they saw you through] ironclad vision.

And You gathered within it scattered grief,

According to decree and grief is in accordance to that which is decreed.

Are you not the guide of the riders when they are confused and lost?

And the safeguard of whoever is standing on the edge of a bank.”

Al-Fath ibn Shahraf continued, “And when it became heavy upon him, I asked him, ‘How are you finding it?’ He replied,
There is nothing I can do except to hold my tongue and fall in silence, and place my cheek on my hand when I remember You.

If a tear rushed into my eyes, one after another I would withhold, until I could no longer hold them back.

My tears then flood out with which I cool down, the heat of the hidden feelings I have.

O You who is the ultimate hope of all devotees, grant me the joy of Your company with all visitors.

I then would never care about anything, if you will be my Lord, my neighbour in this life and next.

The author says: Dhū al-Nūn reported many ḥadīths upon the authority of Malik, Layth ibn Sa’d, Sufyān ibn ‘Uyaynah, al-Fuḍayl ibn ‘Iyād and others. He passed away in Giza, and he was transported upon a ride to a large canopy in fear of the extent of crowding by the people upon the bridge. He was buried within the graveyard of the people of Ma‘āfīr in Dhū al-Qīdah of the year 146.

***

أبُو الخيْر الْتِنَاتِي
Abū al-Khayr al-Tināṭī73

سكن النيبات وهي قرية من قرى أنطاكية، وقيل له: (الأنطف لإنه كان مقطوع اليد)، وكان مُنبذ ذلك أنه كان في جبال أنطاكية يطلع المَبَح وينام في الجِبال.

73 His biography is in Siyar al-A‘lām al-Nubalā (16/22).
He resided in al-Taynāt, a village in Antioch. He was nicknamed as al-Aqta' due to him having a severed hand. The reason for this was that he was in a mountainous region of Antioch seeking permissible sustenance, and he was sleeping there. He took an oath by Allāh that he would not eat any of the fruits of the mountain except that which fell due to the wind. He remained there for days without the wind blowing to him anything at all. Then a day came where he saw a pear tree from which he craved to eat, but he did not act upon this craving. The wind then blew it towards him, and he picked one of the pears. It so happened that a group of thieves had crossed this route and were sitting and dividing their spoils. The Sultan caught up to them and apprehended them, taking Abū al-Khayr with them. A hand and foot from each of them was amputated. Abū al-Khayr’s hand was amputated, and when his foot was about to be amputated a man recognised him and said to the leader, ‘Do you wish to ruin yourself? This is Abū al-Khayr.’ The leader wept at hearing this, and he asked for his forgiveness and so he forgave him, and then he said, ‘I am cognisant of my sin which led to the amputation.’”
to hold so it moves them to the tongue, and then they are expressed by the tongues of the fools.”

He said, “I also heard him say, ‘I entered Madīnat al-Rasūl (Medina) and I was destitute. I resided there for five days without tasting any food. I went to the grave and greeted the Prophet and Abī Bakr and ‘Umar. I then said, ‘I am your guest tonight, O Messenger of Allāh.’ So, I lay upon a side and slept behind the minbar. Whilst sleeping I saw the Prophet in a dream; Abū Bakr was to his right, ‘Umar was to his left and ‘Ali ibn Abī Ṭālib was at his front. ‘Ali ibn Abī Ṭālib moved me and said, ‘Stand, for the Messenger of Allāh has come.’ So, I stood and went to him, and I kissed him [on the forehead] between his eyes. He provided me with a loaf, I ate half and then awoke, finding within my hand half a loaf.”

Ibn Bākawayh reported upon the authority of Ibrāhīm ibn Muhammad al-Marāghi, “I heard Abū al-Khayr al-Tinātī saying, ‘I resided in Makkah for a year and endured therein hardship and poverty. And whenever I wished to
leave to deal with my issue, I would hear a voice stating, ‘Would you turn the forehead with which you prostrate to Me towards another besides me?’”

Abū al-Husayn ‘Alī ibn Maḥmūd al-Ṣūfī reported upon the authority of ‘Alī ibn Muthanna, “I heard Abū al-Khayr say, ‘One does not attain the station of nobility except through compliance [with the Sunnah,] observing the religious mandates, accompanying the pious and serving the needy and the righteous.’”

‘Abd al-Wāḥid ibn Bakr reported upon the authority of Muhammad ibn al-Faḍl, “I left Antioch and entered Tāynat. I entered the presence of Abū al-Khayr al-Aqta’ unexpectedly, and without his permission. I saw him sewing with his hands, and I became surprised at this. He saw me and said, ‘O enemy of your self, what made you do this?’ I replied, ‘I was moved to do so by the affection I have for you.’ He laughed and said to me, ‘Sit, but do not do such a thing after today.’ Then he said, ‘Conceal what you have seen for
as long as I am alive.’ And so I obliged.’”

Al-Shirāzī reported upon the authority of Ibrāhīm ibn Muḥammad al-Sabbāk, “We used to watch Abū al-Khayr al-Tinātī through a small opening and he would be sewing with his hand but when he would come out we would see it still amputated.”

Abū Bakr al-Miṣrī said, “I heard a poor man from amongst us known as al-Anṣārī saying, ‘I entered the presence of Abū al-Khayr and he gave me two apples, placing them in my pocket. I said, ‘I will not eat them, rather I will keep them and enjoy the blessings of his apples as I hold him in high esteem. I suffered greatly from poverty at the time but I endeavoured not to eat them. I placed great exertion into this until I finally capitulated and took one out to eat. I then put my hand in to take the second one and found two apples there. I remained eating them until I reached Mosul. I passed by a ruined building from which an ill man called, ‘O people, I desire apples and it is not the season for apples.’ I took out the two apples and gave them to him.”
He ate them and his soul left him thereafter. I thus came to the realisation that the *shaykh* gave me them due to this ill individual."

Ibn Jahdam reported upon the authority of Bukayr ibn Muhammad, “I was with Abū al-Khayr amongst a group, and they were making mention of miracles. He said, ’Many have made mention of so-and-so walking to Makkah in a night. [However,] I know of an Abyssinian slave who was sitting within the *Jāmi‘ Masjid* of Atarablūs. His head was lying upon his rags and the goats of the Ḥaram (i.e. the holy sanctuary of Makkah) crossed his mind, so he said in his heart, ‘I wish I was at the Haram.’ At this point he stopped narrating the story. The congregation indicated to each other with their eyes and concurred that he (Abū al-Khayr) was that man.”

Abū al-Khayr passed away after [the year] 340.

---

*Muqbil al-Aswad*

أَبُو الْكِحْرُ بَعْدَ الأَرْبَعِينِ وَثَلاَثَمَاةَ

233
Abū Bakr Ahmad ibn Ishaq ibn Sakīnah al-Aza‘ī reported upon the authority of Abū al-Ḥasan ibn Khayrūn, the companion of Abū Bakr ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz, “Abū Bakr Abd al-ʿAzīz stated to me, ‘I was with my teacher—i.e. Abū Bakr al-Khallal—whilst I was a growing youth. A group gathered after ʿishā‘ to talk about the Hereafter. Then they said to each other, ‘We have not seen Muqbil, i.e. the black man who works as a guard, for a lengthy period.’ They then stood and sought after him, and my teacher—i.e. al-Khallāl—said to me, ‘Do not leave, rather guard the door.’ I waited until they had traversed a fair distance and then I locked the door and followed them. When we reached a certain pathway, he said, ‘He is there... I can see an individual behind us.’ They came to a halt and said to me, ‘Who are you?’ I remained quiet due to fear of my teacher. One of them said to him, ‘By Allāh, can you leave him?’ So, he left me be, and I went with them.
We then entered a plantation within which were aubergines, and a black man was therein standing in prayer. They gave the salâm and then sat until he completed the prayer. [After he finished,] he brought out a bag within which was dry pieces of bread and ground salt, and then he stated, ‘Eat.’ They thus ate and recounted the miracles of the Awliya, and the man remained silent. One individual from the group said, ‘O Muqbil, we came to visit you yet you have not said anything to us.’ He replied, ‘Whom am I [to speak,] and I do not have anything to mention except that I know of a man who if he would ask Allah to turn this plantation of aubergine into gold, it would happen.’ By Allah, he had barely finished speaking when I saw the aubergine turning into gold. My teacher—i.e. al-Khallal—said to him, ‘O Muqbil, is there permission for one to take from it?’ He replied, ‘Take [from it.]’ The aubergine was still in the soil and so my teacher pulled it out of the soil with all of its roots, and found that everything within it was gold. A small aubergine and some leaves fell off it, which I picked up and some of which remain with me today.’ He continued, ‘He then prayed two units and asked Allah to return the plantation to its original state. Then the place of that root reverted to that of an aubergine.’"
He was married to the sister of Ibrāhīm al-Khawāṣ. He was a pious man and would travel with al-Khawāṣ whilst relying upon Allāh (i.e. for provisions etc.).

Abū Ḥammād al-Aswad

Muḥammad ibn Nāsir reported upon the authority of Ja‘far ibn Ahmad al-Sarrāj that ‘Ali ibn Muḥammad al-Muzayyin said regarding Abū Ḥammād al-Aswad—known as al-Zanjī,— “He spent thirty years in front of the Ka‘bah at Masjid al-Ḥarām. He would not leave there except to purify himself for the prayer and he was not seen eating or drinking.”

It was also said by Abū al-Ḥasan al-Muzayyin, ‘Abū Ḥammād would turn white when he attained wajd (spiritual ecstasy) and when it would subside, he would return to his original colour.”

Suhayb al-Aswad
Ja‘far al-Dubā‘ī reported upon the authority of Mālik ibn Dīnār, “There was a black man within Makkah who was called Suhayb. His mistress would say to him, ‘O Suhayb you have made yourself of no use for me, as during the day you fast and you spend your nights standing in prayer.’” He continued, “He would reply to her, ‘When I remember the Fire my sleep flutters away and when I remember the Paradise my motivation for it intensifies.’”

فصل

The worshippers and ascetics from amongst them whose names are not known

From them:

A worshipper from the people of Madīnah

[۲۳۷] أَنَّابْناً عَلِیٰ بْن عَبَید اللَّهِ عَنْ آبِی الْحُسَیْنِ بْن الْعُمَّانِدی عَنْ آبِی حَفْصِ

ابن شاهین قَالَ: تَأَوَّلٌ أَبُو عُمَرِ الْحُسَینِ قَالَ تَأَوَّلٌ أَبُو عُمَرِ اللَّهِ بِن سَیفِ قَالَ حَدِیثِ مُحَمَّد

بْن الْحُسَینِ قَالَ حَدِیثِ بْنِ أَبِی بَکْرِ الْمَقْدُمِ قَالَ حَدِیثِ الْبَذْرِی العَمْرَ بْن مَالِک

بْن دِیتَرَ قَالَ: قَالَ الْمَیْمَةُ عَبْدُ أَسْوَدٍ قَالَ لَهُ سَرْحَبِ فِکَانَتِ مَوْلاتهُ تَقُولُ لَهُ: يا

سَرْحَبِ قَدْ أَفْسَدَتْ نَفْسَكُ عَلَیْهِ؛ أَمَا النَّهَارِ فِصَايَمُ، وَأَمَا اللَّيْلِ فَأَتَتْ قَائِمًا. قَالَ:

يَقُولُ: يَا مَوْلَاتِي إِذَا ذَكَرَ الْنَّارُ طَارَ أَنَا، وَإِذَا ذَكَرَ الْجَنَّةِ أَشْتَدَّ شَوْقِی.
Mūsā ibn Ḥābān reported upon the authority of Anas ibn Mālik, “I saw 'Umar ibn al-Khattāb on an occasion when a black slave came to him and said, ‘O Commander of the Faithful, did not Allah state: {The believers are naught but brothers.}? He replied, ‘Certainly, yes.’ The man said, ‘As I am your brother, come with me and help me with a need of mine.’ 'Umar sprung up, placed his hand within the hand of the black man and went to a hut he had in al-Baqī'. The man said, ‘O Commander of the Faithful, are you not fearful of Allah that your abode is sheltered whilst I am here in a damp, dilapidated and filthy condition, [using some of the rags] to cover myself and some to sleep upon. By the One who sent Muhammad with the truth, I will not exonerate you from this until the Day of Judgement unless I receive from you my rights which have been denied to me.'

74 Al-Ḥujarat: 10
Umar cried out at this, placed earth upon his head and lamented, "May the mother of 'Umar be deprived of him, O black man please forgive me.' The black man then wept and said, 'I have forgiven you.' 'Umar then ordered him to be given clothing and money. At this the man said, 'As for the clothing you offer, I accept it from you, however I have no need for the money.' 'Umar replied, 'Why so?' He said, 'I fear that if I take these dirhams, I will be tested by infatuation with them.' 'Umar left him after this. He later sought to find him and enquired regarding him, however he was not able to ascertain where he had gone.'

