

HIJRAH* WILL CONTINUE

Book one.

HIJRAH* - means migration. The word hijrah means leaving a place to seek sanctuary or freedom from persecution because of ones religious beliefs or any other reason.

HIJRAH* WILL CONTINUE

Book one.

Author:

Zubair, the son of Abdurahim

Proof-reader:

Muhsin Turon

1422 of Hijrah

2001 of Christian Era

TABLE OF CONTENTS

The first Story	Mahalla* became deserted	8
The second Story	I have found the Light and will not give it up.....	18
The third Story	We swam across the river.....	49
The fourth Story	Ice chandeliers.....	61

*Mahalla - neighbourhood

I seek refuge in Allah from the evil deeds of Satan.

Those who believe and migrated from their homes and fought for the Way of Allah, and those who have sheltered them and helped them they are truly the believers. Theirs shall be forgiveness and a generous provision. ***Surah - 8 The Spoils of War (Al-Anfaal), Ayah Number: 74***

In the Name of Allah, Most Gracious, Most Merciful

INTRODUCTION

We glorify and praise Allah, the most high. All praise and thanks are due to Allah for having sent us his Prophet and Messenger Mohammed (Peace Be Upon Him), for having bestowed on us the blessing of Islam, for having endowed us with the qualities of the Muhajirs* and Ansars**.

May Allah's blessings and peace be upon the Messenger. And may Allah be content with his people and satisfied with his companions and merciful to those who followed him with devotion.

From our Islamic history we know that at the time of the Message our Prophet (Peace Be Upon Him) and

*Muhajir - a person who makes Hijrah (Refugee, immigrant).

**Ansar - means helpers. The dwellers of Madinah (city in Saudi Arabia) who responded to the Prophet's call to Islam and offered Islam a city-state power.

his companions made the Hijrah and left behind beautiful edifications and examples for the Muslim Community.

How many wisdoms for us are hidden in his example. Indeed like the enmity between Islam and the Kuffar* continues till the Day of Judgment, all deeds of our religion such as Hijrah and Jihad will also be continued. Of course, his companions who lived in so blissful a time on the same Earth and under the same sky we live now, were prominent figures who fulfilled the commands of our Lord with such excellency and who fought dedicating all their wealth and lives in the way of making the faith of Islam the most highest in the world.

In the beginning a Muslim community consisted of a few people, who under the leadership of the Holy Prophet (Peace Be Upon Him), established state where they implemented the rules of Qur'an as guidance for people, and defeated the powerful states of the Persian and Roman Empires. No doubt, this was achieved in exchange for great suffering and thousands of martyrs.

*Kuffar - persons who refuse to submit themselves to Allah (God), disbelievers in God, infidels .

Our ancestors handed down the legacy of the Message to us. And it is our now duty to pass it to our descendants. Unfortunately it has been more than 77 years now that Muslim Community exists with no Khalifah*.

Every muslim shall not forget that each of them has responsibility to make a pledge to the Khalifah. We hope that faithful Muslims will get a positive impression from this small work and will devotedly serve in the way of making the faith of Islam the most highest in the world.

Dear reader, the stories we present to you are real, for some reason names of some Muhajirs and Ansars who are serving in the ranks of the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan at the present as well as names of kishlaks** and cities had been changed .

This book had been written on the basis of interviews conducted with our Muslim brothers who made the Hijrah.

*Khalifah - The word Khalifah refers to the successor or representative of Prophet Mohammed (Peace Be Upon Him) or to one of his successors. This person acts as the head of state for the Muslim Community, Ummah .

** Kishlak - Uzbek word for village (Central Asia)

THE FIRST STORY

A MAHALLA BECAME DESERTED

We used to live in the eastern side of the Sirdariyo river. Our fathers and grandfathers were true muslims. And we grew up under the influence of the Soviet system. We even did not know the meaning of our lives, our days went by aimlessly and without meaning. Finally the Light came down to our kishlak. The Creator gave us the guidance. Islamic families arose and even youngsters started to pray Namaz. Goals and ideas were formed, lives of home-folks altered radically as they started to believe in the revival. Every gathering and all festivities were held with remembrance of Allah and Prophet's words.

After that authorities who were never interested in questioning fights that occur in families as a result of drunken parties started to knock doors very frequently and ask questions, “Where is your son? Where is your brother? Where is your husband?” Especially after the 16th February bombing in Tashkent the kishlak Assembly labelled 17 people as “fundamentalists, extremists, terrorists”, and they were the subject of public discussion. They were detained for two days in the regional offices of the Ministry of Internal Affairs and the National Security Service (NSS) and released afterwards. However within thirty to forty days, fifteen of them were imprisoned for three to ten years on base of false accusation of illegal possession of drugs. Only two old men Muhammadrahim and Abdufattoh remained free. But rumours were spread that they were also to be imprisoned.

Muslim people were oppressed from all sides, and life was made impossible. Fertile land was seized by the chairman, his accountant, their kinfolks and other officials. With every passing day our life was harder and

harder. They drove us into a corner and we were in a desperate situation. Those who fell into their hands were shown on TV. They were forced to publicly recant. We could do nothing but pray to our Lord. Meanwhile as the reflection of the mercy of Allah, Mahmud who was serving as a mujahid* in Tajikistan, secretly came to our kishlak. At that time his father Abdugaffor had been imprisoned, his home was searched and even a day before he came his house was under surveillance. Later we learned that for fifteen days Mahmud was wandering around the border trying to find a way to illegally enter Uzbekistan. If he would come a day earlier he could fall into their hands. Allah saved him. He met with some coreligionist brothers and explained them the meaning of Hijrah. He also said that it was impossible to keep waiting any longer and when imprisonment and mortal danger from infidels threaten muslims, muslims make Hijrah. He cited the Gracious Qur'an to adduce proofs and showed a place and way to make a Hijrah. My younger brother Abdulkarim and fellow-villager Nasrulloh sold some of their properties as if they were "going to buy a car"

*Mujahid - Someone who is active and fights for Islam, a muslim fighter.

and studied ways leading to Tajikistan through Kyrgyzstan. And Abdulkarim visited Kyrgyzstan for a few times and examined all roads.

Finally in the Spring of 1999 we decided to make Hijrah. Our villages Kushtarak and Zarkishlok were under severe police surveillance. In spite of that in the early morning of a given date we, the fifteen families, took our women and kids and headed for Tajikistan to make Hijrah in the way of Allah leaving behind our Motherland where we were born. When our column of vehicles was leaving the kishlak it looked like Allah blinded those who were spying on us and made them witless so they did not sense anything. Even one of those spies helped to push a stopped vehicle and left behind watching us.

All of us left homes under the pretext of “going to a wedding party, going to see relatives.” Considering the difficulties of this journey I told my three younger daughters that “we will come back later” and left them under the care of my father-in-law and himself under the protection of Allah. Using various ways we reached the city of Amirobod.

At the same day when the Sun was at its high point we easily crossed the border via cornfield and came to Kyrgyzstan's kishlak Gultepa. Only there for the first time we could breathe freely. We understood very well all fatal consequences if by misfortune we would fall into their hands. However all of us were fully aware that all difficulties are still ahead of us. Those who saw us wondered: where were these seventy people going to and they asked us, "Where are you going?" "To a wedding party," we answered.

My younger brother Abdulkarim and Kyrgyz muslim brothers met us in Gultepa with an appointed bus. Our guide muslim brothers Fakhriddin and Asadulloh and his mother, they were from Kokand, joined us at that place. It was very dangerous to stay there too long. Without much of thoughts we hurried up into the bus and quickly took off. Among those who could not find room in the bus were my father and, I found this out later, my elder daughter. They left behind waving goodbye to us. For twenty seven hours we, forty three people, rode in that old and worn out bus. Next day before the sunset we reached a check-point on the border between Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan.

Everybody was feeling sick. Women and kids crossed that check-point in the bus while men along the creek hiding themselves. It turned out, that the bus had been arranged only to that point. We paid the driver his money and went on foot. As our guide told us we had a hundred miles way to walk.