***

عابد آخر مدني

Another worshipper from Madinah

[127] أخبرنا مُحَمَّد بن تاَيِنْصَر الْحَافِظ قالَ أَبِي أَبْنَىٰ جَعْفَر بن أَحْمَد بن السَّراج قَالَ أَباْ أَبْنَى تَابِعَ السَّجِّيل الْيَبِيْنٍ بن عَمَر الْبَشَر قَالَ أَبي أَبْنَى أَحْمَد بن سَعد بن إِبْرَاهِيم الْرَّهْبِي قَالَ أَبي عَبْد اللَّه بن عَمَر قَالَ أَبي صَالِح بن سَلِيْمَان وَعَن مُحَمَّد بن المُنكَدِر قَالَ: كَانَّا لِي سَانِيَة فِي مَسْجِد رَسُول اللَّهِ ﷺ صَلِّي اللَّه عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ، ثُمَّ جَثَّت فَسَانَدَت إِلَى سَارِيَة فِي جَرِّ أَسْوَد تَعُوَّل صُفَرَة مَتَر بِكَسَاء وَعَلَى رَقْبِهِ كَنَايَة أَصْغَر مِنْهَا، فَنَتَقَد إِلَى السَّارِيَة أَلِيْي بَن يَدِي. فَكَتَبَ خَلْفِهِ، فَقَامَ فِصْلٌ رَكْعَتَيْنَ، ثُمَّ جَلَسَ فَقَالَ: أَي رِبَ خَرَج أَهْل حَرِم بَيْنَ يَدَيْنِ، فَقَالَ سَيْفِهُ: فَأَنَا أَقْسِم عَلَيْكَ لَمْ أُسْتِفْهُم. قَالَ أَبُو المُنكَدِر: فَمَا وَضَعَ بَدَّة حَتَّى سَبَعتُ الرُّكْعَة، ثُمَّ جَائَتُ السَّانِيَة بِشَيْءٍ مِنَ الْمُطْرُ حَمَد الَّهِ الَّذِي جَعَلَهُ، فَلَمْ أَسْمَع الْمُطْرُ حَمَد الَّهِ مَعَاهُ لَم أَسْمَع بِبَلَدِهَا قَطَّ.
Šāliḥ ibn Sulaymān reported upon the authority of Muḥammad ibn al-Munkadir, “I had a pillar of my own in the masjid of the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ. I leant upon it on one occasion when a black man came, he had yellowness in his skin tone, and was wearing a garment as an izār (lower garment) with another smaller garment around his neck. He moved towards the pillar which was in front of him, and I was subsequently situated behind him. He stood to pray two units of prayer and then he sat and said, ‘O my Lord, the people of Your sacred house came out to seek rain and You did not give them it. I implore You to provide them with rain.’” Ibn al-Munkadir said, “He had not yet lowered his hands when I heard the sound of thunder. Thereafter some rain fell from the sky and it delayed my return to my family. When the man heard the rain, he praised Allāh in a manner which I have never seen the like of.”

He continued, “He then said, ‘Who am I to receive an answer from Allāh, except that I sought refuge in Your praise and Your generosity.’ Then he stood and covered his upper-body with the garment he had used as an izār, and he covered his legs with the garment which was previously upon his back. He then prayed continuously until he sensed that the time of the fajr prayer was about to enter, whereupon he performed the prostration and the witr (ending the night prayer upon an odd unit). Then he prayed the two [Sunnah] units of the morning prayer, after which the iqāmah (the second call to the prayer) for the morning prayer was given and he entered the prayer with the people and I did so as well. When the imām performed the
taslim he stood and left, I followed behind to the masjid door and he exited it whilst lifting his garment so as to wade through the water. I followed him in doing the same action and then I lost track of him.

On the following night I prayed 'ishâ in the masjid of the Messenger of Allah and then proceeded to my pillar and leant upon it. The man came again and covered his upper body with a garment and wore the garment he had previously covered his back with to cover his legs. He then stood and prayed, continuing in this until he felt the morning was arriving, and then he prostrated and performed the witr. He prayed the two [Sunnah] units of fajr and then the iqâmah was called for the prayer. He joined the people in the prayer and I did also. When the imâm performed the taslim the man exited the masjid. I exited behind him and followed him until he entered a property, and it was one of the buildings of Madinah which I knew of. I returned to the masjid, and when the sun rose and I had prayed, I went to that property and found a man sitting there and crafting, it was a shoe maker.
When he saw me, he recognised me and stated, 'O Abā ‘Abdullāh, welcome. Are you in need of anything? Do you need my service for footwear?' I sat and said, 'Are you not my companion from the previous night?' His face darkened at this and he yelled at me, 'O Ibn al-Munkadir, what is it to you?' By Allāh, his fury caused me to become scared, and I said to myself that I should leave his presence immediately.

On the third night I prayed the *‘ishār prayer within the masjid of the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ, and then I went to my pillar and leant upon it. The man did not come. I said to myself, 'By Allāh, what have you done?' When the morning came, I sat in the masjid until the sun rose. I left there and when I reached the property wherein the man had been, I found the door open and the inside of it completely empty. The people there said to me, 'O Abā ‘Abdullāh, what happened between you and the man yesterday?' I replied, 'What did he do?' They said, 'When you left him yesterday, he spread his garment in the middle of his abode and did not leave any of his materials except that he placed them within it. Then he carried it off, and none knows where he went.'” Ibn al-Munkadir said, “I did not leave any of the houses of Madinah I was aware of except that I sought for him there, and I did not find him.”
Abū Mawdūd reported upon the authority of Muḥammad ibn al-Munkadīr, "Rain had been held back from us for a year. I went to the masjid and found therein a black man sitting at the mimbar whilst saying, ‘O Allāh, provide us with rain immediately.’ Subsequently there came thunder and lightning, and he said, ‘O my Lord, this is not what I desired,’ and then rain began to fall. He then stood and I followed him to the house of Ālī Ḥazm. I went to him and presented him with dirhams, to which he refused. I said to him, ‘This is the season of Hajj so will you go with me?’ He replied, ‘This is better and for you therein will be reward.’ And so, he went with me.”

A Black Worshipper from Makkah

Abū Aṣwād from Aḥl Makkah

Abū Mawdūd reported upon the authority of Muḥammad ibn al-Munkadīr, "Rain had been held back from us for a year. I went to the masjid and found therein a black man sitting at the mimbar whilst saying, ‘O Allāh, provide us with rain immediately.’ Subsequently there came thunder and lightning, and he said, ‘O my Lord, this is not what I desired,’ and then rain began to fall. He then stood and I followed him to the house of Ālī Ḥazm. I went to him and presented him with dirhams, to which he refused. I said to him, ‘This is the season of Hajj so will you go with me?’ He replied, ‘This is better and for you therein will be reward.’ And so, he went with me.”
Sulaymān ibn al-Ḥasan reported from his father upon the authority of Ibn al-Mubārak, “I entered Makkah during a time when its inhabitants were suffering drought. The people were praying for rain within al-Masjid al-Ḥarām. I was amongst the people next to the door of Bani Shaybah when a black boy entered. He was wearing two pieces of cloth, one as an izdr and the other covering his upper body. He went to a concealed area which was to my side, and I heard him saying, ‘My Deity, the faces are ashamed of their numerous sins and vile deeds. You have prevented the downpour of the sky as a means of punishing the creation. I implore you, O Halim—the possessor of patience, O Who forbearance is one of His attributes—the One whom does not let His slaves perceive except beauty, provide them with water immediately.’” He said, “He did not stop saying ‘al-sā‘ah, al-sā‘ah’ until clouds had formed in the sky and rainfall became widespread. He then sat there making tasbih and I began to cry. He stood up and I followed him until I saw where he [lived.]”
I then went to al-Fudayl ibn ‘Iyād and he asked me, ‘What causes you to cry?’ I said, ‘One has preceded us to Allāh and He has favoured him over us.’ He replied, ‘What is this?’ I then recounted the story to him and he fell to the ground whilst crying out, he said, ‘Woe to you O Ibn al-Mubārak, take me to him.’ I replied, ‘Time is short [today,] but we will seek him out later.’

On the next day, I performed the *fajr* prayer and then went towards his place where I came across an elderly man at the door sitting upon a mat which was being spread out for him. When he saw me, he recognised me and said, ‘Welcome O Aba ‘Abd al-Rahmān, what can I do for you?’ I replied to him, ‘I am in need of a black slave.’ He said, ‘Indeed, I have many of them so choose which one you prefer.’ He then shouted, ‘O *ghulām,*’ and a strong black youth came. The man said, ‘He would be good for you, I will give him to you.’ I replied, ‘I do not require him.’ They continued to be presented to me, one by one, until the last one came. When I saw him, my eyes widened and the man said, ‘Is he the one?’ I replied affirmatively and he said, ‘There
is no possibility of me selling him.' I asked, 'Why is that?' He said, 'His presence in the house is a blessing, for he does not cause me any expense.' I said, 'Where does he feed himself from?' He replied, 'He earns a living of half a dāniq—more or less—through working with ribbons, and if he does not sell anything, he refrains from eating during that day. And I was informed by my other slaves that he does not sleep during the night, neither does he mix with them—rather he remains preoccupied with himself. I love him from the depths of my heart.' I said to him, '[So do I] go back to Suwān al-Thawrī and al-Fudayl ibn 'Iyād without my need being fulfilled?' He replied, 'Coming here to my place in person is of great weight to me, so take him for what you need.'

Thus, I purchased him and took him to the abode of al-Fudayl ibn 'Iyād. As we were going, he said to me, 'O master.' I said to him, 'I am at your service.' He replied, 'Do not say that you are at my service, for indeed this statement is more appropriate to emanate from the slave rather than the master.' Then I said, 'What is your need my beloved?' He replied, 'I am physically weak and so I cannot bear service to you. You had the choice of selecting other than me, and you were presented with those who were physically stronger.
Illuminating the Darkness: The Virtues of Blacks and Abyssinians

than me.’ I said, ‘I would not want Allāh to see me bearing you with servitude, rather I will buy you a property, marry you off and serve you myself.’ He wept and so I asked him what caused him to cry. He replied, ‘You would not have done this unless you witnessed one of my unisons with Allāh [ع]. If not for this, why did you choose me over the other slaves? I said, ‘This is of no concern to you.’ He urged me, ‘I ask you by Allāh, why did you choose me.’ I said, ‘Due to your du`ā being answered.’ He replied, ‘Indeed I view you—by the will of Allāh—to be a righteous man. Indeed, Allāh has a certain elite group amongst His creation whom He does not reveal their identities to except to the beloved from His slaves, and he does not display this group except to the ones He is pleased with.’

Then he said to me, ‘Is it possible that we could stop for a short while as I have some units of prayer from the previous night still to pray.’ I said, ‘Fudayl’s abode is close.’ He said, ‘No, this location is better for me. The command of Allāh should not be delayed [ع].’ He then entered the masjid through the entrance of the traders and he did not cease praying until he prayed the units which he missed from the night. He said, ‘O Abā ‘Abd al-Rahmān, do you have any need from me?’ I said, ‘Why?’ He replied, ‘Because I wish to depart?’ I said, ‘To where?’ He replied, ‘To the Hereafter.’ I said, ‘Do not depart, I will tell you something that will please you.’ He said.
to me, ‘Indeed this life was beautiful when the transaction was between me and Him ﷺ. As for the current juncture, you have come to know of it and subsequently others will also. I have no need for this.’ Then he lowered his forehead to the floor and began to say, ‘My Deity, take me immediately.’ I went towards him and found him to have died. By Allah, never do I remember him except that I feel deep sadness in regards to him, and the worldly life diminishes within my eyes.”

مأب أسود بغدادي

A black worshipper from Baghdad

Abū al-Qāsim 'Abdullāh ibn Muḥammad al-Ṭāshī reported upon the authority of Abū Ja'far al-Saqqa’ī, “I left my house on an occasion when it was raining. I saw a black man who was lying ill in a rubbish dump. I moved him and took him to my house. When evening fell, he called me and said,
"O Abā Ja‘far, do not spoil what you have done. Sit with me." At this the house began to exude the smell of musk. The scent covered my clothing, utensils and everything else within my house. He again said, ‘Sit with me.’ Then he spoke whilst expressing with his hand, ‘This way you do not make those who are sitting with me now annoyed.’ I heard him saying, ‘My Lord, be gentle with me. My Lord, be gentle with me.’ Then his soul departed from him and I said to myself, ‘I will sell my garments and my jubbahs and through this I will buy him a shroud.’ Around seventy people then knocked upon my door, each of them saying, ‘O Abā Ja‘far, a man has died with you and he will be in need of a shroud.”