Sixty two people left our kishlak , nineteen of them stayed in Amirobod. Seventy year old Abdulfattoh-ota and our mothers sixty five - seventy year old walked along with us. Bahrom was wounded in the leg and could not walk. Four men carried him by turns. Nobody wanted to speak. Everybody was praying inside. Kids were crying, whenever one stopped another one started . It was non-stop. We were moving away from our land where the first drop of our navel blood had been fallen. In spite of the fact that some of us were recalling and grieving for a son, some for a father and some for coreligionist brothers had being tormented in jail, we felt ourselves as coming out of glum and darkness.

Of course we nursed revenge against them in our hearts.

We behaved as if we were going to a wedding party. Men carried belongings , women carried kids and all of us moved quickly. About two hours we walked across the snowfield and then came to the small path.

Because of melted snow the path was washed out and our movement was slow and difficult. Everybody was occupied by themselves and our group spread over a hundred meters. The guide and Asadulloh were far ahead of all. Later on we came in front of roaring mud-flood cutting a gully. To cross the mud-flood I, my younger brothers Abdulkarim, Halimboy and Salimboy handed our belongings and kids over each other.

Youngsters crossed themselves. Every minute made flood more intensive, the sun was beating down and the dusk was falling. Some of us crossed the mud-flood with the help of a rope that was held by others at the both sides of the gully. After all only elderly people left, we could not find the way to help them cross the gully. Finally altogether we carried them over, and those who had already crossed the gully hold them.

When all of us crossed, the big water came and cut the gully more deeper and more wider. Tired and exhausted we were walking in silence, even children kept quiet. We all pinned our hopes on our destination. There is our escape, hoped we.

Mountains covered in shadowy clouds, flourishing flowers alongside the path, saplings with fresh leaves that had not been dusted yet, fresh and clear air easy to breath and difficult to stop, dazzling blaze of the sun... It seemed to me like a real discovery that Allah created the Earth such a beautiful place. Those sites were indeed fairy-tale.

We kept walking and those who saw us asked in surprise, “*khujo meren [where are you going?]*”, and we answered them, “*khonai Jumaboydar tuy meravem [we are going to the Jumaboy’s wedding party]*”. Next evening after walking almost sixty miles we reached Garim kishlak of Tajikistan and spent night in its mosque.

Next day early morning we continued our journey. By the Shom [*after sunset*] Namaz after walking about another forty miles we came to a mosque near Okkurgon .

Fakhriddin who went far ahead of us drove a truck from a place where mujahids used to live. In that way next morning we reached our destination - mujahids' compound in Khoyt. My sixty year old mother whose feet become sore when she walks for a long time, more than seventy year old Abdulfattoh-ota, Aunt Zebunisso and Aunt Kumri they all walked with us.

The next day one of the women who got over all difficulties along with us, she was a wife of a muslim brother Muhammad Sharif, gave birth to a baby-girl. They named her Hojar. She is safe and sound and is growing up.

More than fifteen days we had no news about those who left behind in Amirobod. We could not help them. All we could do was to pray our Lord and ask Him to help them.

Later on we learned that they had been waiting for others who also had made the Hijrah. The wife of mujahid Mahmud did not come to Amirobod at the given time, he worried about that and went back to Uzbekistan. At that time he was wanted by the police and his pictures were placed at public places.

In spite of that he came to his home at the evening and found her there. After quick dinner he put his wife and a small child to a bike and rode one hundred and thirty miles, crossed the Tajikistan - Kyrgyzstan border and joined his fellows.

Alhamdulillah *[Praise be to Allah]* they arrived safe and sound and we all who started the journey gathered together in that place.

WONDERFUL THINGS THAT HAPPENED DURING THE JOURNEY:

A strange woman came to our bus in Gultepa, gave us bread and supplicated for us wishing a safe journey.

In spite of hilly and difficult road we did not feel much tiredness.

We had lavish food in mosques where we spent the nights.

Women ran up to us and distributed bread.

We reached our destination unexpectedly easily.

THE SECOND STORY

I HAVE FOUND THE LIGHT AND WILL NOT GIVE IT UP

I HAVE FOUND THE LIGHT AND WILL NOT GIVE IT BACK

I am 20 years old, my name is Abdulloh. I used to live in Jomboy region of Samarkand district. My parents were always at government service. Our family was a prosperous one and one of the richest families in the kishlak. I was the first-born child in the family and had two younger sisters and brothers. It was 1990 when a terrible misfortune happened to me. A container full of gasoline had blown up and I caught on fire. I ran a couple of steps and fell down. It turned out that 70 percent of my body had been burned.

For ten days I was unconscious and in very critical condition. Almost one year of my life had been spent in a hospital. Allah Subhanahu wa ta'ala [*"Allah is pure of having partners and He is exalted from having a son."*] healed me and I returned home safe and sound. I became so scared that I could not even stay in my room alone and was afraid to enter another room by myself. My parents followed grandpa's and grandma's advice and took me to a Muslim exorcist for cure. Very soon I had been healed. That healing brought something that was new for me into my heart. I felt the existence of the Creator. I started to think a lot. Why did all that not come into my life earlier? I wanted to know Him, to become acquainted with Him, to be among those who worship Him but I did not know how to do that. When I saw my grandpa bending and performing Sajda [*falling on his face*] while praying Namaz, it seemed to me that I had found that thing that I was looking for. A few years I continued to pray Namaz. In fall of 1996 with help of Khurshid brother I understood the truth. I could not keep my happiness from anybody and word for word told the truth to my folks. My parents were happy seeing me praying Namaz and abstaining from sins and wrongdoings, although

they did not accept the truth. The way I dressed, the way I behaved had been changed completely, in particular, being young I had grown a beard. Being ashamed of that my father could not look straight to those around him. Regardless of father's objection I had not even thought about stepping back from Prophet's (Peace be Upon Him) Sunnah*. I had time to pass the truth to my younger brothers. The rude behaviour of my father had been rising from day to day. I could not even find the place in my own home where I had been born. While I was praying my Namaz my mother stood behind me and tried to break the Namaz saying something and taking off my sayings. She said, "Do not pray your Namaz in this room, do not go to that room." During my Namaz she had been pulling out a prayer rug from under me saying, "I sewed this prayer rug myself". Although my heart was widely opened because I had found the guidance and understood the new world, I could not find way to the hearts of my parents. This thing and deteriorating relations with them made my life miserable. Finally my father said to me:

*Sunnah - In general, the word Sunnah means habit, practice, customary procedure, or action, norm and usage sanctioned by tradition. In specific, any time the word Sunnah is mentioned, it is to refer to Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him). Here it means His sayings, practices, living habits.

“If you want to call me father wrap it up your Fridays, stop your namazes. If you don’t do that I’ll kick you out in front of your goatee bearded fellows, I’ll break your legs. I refuse to have a son like you, I damn you, off away with you, pack up your traps and get lost in your mosque.” Everything was clear now. Although, I had a presentiment of desperate misery, I had already sensed a pleasure of belief in Allah. My mahalla fellows had already broken with me. At wedding parties and funeral repasts I stood apart. From time to time when our parents were not with us I talked with my younger brothers about the faith and trust in Allah. My like-minded sister showed her empathy and told me, “Brother, you won’t fit in here, you’d rather leave us.” At the same day I took 3000 sums from my father’s nephew, he was a person whom I trusted, and headed to Tashkent. Sitting in a bus I felt lightness as if a heavy mountain dropped off me. Although, I couldn’t picture what kind of city it was, I hoped that I would be able to study my faith, to enrich my knowledge. With all those hopes and dreams early morning the next day I arrived to Tashkent.

All day long I circled the city and then came to a mosque near Chorsu bazaar. I appeared before an imam and told him everything. Unfortunately, it did not do any good, may be because of his carelessness. However I met a wise man Husniddin, he gave me a job in construction on side of his home. In the evenings we went to religious classes. Two months my father was searching for me. He asked bus drivers, showed my pictures in mosques and finally found me. They came in a car : my mother, my younger brother and a fellow-villager who happened to know Tashkent streets well. My father cried and told me, “Sonny, if you want to pray your Namaz - pray, if you want to go to the Friday prayer - go, we agree to that. Let’s go home, your grandpa misses you and cries bitterly. We could not look straight to those around us.” He was my father, I felt sorry for him. I had stipulated for a possibility to come back to Tashkent one more time to study in Hujrah* and went to home with them. When I went into our home I was amazed to see two Hijabs** hanging on the nails. My two younger sisters started to observe Hijab and did not go out without them.