——

A black worshipper from Baṣrah

[131] أخبرنا مُحمَّد بن عبد الباقي قَالَ أنَّا حَمَّد بن أَحْمَد قَالَ أنَّا أَبُو نُعَيم
أَحْمَد بن عبد اللَّه قَالَ أنَّا أَبُو الأَرْحَمْ ضَمَّرَةٌ بِحَمْرَةِ الْمَقْدِسِيَّةِ في كِتَابِه.
وَخَدَثَنِي عَنْهُ مُحمَّد بن إِبَراهِيم بن أَحْمَد قَالَ: خَدَثَنِي أَيِّي قَالَ: ثُمَّا عبد اللَّه بن
سَعِيد الْهَاشِمِيَّ قَالَ نَا أَبي قَالَ نَا عبد اللَّه بن إِدْريس عن مَالِك بن دِينَار قَالَ:
اِحْتَمِسَ عَلَيْنا الْمُكَّنُرَةُ بِالْبَضْرَةَ فَخُرجَنا يَوْمًا بعَدَّ يَوْمَ نَتِسِقَيْنَا فَلَمْ نَرَ أَثَرَ الإِجَابَةِ،
فَخُرجَتْ أَنَا وَعَطَاة السُّلَمِيَّ وَثَابِت الْبَاَّتِنِيَّ وَمُحَمَّد بن وَاسَع وَحَبِيب الْفَارِسِيَّ
وَصِلَّح الْمَرْيُ في أَخَرِين خِلَّى صَرَّانَى إِلَى المَصْلِى بِالْبَضْرَةَ فَاتَسْقَيْنَا، فَلَمْ نَرَ أَثَرَ
الْإِجَابَةَ، وَالْصَّرِيف النَّاس، وَتَبَيَّنَتْ أَنَا وَثَابِت [الْبَاَّتِنِيَّ] فِي المَصْلِى، فَلَمْ نَرَ أَثَرَ
الْإِجَابَةَ، وَإِنَّ أَسْوَدّ دَيْقِق السَّاهِقَينَ، عَطَى الْبَطْن عَلَى مَيْرَان مِن صُوْف
فِيَاء إِلَى مَاءَ، فَتَمِسَحَ ثُمَّ صَلِى رُكَّعَتِين خَفِيفَتِينَ، ثُمَّ رَفَع طَرَفه إِلَى السَّمَاء
فَقَالَ: سَيْدِي، إِلَيْكَ كَمْ تَرْدُد عِبَادَك فِي مَا لَا يَنْكَحَكَ، أَنفِد مَا عَنْدَكَ؟ أَقَسَمت
عَلَيْك بِحَبِّك لِي إِلَّا مَا سَقِيتهم غَيْبَك السَّاعَة السَّعَاءَ. فَمَا أَمَّ الْكَلَام خَتَى
‘Abdullāh ibn Idrīs reported upon the authority of Mālik ibn Dīnār, “Rain was held back from us in Baṣrāh, so we went out day after day to pray for rain, however we did not see any sign of an answer to our prayers. I went out with ‘Aṭā’ al-Sulāmī, Thābit al-Bunānī, Muḥammad ibn Wāsī, Ḥabīb al-Fārīsī, Sāliḥ al-Murrī amongst others, until we arrived at the musālā in Baṣrāh and prayed al-istisqā (the prayer for rain). We did not see a sign that our prayer had been answered and so the people departed. I remained there-in with Thābit al-Bunānī, and when the night became enveloped in darkness, I saw a black man with thin legs. He had a large belly and was wearing two garments made of wool. He went to the water and touched it, then he performed two short units of prayer and raised his face to the heavens and said, ‘My Master, for how long will you rebuff your slaves from that which does not decrease from You? Nothing with you will ever diminish. I swear to you by Your love for me, provide them with rain immediately.’ He had barely finished speaking when the sky became cloudy and it started to rain heavily.
Illuminating the Darkness: The Virtues of Blacks and Abyssinians

love?’ Then he rushed away and I said, ‘Remain with us.’ He replied, ‘I am a slave, and it is incumbent upon me to be dutiful to my lesser master.’ Then he entered the property of a slave-trader.

On the next morning I went to this slave-trader and said to him, ‘Do you have any slaves to sell for service?’ He replied, ‘Yes, I have a hundred slaves.’ He brought them out for me, one by one, to each of which I would reply, ‘Not this one.’ This continued until he said, ‘There are no more with me.’ When we left, we came across the black man standing in a dilapidated room. I said, ‘Sell me this one.’ He replied, ‘This slave is an invalid, he serves no purpose except to cry.’ I said, ‘That is why I want him.’ He called for him and said to me, ‘Take him for however much you wish, however, after you agree to acquit me from whatever defects you may find in him.’ I subsequently purchased him for twenty dinars.

When we exited that place, he said to me, ‘O master, why did you purchase me?’ I replied, ‘So that we can serve you.’ He said, ‘And why is that?’ I re-
plied, ‘Are you not our companion from the previous night at the musallā?’ He said, ‘You are aware of that?’ He carried on walking until he entered a masjid. There he prayed two units and said, ‘My Deity and Master, the secret between me and You has been displayed to the creation. I swear by You that you take my soul immediately.’ Upon this he passed away, and we seek rain and aid for our needs from his grave to this day (i.e. as an intermediary).’”

Another black worshipper from Baṣrah

Muhammad ibn Harūn ibn Muslim reported upon the authority of ‘Abd al-Wahid ibn Zayd, “I was going towards the direction of al-Khuraybah when I came across a black leper. All of his limbs had come off due to the

75 It is not permissible to seek help from the dead in this manner, as has been mentioned by the scholars. During the time of the Companions they would seek rain through al-‘Abbās (the uncle of the Messenger), and this was after the death of the Prophet ﷺ. During the time of Mu‘āwiyah they would seek rain through Yazid al-Jurshi. Both of these individuals were from the best of people and the most pious. They were known for their taqwā, devoutness and that their supplications were answered.
leprosy and he was also blind. He was sitting down and I noticed some boys throwing stones at him, causing his face to bleed. I saw his lips were moving and so I approached him to hear what he was saying. I heard him say, ‘O Master, You know that if You sheared away my flesh and sawed off by bones, I will only love You more and more. So, do with me as You please.’”

A black worshipper from ‘Abādān

Abū ‘Abdullāh al-Shīrāzī reported upon the authority of Abū al-Khayrāt, famously referred to as al-‘Asqalānī, ‘In ‘Abādān there was a Zanjī man with peppery hair who was taking shelter within ruins. I took some things with me and sought after him. When he saw me, he smiled and pointed with his hand to the ground. I saw that spread widely around me were shining dirhams and dinārs. Then he said to me, ‘Give me what you have.’ I gave him and fled from there, as I was overwhelmed by what I saw from him.’”

Another worshipper, who was seen en route to Makkah

Abū ‘Abdullāh al-Shīrāzī reported upon the authority of Abū al-Khayrāt, famously referred to as al-‘Asqalānī, ‘In ‘Abādān there was a Zanjī man with peppery hair who was taking shelter within ruins. I took some things with me and sought after him. When he saw me, he smiled and pointed with his hand to the ground. I saw that spread widely around me were shining dirhams and dinārs. Then he said to me, ‘Give me what you have.’ I gave him and fled from there, as I was overwhelmed by what I saw from him.’”
Musharraf ibn Abān reported upon the authority of Sāliḥ ibn ‘Abd al-Karīm, “I saw a black slave on the route to Makkah, next to the milepost and he was praying. I said to him, ‘Are you a slave?’ He replied affirmatively, then I asked, ‘Are you burdened with a tax?’ He replied, ‘Yes.’ I said, ‘Should I speak to your master to see if he will lift this?’ He said, ‘This worldly life in its entirety is naught but abasement.’ Thus, I brought him and emancipated him. After this he sat and cried, and said to me, ‘You have emancipated me?’ I replied, ‘Yes,’ and he then said to me, ‘Allāh will emancipate you on the Day of Judgement.’ He again sat down and cried whilst saying, ‘Matters are burdensome upon me.’ I took out some dinars to give him but he refused to take them. I performed Ḥajj four years later and asked regarding him. The people said that he had disappeared, and that since he had left they had been suffering from drought, and he moved to Jeddah.
Dawūd ibn Rashid reported, “It was narrated to me by al-Ṣubayh and Malīḥ—who were two pious youths from al-Shām, and they were nicknamed al-Ṣubayh and Malīḥ due to their proficient worship—, one of them said, ‘One day we were hungry so I said to my companion, or he said to me, ‘Let us go deep into the desert, for we may see a man whom we can teach him his religion and for this Allāh may reward us.’ When we grew weary [from walking in the desert] we came across a black man who was carrying a load of firewood upon his head. We approached him and I said, ‘O man, who is your lord?’ He then threw the firewood which was upon his head to the ground, and then he sat upon it. He said, ‘Do not ask me who my lord is, rather ask me where the position of īmān is in my heart.’ I glanced at my companion after this, and he glanced at me. Then he said, ‘Ask away, for verily the murid does not run out of questions.’ When he saw that there would be no response from us, he said, ‘O Allāh, if you know that You have slaves whom You give whenever they ask, then turn this bundle [of firewood] into gold.’ We then saw them change into shining bars of gold. The man then said, ‘O Allāh, if You know that You have slaves to whom anonymity is more
beloved than fame, then return this gold to firewood.’ Thus Allâh returned it, and he placed it upon his head and went off, and we did not dare to follow him.”

Another worshipper

A man from Ālī Abī Bakrah reported upon the authority of Maymûn ibn Siyāh, “I was with Khālid al-Rabā’î and a group of our companions, and we were making dhîkr (remembrance) of Allâh . A black man came to us and said, ‘Have you mentioned death during this [gathering] of yours?’ We said, ‘Indeed we make mention of it frequently but we have not done so today.’ The man cried and said, ‘You have overlooked that which will never overlook you, and you have forgotten that which counts down your breaths until it arrives.’ Then his legs gave way and he was about to fall, a man from the people gave him support and then his soul exited him. I was looking at him as he passed away. We looked [for someone who knew him] but none had any knowledge of him. We then washed, embalmed, shrouded and bur-
Illuminating the Darkness: The Virtues of Blacks and Abyssinians

One of the worshippers of al-Sawāhīl

Ahmad ibn Maḥbūb reported from his grandfather upon the authority of Ibrāhīm ibn Adham, “I entered one of the fortresses of al-Sāḥil as I was passing by and had been overpowered by the sky (i.e. due to rain), so I sheltered myself in a furnace room. I thought to myself that I would sit here until the rain eased. A black man was there, attending to a fire. I greeted him and said to him, ‘Do you permit me to [stay] until the rain abates?’ He nodded to indicate that I should enter. I thus entered, sitting close to him. I was looking at him but did not say a word, watching him attend to the fire silently. He was moving his lips and turning right to left without a sign of fatigue. When the next day arrived, he came to me and addressed me, saying, ‘Do not hold
it against me that I did not host you well or welcome you. I am a slave, and I have been charged with what you see. I hate to turn my focus away from that which I have been charged with.' I said, 'Why do you turn to the right and the left in that tireless manner?'

قَالَ: خَوَفًا مِّن الْمَوْتِ، وَقَدْ عَلَمْتُ أَنَّهُ نَازَلَ بِيِّ، وَلَكِنْ لَا أُعْلَمُ مِّنْ أَيْنَ يَأْتِي؟ وَلَا مَتَى يَأْتِي؟ فَقَلْتُ: فَمَا تُحَرِّكُ شَفَتِيكَ؟ قَالَ: أَحْمَدَ اللَّهَ وَأَهْلَهُ وَأَسْبِحَهُ لَأَنَّهُ بَلَغَنِي عَنِ النَّبِيِّ - صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ - أَنَّهُ قَالَ لِبَعْضِ أَصْحَابِهِ: أَعْمَلْ، لَا يَأْتِيَ الْمَوْتُ إِلَّا وَلَسْانُكَ رَطَبَ مِنْ ذِكْرِ اللَّهِ عِنْدَنَا. قَالَ إِبْرَاهِيمٌ: فَبَكَّيْتُ وَصَحتُ صَبْحَةً، وَقَلْتُ: بِرَزْ عَلَيْكَ الأَسْوَدُ بَيْ إِبْرَاهِيمِ.