*Hujrah – chamber, prayer cell.

**Hijab - covering the head and the body for Muslim women

Our home had been brightened with the Light of Islam. When I prayed Namaz my two younger brothers were following my movements behind me. I could not hide my joy and extolled Allah for that. It was my first day of joy since I had understood Islam. My brothers missed me much and for that reason always were with me. My parents acted like butterflies losing their babies, they stayed aside and talked over something. One of my sisters had been expelled from agricultural college for observing Hijab the second one from the school. One day when my sister was going out wearing Hijab my mother blocked her way and shouted at her, "Take off that clumsy dress of yours!" The sister did not yield to her and my mother started to beat her. My sister tried to run away from her and mother threw stones at her. In the end mother caught her in the middle of courtyard and pulled off the Hijab from her. My sister tried not to give it up and mother started to beat her unmercifully. My poor sister barely could stand that beating. Finally when my mother got tired of beating,

my sister somehow could make it out to the street. She covered her head with a jacket because her Hijab had been left with mother. And mother fretted and fumed tore that Hijab to pieces. Only marriage could help my poor sister to escape mother's oppression.

One day my father came home with a mullah who carried out funerals and funeral repasts in our kishlak. After having tea and some talk they asked me to come to their room. He was sitting in the room, a large course calico cloth with a container of water, a bar of soap, one pack of tea, seven needles and a bag with a rooster in it was laid in front of him. "What is the purpose of all that stuff?" I asked mullah. "Forty times I will blow and cast a spell over you, this rooster and all this stuff. Then you will stick into the ground around yourself these needles, and wash yourself with this water, and dry yourself with this course calico cloth, and launder your clothes with this bar of soap, and drink yourself this tea till it finishes. If you do that all your poisonous thoughts will leave your head and pass on to this rooster. He will not survive for long", said he.

In answer to that I told him, “All that stuff you are going to do is against the Shariah* of the Prophet (Peace Be Upon Him), it is heresy. Have you no fear of Allah?! Each heresy is meanness and meanness will lead you to hell.” Telling that I tried to dissuade him from miscreant intentions. Unfortunately he did not accept it. My father who was sitting there got very angry and told me, “You are so ill-mannered. How you dare to disgrace the mullah? In this case I will put you into a madhouse, they will give you an injection and for your entire life you will be a dolt and nobody, not even a dog will ask about you.” When my father stopped talking the mullah did whatever he wanted to do. After that my father paid the mullah his fees, gave him the rooster and went to drive him to his home. I took that occasion went out of home and again ran to Tashkent. It was spring of 1998. The situation in Tashkent had been changed drastically, Hujrahs had been closed, guys had shaved off their beards and gone into hiding, some of them had been taken by militiamen, some of them had disappeared without leaving a trace and some of them had been told made Hijrah, devout Imams had been imprisoned, and one could not hear the Azan**.

*Shariah - The Shariah is the revealed and the canonical laws of the religion of Islam.

**Azan - Call to prayer.

Barely two-three months I studied that time and then took my masters' advice and returned to my home. For two years I used to work as a driver and continued my weekly classes. One day we went to muslim brother Abdulmajid to celebrate the birth of his child. There we talked about muslims suffering from oppressions and how to bear them. I told there, "The patience should comply with the Siyrat*, in other words we should examine the life of Prophet and his companions. The patience does not mean doing nothing in response to the actions of an enemy, quite the contrary they had had patience with Hijrah and Jihad." Then we talked about miracles occurring during Jihad in Chechnya. Within two-three days militiamen in plain clothes arrested me. I saw there muslim brothers who had been at that party. They were beaten up and stood with raised hands, red faced and crying. Seeing that made my heart horrified.