He replied, 'It is due to the fear of death. I am certain that it will descend upon me, however I do not know from where (i.e. which side) it will come and when it will come.' I then asked, 'Why do you move your lips in that manner?' He replied, 'I say alhamdulillah, la ilaha illallah and subhanallahu. This is because it reached me that the Prophet said to some of his Companions, 'Perform good deeds, do not allow death to descend upon you except that your tongue is moist with the dhikr of Allah ﷻ.' I wept at this and cried out. I said, 'This black man has excelled you, O Ibrahim.'”
بِنَاء الْثَّلَاثَةِ وَالْعَشَرَةِ
Chapter Twenty Three

فِي ذِكْرِ المَتَعِدَاتِ مِنِ السُّوِادَاءِ فَمَنِ الْمَعْرُوفَاتِ الْأَسْمَاءَ
In mention of the worshippers from amongst the women of the black people

فِمَنِ الْمَعْرُوفَاتِ الْأَسْمَاءِ
Amongst those whose names are known is:

ميِّمَونَةُ السُّوِادَاءِ
Maymūnah al-Sawdāʾ
Al-Fudayl ibn Iyād reported upon the authority of ‘Abd al-Wāhid ibn Zayd, “I sought from Allāh over three nights to show me my companion in Jannah. It seemed to me as if someone was saying, ‘O ‘Abd al-Wāhid, your companion in Jannah will be Maymūnah al-Sawdā.’ I asked, ‘Where is she?’ The reply was, ‘Amongst the people of so-and-so in Kūfah.’ I then went out to Kūfah and asked about her. It was said to me that she was a crazy woman living among them and she herded sheep for them. I said that I wished to see her. They said, ‘She went to al-Jubban.’ I went there and found her standing in prayer. There was a cane in front of her and there was a wool jubbāh upon it which had written on it, ‘Not for sale and not for purchase.’ The sheep were mingling with wolves, neither did the wolves attempt to eat the sheep nor were the sheep scared of the wolves. When she saw me she curtailed her prayer and said to me, ‘Return O Ibn Zayd, the rendezvous is not here, rather it is promised for the future.’ I said, ‘May Allāh have mercy upon you, from where did you ascertain that I am Ibn Zayd?’ She replied, ‘Do you not know that the souls are like conscripted soldiers, those whom they recognise, they get along with, and those whom they do not recognise, they will not get along with.’ I said, ‘Can you provide me with an exhortation?’ She said, ‘I am amazed to see a preacher [desiring to] be exhorted!’ She continued, ‘O Ibn Zayd, when you let your limbs judge others with justice, they will reveal to you that which they conceal. O Ibn Zayd, it has reached me that if a slave is given something in this worldly life and covets it greedily
again, Allâh will take away his love of being in solitude with Him, and sub­stitute His closeness with distance, and intimacy with estrangement.’ Then she recited the following:

O preacher, who stood seeking the reward for, reprimanding the people against sin.

You prohibit while you are corrupt in truth, this is both abominable and astonishing.

If you had reformed before this, your faults, or quickly asked for for­giveness,

Whenever you addressed Him with “my love”, it would land as truth­ful in the hearts.

You forbid aggression and corruption, whilst you seem in your for­bidding somewhat doubtful.

I said to her, ‘I saw wolves amongst the sheep, however the sheep were not afraid of the wolves, nor did the wolves attempt to eat the sheep. How is this so?’ She replied, ‘Off with you, I have rectified that which is between me and Him, so He rectified that which is between these wolves and sheep.’”
Sha’wānah from the People of al-Ubullah

Muhammad ibn al-Ḥusayn reported upon the authority of Mu‘ādh ibn al-‘Aqīl, “Sha’wānah cried to the extent that we feared blindness would take her. We mentioned our concern to her to which she replied, ‘By Allah, blindness in this world due to crying is beloved to me in comparison to blindness in the hereafter due to the fire.’”
Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥusayn said that Mālik ibn Ḍaygham reported to him, "A man from the people of al-Ubullah used to frequent my father often. He would dictate to him in regards to Shaʿwānah and her constant crying. My father said to him one day, 'Describe to me her crying.' He replied, 'How can I describe it to you! She cries day and night without end.'" Mālik said, "My father said to me, 'Leave until you come across this pious woman and then observe her.' Thus, I left with a man who said to her, 'This is the son of your brother Ḍaygham.' She welcomed me and said, 'Welcome O son of whom we have not laid eyes upon but still we love. By Allāh my dear son, I seek longingly to meet your father and nothing bars me from coming to him except my fear of distracting him from service to his master. And indeed, service to his master is more important than conversing with Shaʿwānah.' Then she said, 'Who is Shaʿwānah and what is Shaʿwānah? [She is merely] a sinful black bondmaid.'" He continued, "Then she took to crying, and she did not cease in this whilst we exited and left her.

 قال مِحْمَدُ مَوْلاَنُهُ مَوْلاَنَّي نَحْدِثُي بِهِ بِبَسْطَامَ قالَ: أَسْتَأْدِنَا عَلَى شِعْوَانَة فَقَضَتْ، فَإِذَا مَنَزَّلَ رَثَّ الْيَتْهَةُ، أَثَرَ الْحَرْبُ عَلَيْهِ بَيْنَ، فَقَالَ لَهَا صَاحِبِ لي: لَوْ رَفَقَتْ بِنْفَسِك فَقُصْتَ مِنْ هَذَا الْبِكَاءِ شَيْئًا كَانَ أَقْوَى أَلِكَ عَلَى مَا تُرْيِدُنَّ. ثُمَّ قَالَتْ: وَاللَّهُ لَوْ زَوَّدَتْ أَنَا أَبْكَيْيَ حَتَّى تَنْفَدَ دِمْوُعشٍ، ثُمَّ أَبْكَيْيَ الدَّمَاءِ حَتَّى لَ نَبْقَى فِي جَسْدِي جَارَحَةً فِيهَا فَطْرَةً مِنْ دِم، وَأَنَّى لِي بِالبِكَاءِ.

Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥusayn said that Yahyā ibn Busṭām reported to him, "We called at the door of Shaʿwānah and she permitted us to enter. Her abode was decrepit and had clear signs of ruin. One of my companions said to her, 'If you were easier on yourself and stopped crying so much then you would be more able to achieve what you desire.' She replied, 'By Allāh, I wish that I could cry until my tears are exhausted, and then cry [tears of] blood until there no longer remains within my body a single organ which contains a drop of it. But then how far for me will be the shed of tears.'"
Muhammad reported upon the authority Muḍar, “I have never seen anyone who cried more excessively than Sha’wānah, and I have never heard a voice more inciting to the hearts of the pious than hers, when she would whimper and say, ‘O deceased ones, O son of the deceased, O brothers of the deceased.’”

Muḥammad said, “I stated to Abū ‘Umar al-Darlr, ‘Have you seen Sha’wānah?’ He replied, ‘I have frequented her assemblies on a number of occasions, however I could not decipher [much of] her words due to her excessive crying. I heard her say once, ‘Whomever amongst you is able to weep then he should do so. If you are not capable of this then you should display compassion to those who do so. Indeed, the one who weeps does so because he is aware of that which made him cry.’”

Al-Ḥārith ibn al-Mughīrah reported that Sha’wānah used to lament whilst reciting these two couplets:

| 140 | قال أبو بكر الفراشي: وحدثني الهاجري بن محمود الثميمظ قال: حدثني محمود بن شهيل عن الهاجري بن المغيرة قال: كانت شعوانة تنوَّع بهذين البيتين: |

He lays hope in this world that some of it remain for him, but the
end descended before the hope [came to fruition.]
The living is expeditious in irrigating the roots of the sapling, however, the sapling [grew and] lived whilst the man perished.

Illuminating the Darkness: The Virtues of Blacks and Abyssinians

‘Abdullāh ibn Muḥammad al-Qurḍī reported upon the authority of Ibrāhīm ibn ‘Abd al-Malik, “Sha’wānah and her husband entered Makkah. They would perform tawāf and pray, and when they grew weary, he would sit and she would sit behind him. He would say whilst sitting, ‘I am thirsty for Your love and nothing can quench it.’ And she would say in Persian, ‘You have cultivated in the mountains a remedy for every disease, however the cure for lovers does not grow in the mountains.’”

١٤٢ أخبرنا مُحَمَّد بن عبد الباقي قال أنابانا رق الله بن عبد الوهاب عن أبي عبد الرحمن السلمي قال: شبعت الخليلين الصوفي يقول: دخلت على تحييّة زائرة فسمعتها من داخل البيت تقول في مناجاتها: بآ من يحبني وأحبه. فقلت: يا تحييّة، من أين تعلمين أنه يحبك؟ فقالت: كنت في بلد النوبة، وأنا كتابة
‘Abd al-Wahhab reported upon the authority of his father ‘Abd al-Rahman al-Sulami, “I heard al-Mählî al-Ṣâfî say, ‘Tuḥyīyah visited me on one occasion, and I heard her invoking Allāh quietly from within the house, ‘O the one who loves me and whom I love.’ I said, ‘O Tuḥyīyah, from where do you ascertain that He loves you? ’ She replied, ‘I am from the land of al-Nūbiyyah, and my parents were Christians. My mother used to bring me to the church and take me to the cross. She would instruct me to kiss it, and whenever I would try to comply, I would see a hand protrude and push me away so that I would not kiss it. Thus, I have come to know that He has cared for me for a long time.’”

---

Section

فَأَما المجهولات الأسماء من متبعدين فمنهن

From the Female Worshippers Amongst Them Whose Names Are Not Known

أم محمد بن الحنفية

Umm Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥanafiyyah

كَانَتْ جَارِيَةً سَنْدِيَةَ سُوْدَاءً مِنْ سَبِيْ الْعَيْلاَمَةِ، فَصَارَتْ إِلَى عَلِيِّ بْنِ أَبِي طَالِب

رضي الله عنه.

She was a Sindī girl with black skin who was from the captives of al-Yamāmah. She came into the possession of ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib.
Fatimah bint al-Mundhir reported upon the authority of Asmā bint Abī Bakr, “I saw Umm Mūhammad ibn al-Ḥanafiyah the black Sindi. She was a bondmaiden of Bani Ḥanafiyah, and she was not from their tribe. This is because Khalid ibn Wālīd made a treaty with them to take their slaves as captives, instead of their free people.

A Female Worshipper from Makkah

Al-Ṣabāḥ ibn Muhārib reported upon the authority of al-Muthana ibn al-Ṣabāḥ, “Atā and Mujahid used to visit a black woman in one of the areas of Makkah, and she would make them cry [due to her piety and words.] Then they would return.”
Tanwiru 'l-Ghabashi fi 'l-Fadli 's-Südáni wa 'l-Habashi

A Female Worshipper from Kufah

[145] أخبرنا المهديان ابن أبي متصرع وابن عبد الباقي قالا: نبأ جعل بن
أحمد السراج قال: أنا أبو النوري قال: أنا مُحَمَّد بن عبد الله الدقيق قال: أنا
الحسين بن صفوان قال: أنا عبد الله بن مُحَمَّد الفرشي قال: خديفي مُحَمَّد بن
موسى الصايغ قال: خدثنا عبد الله بن نافع قال: أيُّ الريَّع بن خنيد في مَناءه
فقيل له: إن خلائمة السؤداء روجت في الجَنِّ، فلمَّا أصبح سأل عنها فدل عليها،
فإذا هي ترعي أعتزها، فقال: لأيمن عندما فأنظر ما عملها؟ فقام عندها ثلاثًا لا
يزده تزيد على الرُّضى، فإذا أمست جاءت إلى عنز أنها فحلت ثم شربت ثم
حلبت فسقته، فقال: هل في اليوم الثالث: يا هذا، ألا تشيخي من هذه العذر.
قالت: يا عبد الله، إنها ليست لي قال: قلم تشيخي من هذه؟ قالت: إن هذه
منحتها أشرب من لبنها، وأسقي من شفتها، فقال: يا هذا، قلَّ يُلَك من العُمَل
أكثر ممَّا أرى؟ قالت: أنه الله: لا أَنْثي ما أستقبلت على خالٍ قط فتمينا أني على
خال سواها، ولا أستقبلت على خالٍ قط فتمينا أني على خال سواها رضاه بِما
فسمه الله [عَرْ وَجْل] لي، فقال: يا هذا، علمت أنني زائت في المِنام أنك
رُجْتِي في الجَنِّ؟ قالت: أنه الريَّع بن خنيد. فقلت: عبد الله بن نافع:
كيف علمت هذا؟ قال: لعلَّها أن تكون زأت في منامها مثل ما رأي.

‘Abd Allah ibn Nafî reported that Rabî‘ ibn Khaytham had a dream wherein someone said to him, “Fulâna (i.e. so and so), a black woman, will be your wife in Jannah.” When morning came, he enquired about her and was told where to find her. He found her tending to goats, and he said, “I will stay with her to see what she does (i.e. good deeds to earn Paradise).” He
spent three days observing her and did not see her increase upon the compulsory acts. During the evenings she would go to her goat, milk it and drink it, then milk it again to give him a drink. On the third day he asked her, “O lady, why do you not give me milk to drink from this goat?” She replied, “O ‘Abdullâh, this one does not belong to me.” He said, “So why do you give me milk to drink from this other one?” She replied, “I have been permitted to drink from this one, and also to give its milk to anyone I want.” He then said, “O lady, so do you perform other than that which I have seen?” She replied, “No, however there is never a morning wherein I wish my condition is other than what it is, and neither is there an evening where I wish so. Rather I am pleased with what Allâh the Most High has commissioned for me.” He then said, “O lady, do you know that I saw you in a dream wherein it was said that you will be my wife in Jannâh?” She replied, “So you are al-Râbi’ ibn Khaytham.” The narrator asked ‘Abdullâh ibn Nâfî’, “How did she know this?” He said, “It is possible that she saw a dream similar to his.”

********

A Female Worshipper from Basrah

Abû ‘Abdullâh ibn Bujayr reported upon the authority of Şâlih ibn ‘Abd al-Karîm, “I saw a black woman in al-Bäsrah. The people were gathered around her and she then stood and entered a house, being subsequently followed by the people. They surrounded her but I was able to approach her and say, ‘O lady, are you not moved by this astonishing situation?’ She raised her head to look at me, and she replied, ‘How can a person be astonished at
his own good deed if one does not know whether his deed has been rejected (i.e. by Allāh)’.”

---

**A Female Worshipper Who Was Found in the Lands in Which Banī Isrā‘īl Were Lost**

Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥasan al-Maṣrī reported upon the authority of Dhū al-Ḥūf al-Ḫūf, “While I was walking in the barren land of Banī Isrā‘īl in which they were lost, I met a black slave girl who was consumed with de—
votion and love for al-Rahmān. Her vision was fixed to the sky, and I said to her, ‘Assalāmū ‘alayk O sister.’ She replied, ‘Wa ‘alaykum al-salām, O Dха al-Nün.’ I said to her, ‘Where do you know me from O girl?’ She replied, ‘Indeed Allāh the Mighty and Majestic created the souls two thousand years before the bodies. Then he circulated them around His throne; those favourable to each other formed an accord and those antagonistic to each other differed. During that period our souls became acquainted.’ I said, ‘Indeed I can see wisdom in you, teach me something from which Allāh has taught you.’ She said, ‘O Abā al-Fayḍ, fashion your body parts on the scales of justice, until all that which goes against Allāh dissolves and the heart becomes filtered pure, so that nothing remains within it except your love for the Lord. Upon this, He will place you at His doorstep and elevate you to a new rank. Good things will be presented to you with obedience.’ I said, ‘O sister, tell me more.’ She replied, ‘O Abā al-Fayḍ, exercise discipline so that you benefit [later] practice obedience to your Lord when you are in solitude and He will answer you when you supplicate.’”

١٤٨

عائدة أخرى

Another Female Worshipper

من الموصل راعية معاه فمضى إبراهيم نحو الموصل، فسأله عن القوم فدلَّ علَّهِم، فسألهم عن الجذيرة، فقالوا: هي في المعرفة تزاه، فخرج إليها في الصحراء وإذا حبشية ولهى فقالَ لهَا: السلام عليك يا هَذه، فقالَت: وعليكُن.
Zakariyya ibn Yahya al-Ta’i reported, “Ibrahim saw in a dream that someone said to him, ‘Your wife in Jannah will be Fulanah (i.e. so and so), the black slave of a certain tribe from Mosul who tends to their goats.’ Ibrahim subsequently embarked towards Mosul and asked in regards to that tribe. He was directed to them and he then asked them in regards to this slave. They said that she was with the goats, tending to them. He thus departed to the desert seeking for her until he came to her, she was an Abyssinian who was devoted [to Allah.] He said to her, ‘Assalaamu alayk, O lady.’ She replied, ‘Wa alayk al-salam wa rabmatullahi wa barakatub. Who are you?’ He replied, ‘I am your husband in Jannah.’ She said, ‘If you are truthful, then you must be Ibrahîm ibn Adham.’”
In mention of those who preferred black bondmaidens to white ones, those who loved them, and those who died due to their love

Zubayr ibn Bakkār reported upon the authority of his uncle Muṣ'ab ibn ‘Abdullāh, “‘Abdullāh ibn Abī Bakr al-Siddīq ᵃ was in love with a black bondmaiden. His heart was preoccupied with her but his father Abū Bakr ᵃ kept them apart. Despite this he still felt something in his heart for her. He said,

اَحْبَبْ لَحِبَّها السَّوْدَانَ حَتَّى اَحْبَبْ لَحِبَّها سَوْدَةَ الْكَلَابِ

Due to my love for her I love black, to the extent that I love black dogs due to my love for her. ⁷⁶

⁷⁶ This narration is not established. See the biography of ‘Abdullāh ibn Abī Bakr ᵃ in al-Tārikh al-Awsat of al-Bukhārī (1/115-116), al-Isabah (2/283-284) and in other
Ibn al-Marzubān said [...] : Hishām ibn Muḥammad ibn al-Sā‘ib reported, “Ibn ‘Abbās practiced coitus interruptus (‘aḍ) with one of his bondmaids who was black.”

Ibn al-Marzubān reported upon the authority of ‘Abdullāh ibn Rabāḥ al-‘Ajalānī, “I was in the masjid on one occasion when I saw Abī al-Jalīd al-Fazārī standing by a black slave, and it was as if she was a statue. I went to him and said, ‘What is this that I see you doing here?’ He replied, ‘I am fixing my gaze upon this bondmaiden placing hope in Allāh that he allows me to have her.’ Then he recited,

"Allāh yuḥdībī ājilī fāḥtim, ashtar min māllī ṣiṣnaka kalsān
urṣīsah ṣuṭṣās ṣuṭṣās al-qalīm, tuṣinn Amrū lādi waṭhīmtm

If death does not afflict me then I swear, to buy with my wealth this poor one who is like a statue.

With a flat nose and rough feet, to bear me a son and to serve.”

"Qāl māṣub: wakān Abī Al-Jalīd ṣurūrīyā bīdawā ʿulāmā, farrāʾīṭ al-ṣaḥābāʾā biwāmān

sources.
Mus'ab said, "Abū al-Jalīd was a Bedouin and a well-learned individual. I saw al-Ḍāḥḥāk ibn 'Uthmān narrating from him and taking knowledge from him."

Ibn al-Marzubān said: Hakīm ibn Ṭālḥah al-Fazārī reported upon the authority of Sayyār ibn Najīh, "I was seeking Ibn Mayyādah and it was said to me that he left on the previous day. I came to know that he had left to go after a bondmaiden of Bānī Sāḥil. So, I sought after him, finding him in a low ground which was surrounded by a dark stony area. I saw sheep there and Ibn Mayyādah's donkey was bound there also. He was there with it under a tree and so was the black bondmaiden, so I greeted them and sat. Ibn Mayyādah turned to her and said recite to them the poem I made for you, so she recited,
فَلا تكُن في هَنا الهَجا فَإِنَّهَا مُصلَحةً من بَعْضِ تَلُكَ الصالِحَة
وَلَبِسْتُ من الْبَيضِ القَصَار الحَوائِل
ولَكِنَّهَا رِجْحَانَة طَابِ نَشْرَها بِأَجْرَحَ تَنْدَي بالضَّحَيَّة والأَصَيْل

They promised me that I will meet you whilst I knew, that I would not meet you except in Babylon.

And in regards to it the matters have not passed me nor has ceased, the depth of my love [and the] intense fantasy.

The months of Hajj have passed to separate between me and her, and my enemies have raised many true and false [contentions.]

I say to those criticising me when they face me, with criticism like the stabbing of a sharp knife,

Do not be excessive in lampooning her, for she is a dove from those doves,

Which are yellow, unrefined and direct in affection, and she is not from the white, uncoloured and fickle.

Rather, she is like sweet basil in emission of pleasant scent, which is found upon her both in the morning day and the evening.”

قَالَ سَيَّار: قَلْتُ: مَالِكَ لَا تَشْتريها! فَقَالَ: إِذَا يَقْتَلْ حِبَّها.

Sayyār said, “I said to him, ‘Why do you not purchase her?’ To which he replied, ‘Doing so will put her love in my heart to an end (i.e. having her will make her within my reach and so my passion will fade away).’”
Ibn al-Marzubān reported upon the authority of Muḥammad ibn Sallām, “A black man was presented (i.e. for marriage) to a woman who had a cousin deeply in love with her. However, she chose the black man. Her cousin thus said,

*وَلَمْ تَعْشَ قَلْبَاً أَلِيمًا، فَأَلَامُ عَيْنِي وَلَمْ تَجْلَعْ فَوْقَ يَقَارِبَةَ قُمْرِيْبَةَ

The crown of my hair has turned grey and my eyesight faded, as I talk about the qumriyyab (a form of dove) of the valley.

I was told a crow embraced the qumriyyab, over branches and sticks.”

Ibn al-Marzubān said that some of them recited:

*وَلَمْ تَعْشَ قَلْبَاً أَلِيمًا، فَأَلَامُ عَيْنِي وَلَمْ تَجْلَعْ فَوْقَ يَقَارِبَةَ قُمْرِيْبَةَ

They said that I love the brown skinned women and I replied, [yes,] the colour of ghawālī and of musk and al-'ūd.

I am a man to whom whiteness has no special rank, and this would be the case for me even if the world became bereft of darkness.

He said that the following was composed for Abī al-Shīṣ’s black bondmaiden named Tibr (the word tibr refers to small pieces of gold):

*لَمْ تَنْصَفَ يَأِ بَنُوَّةَ الْذَّهَبَ تَتَلُفْ نَفْسِي وَأَنْتُ فِي لَعْبِ

277
You are not being fair with me O you, who is named after gold, my soul is being destroyed whilst you remain in jest.

O cousin of the fragrant musk, if not for him we would not be able to gather it nor perfume.

Musk befits you in being black, and in scent. So what lofty attributes are shared in this *nasab* (i.e. relationship/ancestry).

He said that Abū Muḥammad al-ʿAbbāsī recited the following to some people:

---

I say to the one who finds fault in blackness with foolishness, and in blackness there are certainly those who find fault in it and those who begrudge it.

If the fault you find is the blackness itself, then know that musk and *al-ʿūd* are black too.

And there is the black corner [of the Kaʿbah) of which people touch to attain *shabāʿa*, and towards which people fall in *rukūʿ* and *sujūd*.

And if not for the blackness of the eye, its sight, would not be correct, and it would not sit right while it sleeps.

And if al-Mahdī knew of a colour better than it, he would utilise another colour for his banners when his affair arises.
Muhammad ibn al-'Abbās ibn Abī Ḥātim reported upon the authority of his father, “In Basrah there was a man with us from al-Mahalabah who was deeply in love with a Zanjī woman who belonged to one of his neighbours. He did not stop pressing her owner until he allowed him to purchase her. She consumed his heart over his family. He was admonished due to this matter by a group from his family and brothers, however he did not pay heed to their words.

Ibn al-Marzubān reported that al-'Utbi composed the following for a black bondmaiden of his,

أحسن عنتدي من رجوع الشباب

May I be deprived of her if her face, is not more favourable to me than the return of youth.

Ibn al-Marzubān said that the following was recited to Abī 'Alī al-Baṣīr:

أسكنتي سكرًا بغير شراب
لم ترجع بآية من كتاب اللَّه
إفِنَّها صبغة كلون الشباب

Ibn al-Marzubān said that the following was recited to Abī 'Alī al-Baṣīr:
She intoxicated me without any drink, [as] she did something that was awe-inspiring.

As she recited a single *āyah* from the Book of Allah, her voice made me forget Umm al-Kitāb (i.e. al-Fāṭiḥah).

I never minded her different colour, for she is tanned in the colour of youth.

He said that one of the scholars of literature recited the following to him:

أهَدَتْ لِقَلْبِكَ صَبْوَةٌ وَفَضَادًا
ولَحِجَّنَ عَيْنَكَ عَيْبَةٌ وَسِهَادًا

منَ كَانَ يَرِبَّ في الْيَضَابِ، لَحِسْنَهُ فَإِنَّ الْمَعَارِضَ بِالْيَضَابِ سَوَادًا

لَا يَنْفِذُ الْقَرَطَاسُ فِي حَاجَتِهِ، حَتَّى تَنْمَق سَاحِتِهِ مَدَادًا

نَفْسِي الْفَدَاَءُ لَكَ خَوَد طَفْلَةٌ سَوَادًا أَقْرِبَ الْفَوَّادَ بَعَادًا

She bestowed your heart with desires and immorality, and your eyelid with a tear and sleeplessness.

The one who craves whiteness, due to its beauty, I can challenge whiteness [with the beauty] of blackness.

For the parchment cannot serve its purpose, until both sides have been written on with [black] ink.

My life is sacrificed to you, O black girl that brought my heart closer.

Ibn al-Marzubān reported upon the authority of al-Madāʾīnī, *"Al-Farazdaq took a Zanjī as a slave girl besides his wife, al-Nāwwar. He loved her and she bore him a girl. He adored her and would praise the Zanjī people."*
Ibn al-Marzubān reported upon the authority of Ja'far ibn Ziyād al-Shāmi, "A man from amongst us desired a black slave girl, however his family chastised him for this. They said to him, 'You desire after a black woman?'' So, he composed the following:

A beauty spot upon an ugly cheek, will clothe it with allure and beauty.

Thus, how can one be chastised over the one he sees, all of her in essence to be like a beauty spot.

Ibn al-Marzubān said that Ahmad ibn Ḥabīb recited to him couplets from the poetry of Abī Ḥafṣ about the bondmaiden of Yahyā ibn Khālid al-Barmaḵī, who was black:

Musk resembles you and you resemble it, in colour, whether you are standing or sitting.

There is no doubt—as your colours are one—that you are both created from the same clay.
Ibn al-Marzubān reported upon the authority of Abī al-Ḥasan al-Madani, “Yazīd ibn Muʿāwiyyah had a black bondmaiden whom he loved dearly. One day, he was with her alone but his wife came to know about it and walked in on them. He then went with his wife, leaving the black bondmaiden and feeling embarrassment from her.”

Ibn al-Marzubān said that he heard one of the scholars of literature say, “It reached me that a man was blamed for falling in love with a black woman. He responded by saying, ‘By Allāh, she befits to be a beauty spot upon the cheeks of young females.’”

Ibn al-Marzubān reported upon the authority of Ḥammād ibn Ishaq ibn Ibrāhīm al-Muṣālī from his father, “Al-Faḍl ibn al-Rabī’ stood in the way of some slavegirls, and in the group was a black girl. She possessed a good tongue, sweetness and looks. She struck his heart and he spoke to her. When he saw her quick-witted response, it increased his amazement with her. Thus, he purchased her.”

Ibn al-Marzubān said that Aḥmad ibn Jaʿfar recited:
I like black slavegirls only because of Takttum, for her I also loved whoever is black.

There is nothing better than musk as a fragrance, And there is nothing like a black night to sleep well.

And he said that Abu ‘Abdullah al-Asbâti recited,

Don’t you see that a little of musk is worthy of wealth (i.e. expensive), whereas a bulk-load of salt only costs a dirham.

And that the blackness of the eye is its light, whereas the whiteness of the eye gives no light.

He said that he recited for Isma‘il ibn Abi Hashim, the mawla of Al al-Zubayr:

A slavegirl with a tuned body from Abyssinia, in her face are signs of burns and freckles,

She is like a twig that has bent in a rainy day.
And also:

A Nubian girl with a good spun, walking in a purple garment,
As if she is a twig.

And he said that he recited poetry to Ibn al-Jahm regarding loving black women being a habit of jolly men; due to it being an indication of beauty in the heart:

How could an amusing youth desire, the love of white women whose whiteness resembles grey hair?

While black women resemble the blackness of the eyes, and musk which is dipped in fragrance and goodness.

Those who resemble musk and blackness of the eye I sacrifice, myself to save you from the hardships of time.

Ibn al-Marzbân reported upon the authority of Qâsim ibn ‘Abd al-‘Rahmân, “Mu‘ammad ibn ‘Abd al-Malik al-Asadi had a black slave girl whom he loved, and she bore him a child.”
He reported upon the authority of al-Sa'qar ibn 'Abdullah al-Makki, "In Makkah there was a man with us who was known as al-Husam ibn Qudamah, famous for his love of black women. His brothers would criticise him for this but he did not change. He composed many poems in regards to them, from them is:

لا تلوموا فلانا جبين ملامه 
فتنته بشكلن الجواري 
يا جوابي خدثني ببحتني 
سوا فيتمنوني ورب القيامة 
فإذا مات فاجعها الحريمات 
وصرفت مولدات اليمامات 
والقلال الحقائب المدحيات 
ثم قوموا على الحجرون فاصحوا 
يا قبيل القيان يا بن قدامة

[161] قال ابن المزَّان: وأخبرني أبو الفضل الأياري عن أبي داود المصاحفي:
قال: كنت للنضر بن شمائل جاية أذنها قد أذنها وخرجه وفرحها، وكانت فصيحة، وكان يبئيل إليها ويبحها، قال: قالت لي يومًا - وقد ذكرتها بالشعر - 
الغ عن هذَا، فإنَّهُ حرفه كله، والله ما زال بيننا فقرًا ما كان فيه.

Ibn al-Marzúbád reported upon the authority of Abi Dáwúd al-Maṣáḥifí, "Al-Nadr ibn Shamil had a bondmaiden who he cultivated, took out and gave joy to. She was very eloquent, and he was enamoured with her and
loved her dearly. She said to him one time—whilst they were talking about poetry, ‘Refrain from such poetry, for it is in vain and by Allah our house will remain poor so long as we recite:

عفت الدیار محلهٔ فقامها وآذنتنا بینهاً اسماء

The abodes have been deserted, and Asmā has notified me that she will be departing.

وأشباهما حتیٌ أبدلنا اللہ [عرض وجل] بذلك فخصبته رحلنا وأمن بیتنا فجعلت

And the like of this couplet. [Refrain from this,] and then [you will see] Allah will give us in exchange an increase in our belongings and security in our abode.’ Her words caused me to become amazed at her refinement and level of discernment.”

[۱۶۲] أخبرنا مُحِمَّد بن ناصر قال أنا المَنَّار بن عبد الجَبَّار قال أنا أبو مُحِمَّد

الجَمْحُوْرِي قال أنا ابن حيويه قال أنا مُحِمَّد بن خلف قال: أَخْرِيجي أبو بكر

الفرِشْيُي قال: خَدْثَيني مُحِمَّد بن بكر عن الأرضي قال: كان أبو حامِي سُلمة

بن دينار الأَخْرِيج يُنّمِّتُ يِهِدًا الْبَيْتِ.

Muhammad ibn Nasir reported upon the authority of al-Asma‘ī, “Abū Ḥāzim Salamah ibn Dīnār al-Āraj cited the following couplet,

فَمِن يَلِّك مَعْجِبٌ بِبُنَاتٍ كَسْرِيٍّ فَلَّيْنِي مَعْجِبٌ بِبُنَاتِ حَام.

One may be enamoured with Persian women, I am like so but with the women of Ḥām.”

قال مُحِمَّد بن خلف: وأَخْرِيجي بعض أهل الأَلدِب قال: كان إِسْمَاعِيل بن جامِع

قد تزوج بالحجراء جارِيَةٍ سُودَاء مولاةٍ لقوم يقال لها مَرْيَم، فَلْمَا صار من الرشيد.
Muhammad ibn Khalf reported upon the authority of one of the scholars of literature, “Ismā‘īl ibn Jāmī‘” married a black woman named Maryam—who was the freedwomen (mawlat) of a people—in al-Ḥijāz. When he became from the close people to al-Rashīd, he grew to miss her deeply, and he said that he was remembering her, the places they would frequent together and the places they would have relations:

Will the nights I spent [with her] at al-Ḥis-has return, in the tent of knots and adornments.

The fragrance of their fumigator pierces through the perfume, like an arrow flies through a windy storm.

The smell of her musk travels to me through her garments, and the rosy umber smells stronger with fire.

All the while Maryam wears soft clothes and sings for me beautiful tones.
Al-Rashīd said to him after hearing his poetry, ‘Woe to you, who is this Maryam that you attributed with the characteristics of al-Ḥūr al-Īn (the women of Paradise)?’ He replied, ‘She is my wife, and I can describe her with traits which are double what I mentioned in the poetry.’ So, al-Rashīd sent a detachment to al-Ḥijāz and he then saw a black Tamātānī woman who had large lips. He then said to him, ‘Woe to you, this is the Maryam of which you fill the whole world with her praise?’ He replied, ‘O sire, indeed ‘Umar ibn ‘Abdullāh ibn ‘Abī Rabī‘ah said,

فمتاحكن وَقُدْ قَلَّ لَهَا حَسَنُ فَيْ كُلِّ عَيْنٍ مِن تَوْد
They laughed and then said to her, beauty is in the eye of the beholder.

Al-Ḥasan ibn ‘Alī reported upon the authority of Abū al-Ṣa‘īb al-Madani, “In Madinah there was a girl singer, and she was from the best of people at singing. A man from Banī Hāshim purchased her. She was in love with a black youth from the people of Madinah. Her master said to her to sing for him on one occasion, so she recited,
Illuminating the Darkness: The Virtues of Blacks and Abyssinians

If the black hair became grey, I would forget my night, and how is it possible for the grey to become black.

I love due to this love the colour black, to the extent I love dogs that are black in colour.

Her master said, ‘By Allah, I am not black. Who are you referring to?’ She replied, ‘So and so.’ He said, ‘Do you love him?’ She replied, ‘Yes, by Allah.’

He said, ‘There is no excuse for me to prevent you from him then. So, he prepared her in the best manner and then sent her to him.”

Ibn Khalf reported upon the authority of Abū ‘Ubaydah Ma‘mar ibn al-Muthanā, “Ibn al-Damīnah would follow after a black bondmaiden in a certain neighbourhood. His family and clan rebuked him for this, but he refused to abandon this practice and they complained to the Commander of the Faithful regarding this. He was thus imprisoned for a month.”

Ibn Khalf said, “Abu ‘Abdullāh ibn Abī Muḥammad cited some poetry to me which was composed by some poets from Basrah.

"Ibn Khalf reported upon the authority of Abū ‘Ubaydah Ma‘mar ibn al-Muthanā, “Ibn al-Damīnah would follow after a black bondmaiden in a certain neighbourhood. His family and clan rebuked him for this, but he refused to abandon this practice and they complained to the Commander of the Faithful regarding this. He was thus imprisoned for a month.”
They said that white possesses beauty despite all its defects, just like how black is boring due to its defects.

But would an eye be described as beautiful without its eyelids and strong black and white area?

Or would gems glow on horses if there was no necklace with black gems around it?

O my self, be patient with the troubles of love, for there is nothing after such love except death and ease.

Ibn Khalf reported upon the authority of al-Majishun, “Jalidah was a black woman who was known for her beauty. One day, Muhammad ibn Abdullāh ibn ‘Amr ibn ‘Uthmān saw her and he fell in love with her. He proposed to her in secret but she refused and insisted that such a marriage be known and not in secret, and said, ‘If I agree to be married in secret, I will be putting all black people to shame.’ Then, he forgot about her.”
Ibn Khalf reported upon the authority of Ahmad ibn Mūsā, “I entered into the presence of ‘Abdullāh ibn al-Mahdī and he was sitting with his bondmaidens and I became shy. He said to me, ‘Do not be shy. By Allāh, tell me which one from these are you most fond of?’ I looked at a black one from the group of women and stated that she was the one. She came forward and he sat next to her. By Allāh it was not long before he wept due to his love for her.”

Ibn Nāṣir reported upon the authority of al-‘Umrī, “Abū ‘Abdullāh al-Ḥūbshānī was deeply in love with a woman named Ṣafrā al-‘Alāqīmiyyah, who was black. He grieved due to his love for her to such an extent that he neared death. So, some of his family members said to her master, ‘If you send Ṣafrā to Abū ‘Abdullāh al-Ḥūbshānī he may regain his senses due to seeing her.’ Her master ceded to this. When she entered his presence, she said to him, ‘How are you this morning O Abā ‘Abdullāh?’ He replied, ‘I am fine so long as you do not leave me.’ She said, ‘What is it that you desire?’ He replied, ‘Being close to you.’ She said, ‘What is it that causes you grief from me?’ He replied, ‘Your love.’ She said, ‘Do you wish to make a bequest?’ He replied, ‘I bequeath to you if they accept it from me.’ She said, ‘I wish to leave.’ He
replied, 'You wish to hasten in the reward of praying upon me (i.e. the funeral prayer)ʹ? She stood and left. When he saw her leaving, he let out a sigh and subsequently died.
Chapter Twenty Five

In Mention of the Sons of Ḥabashī Women from Quraysh

[They are:]
Tanwiru 'l-Ghabashi fi Fadli 's-Sudani wa 'l-Habashi

عفان... Achmad ibn Maḥmūd ibn صاحب المحترمي... المعتصم... هبة اللّه... بن إبراهيم بن المهدي... مُحَمَّد بن عبد اللّه بن إسحاق المهدي... عيسى وعجرف... أبنا أبي جعفر المنصور... المعتصم... مُحَمَّد بن علي بن عبد اللّه بن المعتصم... عبد الوهاب بن إبراهيم بن مُحَمَّد.


٣٣٣

ومن أبناء السنديات
From the sons of Sindī women were:

Amongst the children of the yellow bondmaidens was:

Shahrayar.

Ibn Nasir reported to us upon the authority of 'Imran ibn al-Kalbi, “The kings of the non-Arabs would receive cupping from the women. When the Kisra (the Persian ruler) would wish to be cupped, his cupper would come. She was a tall, large, beautiful yellow woman. She would take off her clothes—as was their practice—and then sit the Kisra between her thighs. The Kisra desired her and fell in love with her. And due to this relationship Shahrayar was born.”
Chapter Twenty Six

In exhortation and counsel

The author said: As I have written enough to satisfy the purpose of this book, i.e. in mention of the great people of this race, I deem it appropriate to end it with exhortation, counsel, *dbikr* and supplications that the one whom the book is addressed to will benefit from.

In terms of the exhortations and counsels which have been transmitted (i.e. from scholars of the past) then these have already been heard, however it is the nature [of humans] to desire novelties and to prefer fresh material. And it is due to these reasons that I have crafted this chapter based upon my words alone.
Exhortations have been explicit and expressive but decorations and adornments have amused and attracted whoever noticed them. Hardship is overcome with determination and patience, and the hard-working who is wise always focuses on the final destination.

O the one who is to be distanced from his children, just as his father was distanced from him.

Keep in mind the statement, certainty has come and they put him in the right direction.

They cleared themselves from his oppression, before death, and they cleared him too.

O you who will shortly decompose, do not neglect the religious orders so you do not regret this dearly on the day your decomposed parts will rejoin. The mountains of this world are merely a delusion that would bait only the inexperienced; the example of the one who is attached to it is like a person playing with the rays of sun.

By Allah, if this worldly life is ours, and its provisions come for us tomorrow,
Illuminating the Darkness: The Virtues of Blacks and Abyssinians

No free person should exert effort for it, so what is the case when it is destined to expire and vanish!

Ya hadda, hakam nafsak 'anHD hakam 'ulmak, la 'anHD Qasimyy 'aHmaal, fahakam 'ulmak dindin, wa-Qasim Al-Hawiy yujjur.

O reader, control your soul by judging with your intelligence and abstain from making your desires as the adjudicator for your actions. Indeed, the one who judges with his intelligence will be pious, and the one whose judge is his desires will be a wrongdoer.

And from the aspect of advice regarding the mind: do not let it indulge in thoughts of “if” or “would that”.

Section

Wama 'awzibbi bi an Aqool: Yatinibi l-mn Ruz al-dhin 'an la yturk al-amk fima biin yadin, wafima huqul lb, walu'allum anha fi al-majaz lii dari majaraat, wafi kll hujjatul lamaniy rasaol, waiqrab al-rhalin tizbir, wakm bgt mutammm, wamahah al-huqra fi al-qbir mushtashen rub allub, wafima yhawlu awqaib mushtashen, yatinibi l-tubbd mutiqat 'an la yakhli farsa mn anfasah 'an fiq al-hir, fa'an kll nafs khawatna, wala'idu kll alam jwabana, fa'an asaad la b'd minna, walya'hab al-marlha Al-ahi la yizri mnati ftuq, waliqab mn yira'a sra wa'ulaythina, fa'an 'in taklam sunu, w'an nazar ra'ayi, w'an yafkur aml, w'al-hintatul yittum fi atsanma turhaf, watal midh تحت al-ard toqadd.

That which I advise is as follows: It is necessary for the one given intelligence
that he does not neglect thought in that which is before him and that which has been created for him. However, he should know that the world he finds himself in is merely a passageway to the terminal abode, and that within every moment is a messenger for death, for merely the journey drawing close serves as adequate alarm. How many an unprepared have been unexpectedly overcome? And there is a resting place encumbered with horror in the grave, it is coarse and terrible. The vigilant slave should seek to do good with every breath he inhales, for each breath inhaled is the likeness of a chamber. One must prepare himself with an answer for each deed, for there will certainly be questions posed regarding them. Likewise, he must be ready for the journey upon which he does not know when he will embark. He must pay heed to the One observing his actions—the silent and the open, for what one speaks He hears, what one sees He witnesses and what one thinks He comprehends. Paradise is decorated in the heavens whilst the Fire is kindled under the earth.

والقدر عَنَّ قَلِيلٍ يُجَفَّرَ، وَالملِكُانِ عَنْ يَمِينٍ وَشَمَالٍ، وَالصَّحَافِينَ تَمْلَأُ بِالْخِيرِ أوْ الخَيْرِ، فَاغتَمِمْ قَيْدًا هَذَا صُحُبَكَ فِي هَذَا الزَّمَنِ قِبْلَ وَجْهِ الزَّمَنِ، وَأَعَمَّرَ ذَاتِ الْبَقَاءُ إِنَّهُ رَحِيمٌ عَلَى الْبَقَاءِ بِانفِقَصٍ مِنْ دَارِ الْفَناءِ، وَإِذَا كَانَ أنْ تَغْفِلْ عَنْ نَفسِكَ، فَإِنَّ الْمُؤْمِنِ أَسِيرُ فِي الْدُّنِيَا بِسَبْعَةٍ فِي فَكَاكِ رَقْبِهِ، وَلَا تَذْهَبْ لَحَظَةٌ إِلَّا فِي فَعلٍ خَيرٍ، وَأَقُلْ مُرَأَبَ الْأَفْغَالِ الْإِبْائِحَةَ، وَاِسْتَوَتَفْ مِنْ فَقْلِ الْبَصُورِ وَغَلْقِ الْلَّسْنَانِ، فَإِنَّ فَتْحُهُمَا لَا يَنْهَى يَنْهُ مَا فِي الْقُلْبِ مِنْ الْخَيْرِ، وَزَاحِمُ الْقَضَاءِ فِي أَعْمَالِهِمْ، وَقَدْ أَجْمَعُ الْحُكْمَاءُ أَنَّهُ لَا َتَنَالُ رَاحَةٌ بِرَاحَةٍ، وَمَثْلُ لِنَفْسِكَ عَافِيَةً الْطَّاعَةُ وَمَغْيَةَ الْمُعَصِيَةُ، فَكَانَتْ مَا شَعِبَ مِنْ شَعِبٍ، وَلَا الَّذِى مِنْ عَصِيٍّ، وَلَا تَأَلَّمُ مِنْ صَبَرٍ، وَأَلْنُ لَدَّهُ [لِفَتْمَةٍ] آمُّ، وَأَلْنُ مَنْشَقَةً صَبَرُ يُوْسُفُ؟ وَأَخْدُرُ مِنْ مَخَاطِلَةٍ أَهْلُ هِذَا الزَّمَانِ، فَإِنَّ الطَّنَحَ يَسْرُقُ عَادَاتَ الْمَعَاشِرِينَ، وَلَتَنَكُّ مَخَاطِلَكَ لِلسَّلِّفِ بِالْإِطْلاَعِ عَلَى أَخْوَالِهِمْ، وَحَادِثَ الْقُرَآَنِ بِالْفَلْكِ فِيهِ فِي الْحُلَوَاتِ، وَتَصَفُّجُ جَهَارُ الْرِّحْلِ قِبْلَ أَنْ تَفَاجَأَ بِغَنْطِهِ، فَلَا تَرِى عَنْدَكَ غَنْتِهِ.
Illuminating the Darkness: The Virtues of Blacks and Abyssinians

One’s grave is soon to be dug and [he should bear in mind,] the two angels of the left and right and the parchments within which is recorded the good deeds and the bad. So take advantage, O reader, of your health in your lifespan before it elapses. Construct for yourself the everlasting abode through the means of this transient one. Be heedful, for the faithful are prisoners in this world, constantly striving to free themselves (i.e. from the punishment in the hereafter). Do not let a moment pass except in the performance of good deeds, and do not overindulge in that which is permissible (mubāh). Be sure to control your eyes and fasten your tongue, for indeed if they are opened by lust then the goodness within the heart will be spoiled. Compete with the deeds of the pious. All sages agree that comfort is not attained through comfort, and take as motivation the consequence of obedience and the fruit of sinfulness. Then, it will be as if the one who satiates himself has never done so before, the sinner has never enjoyed his sin, and as if the patient has never suffered before. Where is the delight of Ādam’s bite and where is the hardship of Yūsuf’s patience? Be weary of your mixing with people of this time for indeed it is in man’s nature to adopt the practices of his contemporaries, rather mix with the Salaf by acquainting yourself with their conditions and lifestyle. Study the Qur’ān by contemplating it during your times of solitude. Make sure of the provisions you have—which you will need for the coming journey—before death takes you by surprise and leaves you with naught but regret.
The author said: Many people are infatuated with certain *adhkar* (words of remembrance) and *tasbihat* (words of glorification) which are not established from the Messenger of Allah ﷺ and which do not have any basis. Thus, I deemed it appropriate to mention some of the authentic forms of *dhikr* and *tasbih* which can be relied upon.

The best form of *dhikr* is recitation of the Qur'an:

170. [ فقد روى عبد الله بن عمرو عن النبي ﷺ: صلِّ الله عليه وسلم - أنه قال: (يقال لصاحب القرآن أقرأ وارتق، وترتل كما كنت ترتنل في الدنيا، فإن منك غيبة آخر آية تقرأها)].

‘Abdullah ibn ‘Amr reported from the Prophet ﷺ, “The companion of the Qur’an will be told [on the Day of Judgement,] ‘Recite and ascend, as you would do so in the *dunyā*, for your station will be correspondent to the last
As for other forms of adhkār:

In the two Sahihis (i.e. the books of al-Bukhari and Muslim) there is the hadith of Abī Hurayrah wherein the Prophet ﷺ said, “Two words are light upon the tongue yet heavy upon the scale and beloved to al-Rahmān: subhānallāhi wa bihamdihi, subhānallāhi al-āzim.”

In Sahih al-Bukhari there is the hadith of Abī Hurayrah from the Prophet ﷺ, “Whomsoever states ‘subhānallāhi wa bihamdihi’ one hundred times within a day, his sins will be forgiven even if they are as much as the foam of the sea.”

There is another narration which was only reported by Muslim, that being the hadith of Abī Dhar, “The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ was asked, ‘Which speech is the most meritorious?’ He replied, ‘Subhānallāhi wa bihamdihi.’”

78 Reported by Imām Ahmad in al-Musnad (2/192), al-Tirmidhi in his Sunan (8/117)—who graded it as hasan sabīh, al-Nasāʾī in Fadāʾil al-Qurʿān (97), and al-Hākim in al-Mustadrak (1/552)—which al-Dhahabi graded as sabīh.
In another hadith collected only by Muslim, Juwayriyyah said, ‘The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ came to me one morning whilst I was engaged in tasbih. Then he left due to a need of his and returned at approximately the middle of the day. He said to me, ‘Are you still engaged in tasbih?’ I replied affirmatively, so he said, ‘Should I not teach some words which if placed against yours (i.e. the words of tasbih she made) would outweigh them? (i) Subhânallâhi ṣâdâ ḱhalqihi thrice, (ii) subhânallâhi zinâta ṣâršihi thrice, (iii) subhânallâhi ṣâdâ ṣâdâ nafsîhi thrice, and (iv) subhânallâhi midâda kalimatâ tibi thrice.’”
Chapter Twenty Eight

في الأذاعية

Supplications

The author said: Many of the people use supplications from unreliable books, and it is not correct to do so except from authentic sources.

As for the timings of *du'a*:

Muslim reported in his *Sahih* on the authority of Abī Hurayrah that the Prophet ﷺ said, “The closest position the slave gets to his Lord is during the prostration, so be excessive in your *du'a* [whilst in prostration].”
And from the other times in which the *du‘āʾ* is preferred and accepted is between the *adhān* and *iqāmah*, during rainfall, upon finishing the Qur‘ān, and whenever one finds *khushūʿ* (when one feels spiritual humility).

---

### Section

وَمَن آدَمُ الدُّعَاءِ: تَقْدِيمَ الْتَوَهِّةِ، والتوهّةُ مِن أَكْلِ الْحَرَامِ:

And from the etiquettes of *du‘āʾ* is that one precedes with seeking forgiveness and refrains from consuming the unlawful:

[176] فَقَمَ أَفْرَادٌ مُسلمٌ مِن حَدِيثٍ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ عَن النَّبِيِّ - صَلِّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمُ - : أَنَّهُ ذَكَرَ الرجلُ يُتِبِّيِلُ السَّفرَ أَشْعَعَ أَسْهِمَ أَيْمَّهُ يَمِدْ يَدَهُ إِلَى السَّمَاءِ: بَا رَبِّ مِطَعِعُهُ حَزَامٍ وَمِشْرِبِهِ حَزَامٍ وَمِلْبِسِهِ حَزَامٍ وَغْذَيْهِ حَزَامٌ وَغَذِيَ بالحَزَامِ فَأَيْنَ يُسْتَجِبُ لِذَلْكَ.

Muslim reported the hadīth of Abi Hurayrah that the Prophet ﷺ recounted the case of a man who had journeyed far and was dishevelled and covered in dust. He then stretched out his hands to the sky and said, “O Lord,” whilst his food was unlawful, his drink was unlawful, his clothing was unlawful and he had been sustained by the unlawful, so how could his call be answered?

وَمَن آدَمُهُ: حَسْنُ الْظَّنَّ بِالإِجَابَةِ.
And from amongst the etiquettes of du'a is to think positively in regards to it being answered:

\[
\text{\text{١۷۷}} فَقَدْ جَاءَ فِي الْحَدِيثَ:} \text{\text{((اَدْعُوا اللَّهَ وَأَتِمُّمُّ مَوْقِفَتَكُم بِالْإِجَابَةَ))}.}
\]

It is mentioned in a hadith, “Supplicate to Allah whilst being certain of a response.”

وَمَن آدَابَهُ: حُضُور الْقُلْبِ:

And from amongst the etiquettes of du’a is for one’s heart to be present:

\[
\text{\text{١۷۸}} فَقَدْ قَالَ الْبُقَيِّ - صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ - :} \text{\text{((لَا يَقِلُ اللَّهُ الدُّعَاءَ مِن قَلْبٍ غَافِلٍ لَّا)}}
\]

The Prophet ﷺ said, “Allah does not accept the du’a’ from one whose heart is inattentive and heedless.”

ذُكِرُ الدِّعَاءُ [عَنْ الْكُبْرَ]  

In mention of du’a’s during times of distress

\[
\text{\text{١۷۹}} فَقِيعُ الصَّدِيقِينَ مِن حَدِيثِ ابْنِ عُبَيْسِ عَنِ النَّبِيِّ - صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ - أَنَّهُ كَانَ يَقُولُ عَنْدَ الْكُبْرَ:} \text{\text{((لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ الْعَظِيمُ الْعَلِيمُ، لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ} \text{ربُ الْعُرْشِ الْعَظِيمِ، لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ رَبُّ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ رَبُّ الْعُرْشِ الْكَرِيمِ)).}
\]

In the two Sahihs there is a hadith on the authority of Ibn ‘Abbās that the Prophet ﷺ would say during times of distress: “Lā ilāha illalldhul ‘āzimul ḥalim (No deity is worthy of worship except Allah, the Most Great and the Most Forbearing), lā ilāha illallahu rabul ‘arshul ‘āzim (No deity is worthy

79 This hadith and the one before it are one. Both are found in al-Musnad of Īmām Āḥmad, and the Sunan of al-Tirmidhī. Al-Tirmidhī said, “This hadith is gharib and we do not know of it except from this way.”
of worship except Allāh, Lord of the great throne), lā ilāha illā allāhu ruubbūs samāwātī wa rabbūl ardi wa rabbūl arshīl karīm (No deity is worthy of worship except Allāh, Lord of the heavens, Lord of the earth, and Lord of the honourable throne).”

ذكر الدعاء عند الهم والحزن

In mention of du’ā’s during times of grief and sadness

Ibn Mas’ūd reported that the Prophet ﷺ said, “If one of you is stricken with grief or sorrow and he says, ‘Allāhumma inni ‘abdulla wa ibn ‘abdika wa ibn amatika (O Allāh, I am your slave, the son of your male and female slaves), nāsiyati biyadika madīn fi hukmuka (my forelock is in Your hand, subject to your command), ‘aḍlu n fi qāḍīnuka (You are just in Your decree), as’aluka bi kullumin buwa laka samma’ata bibi nafsaka (I implore you through every name of Yours, that which You named Yourself), aw ‘al-lamtaba aḥadān min khalqika (Or taught it to one of Your creation), aw anzaltabu fi kitābika (or revealed it in Your book), aw istātharta bibi fi ‘ilmul ghaybi ‘inda laka (Or that You kept unseen from us), an taj’alal qur’ān rabi’a qalbi wa nūr sadri wa jakā’a huzni wa dhabāhā hammi (that You make the Qur’ān a solace for my heart, a light for my chest and the clearance of my sadness and grief), except that Allāh ﷺ will remove his grief and sadness—replacing it with happiness.”
Illuminating the Darkness: The Virtues of Blacks and Abyssinians

In mention of *du‘ā’* when one is fearful of the ruler

[181] قال ابن مسعود: (إذا كان على أحدكم سلطان يخفاه فليقل: اللَّهُ رَبُّ السَّمَاءَاتِ السَّبْعِ وَرَبُّ الْخَلْقِ الْبَصِيرِ بهم كن لي جاراً من فلان بن فلان وأحرابه من خلقك أن يفرط علي أحد منهم أو أن يطغى، عُرَجَارَكَ وَجَلَّ ثَنَاؤُكَ، وَلَا إِلَىِّ إِلَّا أَنَّتَ).

Ibn Mas‘ūd said, “If one of you is under a ruler whom instils fear within him, then say, ‘Allāhumma rabbas samāwātis sab‘i wa rabbal ‘arshī‘ azīm (O Allah, Lord of the seven heavens and the great throne), kun li jārān min fulān ibn fulānin wa ahzābīhī min khalqika (Be my protector from so and so and his supporters from Your creation), an yafiruṣa ‘alayya aḥadun min-hum aw yataqā hadā (Lest they exceed the limits with me or oppress me), ‘azza jārūka wa jalla than‘ukka, walā ilāha illa anta (Mighty is Your protection and glorified is Your praise, and there is no deity worthy of being worshipped besides you).’”

أَدْمِيَةً مَأْثُورةً

Authentic *du‘ā’s*

[182] روى البُحَارِي وَلَمْ يُسَلِّمْ فِي الصَّحِيحِيَّيْنِ عَنْ عَابِدَةَ [رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنَّها] أنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ - صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ - كَانَ يَذْعَوُ بِهِهِلَاءِ الدُّعُوَاتِ: Al-Bukhārī and Muslim reported in their Sahibs on the authority of ‘Ā’ishah that the Messenger of Allāh would supplicate with the following *du‘ā’s:*

((اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أُؤْمِنُ بِكَ مِن فُتْحَةِ النَّارِ وَعُدُّادِ النَّارِ وَفُتْحَةِ الفَجْرِ وَعُدُّادِ الفَجْرِ وَمِن شَرّ فُتْحَةِ الْغَنِّيَّةِ وَمِن شَرّ فُتْحَةِ الفُجَّرِ وأُؤْمِنُ بِكَ مِن فُتْحَةِ النَّصْبِ الدَّجَالِ. اللَّهُمَّ اغْسِلَ"}}

311
“Allahumma innī a’udhu bika min fitnatil nāri wa min ‘adhābīn nāri wa fitnatīl qabr wa ‘adhābil qabr (O Allah, I seek refuge in You from the trials of the Fire and its torment, and the trials of the grave and its torment), wa min sharrī fitnatīl ghinā wa min sharrī fitnatīl faqri (And from the evil of being tested with wealth and from the evils of being tested with poverty), wa a’udhu bika min sharrī fitnatīl masāḥid dājjālī (And I seek refuge in you from the trials of al-Masih al-Dajjāl). Allahumma-ghṣil qalbī khatāyāyī bimā’ī al-thaljī wal barādī (O Allah, cleanse my heart of sin with water of snow and hail), wa naqqī qalbī min al-khatāyā kama naqqayta al-thawab al-abyad min al-danasi, (and purify my heart from sin as You purify a white garment from filth) wa bā’id baynī wa bayna khatayā kama bā’dīta bayna al-mashriqi wa maghrībi (And distance me from my mistakes as you have distanced the east from the west), allahumma innī a’udhu bika min al-kasli wal harami wal-maghrimi wal math’ami wal maghrami (O Allah, I seek your refuge from laziness, senility, sin and being burdened with debt.)”

In the Sahihayn, there is the ḥadīth on the authority of Abl Musa that the Prophet ﷺ would supplicate with the following du’a: Allahumma-ghṣir li jiddi wa hazli (O Allah, forgive me for what I have done in seriousness and in jest), wa khata’ī wa ’ām di (My deliberated mistakes and the inadvertent), wa kullu dhaliqa ’indi (all of this emanated from myself). Allahumma-ghṣir li mā qaddamtu wa ma ahzartu, wa mā asrartu, wa mā a’lantu, wa mā anta a’lamu bihi minni, Anta al-mūḍmūr, Anta al-muʾākib, Anta al-muʾašar, Anta al-muṭakabbir, Anta al-maṣlaq, Anta al-maṣlaq.”
which I did openly, and that which You are better aware of than me). 

\textit{An-ta-l-muqaddimu, wa anta-l-mu'akhkhiru; wa anta 'alā kulli shay'in qadir} (You are the one who advances and the one who holds back, and You are over all things able)."

Muslim reported the hadith on the authority of Zayd ibn 'Arqam that the Prophet would say: “\textit{Allāhumma inni a'ūdhu bika minal 'ajzi wal-kasāli, wal-jubni wal-bukhli, wal-harami wa 'adhabil qabri} (O Allah, I seek refuge in You from inability, laziness, cowardice, miserliness, senility, and the torment of the grave), \textit{Allāhumma āti nasī taqwāhā, wa zakkihā, anta khayru man zakkahā} (O Allah grant my soul taqwā and purify it, for You are the greatest purifier), \textit{anta waliyyuhā wa mawlaha} (You are its guardian and its master), \textit{Allāhumma inni a'ūdhu bika min ḫalmin layanfa'u, wa min qalbin la yakhsha 'a, wa min da'wat in Id yustajabu laha} (O Allah, I seek refuge in You from un-beneficial knowledge, a heart with no 

\textit{khusbū' and from an unanswered prayer})."
Tanwiru 'l-Ghabashi fi Fadli 's-Siidani wa 'l-Habashi

lies). Wa aslih li dunyā allati fihā ma'āshi (And rectify my worldly life in which my livelihood lies). Wa aslih li ākhbarātallati fihā ma'ādī (Rectify my hereafter in which my return lies). Waj'ali l-hayāṭa ziyādatan li fī kulli khayrin waj'ali l-mawta rdhatan li min kulli sharrin (Make this life a means of increase for me in goodness, and make a death for me from every evil)."

Muslim reported a hadith upon the authority of Ibn 'Abbas that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ would supplicate with: "Rabbi a'inni wa la tu'in 'alayya (My Lord, help me and do not give help against me). Wansurni 'ala man bagha 'alayya (Give me victory over those who vie against me). Rabbi-j'al-ni laka shakkaran, laka dhakkaran, laka rabbāban, laka mitwā'an, laka mukbbitan, ilayka awwahan muniba (My Lord, make me thankful to You, mindful of You, fearful of You, obedient to You, humble to You and penitent). Rabbi taqabbal tawbati, wa-ghsil hawbati, wa ajib da'wati, wa thabbit hujjati, wa saddid lisānī, wahdi qalbi, waslul sakhimata sadri (My Lord, accept my repentance, wash away my misdeeds, answer my supplications, clearly establish my evidence, set right my tongue, guide my heart, and remove the malice from my chest)."
Buraydah reported that the Prophet heard a man saying, “Allāhumma inni as’aluka bi‘inni asbhadu annaka aladhi lā ilāha illā anta, al-āhada al-ṣamadu aladhi lam yalid wa lam yūlad wa lam yakun labhu kufiwan aḥad (O Allāh, I ask You by my testification that you are Allāh, there is no deity worthy of being worshipped besides You, You are the One, the Eternal, the One whom does not beget nor is begotten and to whom there is none comparable).” The Prophet said to this, “He has asked by the great name of Allāh, the one which when it is asked alongside, what is sought is given, and when it is supplicated alongside, the supplication is answered.”

Shadād ibn Aws reported that the Prophet said, “If [you see] the people amassing gold and silver, then greater a gathering is that of the words, “Allāhumma inni as’aluka-thabata fil-amri, wal ‘azimatu ‘alā l-rushdi, wa as’aluka shukra ni’matika, wa as’aluka husna ‘ibādatika, wa as’aluka qal- ban saliman wa as’aluka lisānān sādiqan, wa as’aluka min khayri mā ta’lamu wa a’udhu bika min sharri mā ta’lamu, wa astaghfiruka lima ta’lamu, innaka anta ‘allāmul-ghuyūb (O Allāh, I ask you for firmness in all matters and resolution to remain upon the right way. I ask You to make me grateful for Your blessings. I ask You to perfect me in worshipping to You. I ask You for a sound heart and a truthful tongue. I ask you the good from what You know, seek refuge from the evil from what You know, and I seek forgiveness for what You know. Indeed, You have knowledge of the unseen).”
Al-Bara' reported that the Prophet ﷺ said, "If Allāh wishes good for His slave, he teaches him these words and then ensures that he will not forget them, ‘Allāhumma innī da‘if faqūnī fi rīdākā, wa khudh īlá l-khayrī bīnāsīti, wa‘jālī l-islāma muntāhā rīdā‘ī, allāhumma innī da‘ifsun fa qawwini, wa innī dhalilun fa a‘izzānī, wa innī faqirun fa aghnīnī (O Allāh, I am weak; strengthen me with the deeds that assure Your pleasure, and direct me towards the good. Make Islam be the utmost of my pleasure. O Allāh, I am weak so strengthen me, I am lowly so increase me in status. I am poor so enrich me).’"

We have concluded the book, with the praise of Allāh and His aid.

Allāhumma ‘alā wa ‘a‘alā wa sallāt ‘alā wa ‘alā ummaī bayyina mūsim ‘alā wa ‘alā wassalāmuhu.

All praise be to Allāh, the first and the last, and may His salāt and salām be upon our leader Muḥammad and his family.
Tanwīrū 'l-Ghabashi fī Fadli 's-Sūdāni wa 'l-Ḥabashi
Illuminating the Darkness: The Virtues of Blacks and Abyssinians
Tanwiru 'l-Ghabashi fi Fadli 's-Sūdāni wa 'l-Ḫabashi