*Siyrat - The writings of the companions of the Prophet (Peace Be Upon Him) about him, his personality, his life story and his ways of handling different situations.

One of the cops asked, "Is that one a driver?" and reached out his hand to me, "How are you?" Before I had time to answer: "Alhamdulillah" [*Praise be to Allah*], he punched in my chest, "What are talking about, you bastard! Where is your community?.....So, you want to make Hijrah?.... Against whom you want to make Jihad? f....your mother, f..... you!" Using such foul and rotten language he cursed me and started severely beat me wherever he could. After spending a week in the militia I had promised them to bring another two muslim brothers with myself and somehow went out. Later on I've learned that my father paid a huge amount of money to save me.

Our community was a big one. Muslim brother Abdulkholik from Kiziltepa prison of Bukhara region joined our community and changed some of our thoughts. "Are you still going for Friday prayers? All those mosques that had been built in time of Receptacle-of-Tyranny are serving Kuffar. Those imams are not slaves of Allah, they are slaves of Pharaoh, one can not follow them. The Friday prayer must be prayed in countries living under Allah's rules." He said so and cited some proves. Those words made huge impact on me and more and more I started to think about Hijrah.

While the pain I suffered from all the torture was not over yet, I received a summons from militia. I had shown that paper to my master. He advised me not to go there, sited proves from the Siyrat and tore that summons. Next day I received another one and the day after the next a militiaman came to our home. After that my father went to the militia and told them, "I have an aversion for this boy, you may do what you want to do with him put into prison or kill him, whatever you want, but do away with him." I heard him telling my mother about that. He sent for me and told, "Now I can not save you. You will rot in their prison, it's for sure. I will be a rat if I go and ask for you." He said that and yelled something else. He also told to my grandma, "This boy became a mote in an eye. We couldn't get rid of him by bringing him back home, we couldn't get rid of him by chasing him away." Next morning I took eight thousand sums from my master, left with him my belongings and started my Hijrah.

My goal was to reach Afghanistan - the Receptacle-of-Islam and to swear allegiance to Amir-Al-Mumin*. The next morning the train would leave at half past four and I was afraid to oversleep it. For that reason till approximately two in the morning I stayed in my father's room but finally fell asleep. "Wake up, go to your own bed," these words of my father who just had come from work woke me up. Time was half past four. I did not lose hope and rushed to the railway station. From far away I saw the train that had already arrived. Two militiamen who were on the permanent guard on the gate were absent, the another one who was on the platform and was leaned against the wall told me, "Shut the door." It turned out that the train had been late for an hour. I entered one car and saw four-five militiamen searching through passengers belongings. I quietly stepped back and went to another car. I bargained with a conductor and he agreed to take me to Dushanbe for four thousand sums. I still was thinking about those militiamen. Passing the Turkmenistan steppes, watching camels wandering around those unlimited steppes and people living in those deserted plains made me forget, at least for a little, the problems bothering me. When we were approaching Sariosiyo control increased significantly as it was a visa regulations area.

*Amir-Al-Mumin - the Leader of the Faithful.

Militiamen, soldiers walked by setting me aside as if they did not see me. And I was sitting with bowing head in-between the cars, at the place that was shown me by the conductor. Somehow I arrived to Dushanbe. It was the dead of night around twelve o'clock. With two fellow passengers we went to a house of a merchant near the "Green bazaar" and spent that night there. I told them my story and they suggested me to go to Garm. "Jumaboy and Qori* Tohirjon are there," they told me, "you should go to them." The next day I wandered around the bazaar and faced an old raisin vendor, kindness was on his face. He happened to be a very polite person named Abdurahim-ota. After exchanging greetings I told him everything that had happened to me and even surrendered my passport to him. He whispered in my ear, "Do not tell anybody that you are from Uzbekistan. Tell that you are from Regar, otherwise militia will arrest you and send back to Uzbekistan."

*Qori - someone who recites the Qur'an.

He promised to help me and took me to his home. After two days the raisin vendor entrusted me to his friend a cab driver from Garm and told me, "Do not tell anybody that you've been to my house, otherwise I will be in trouble, and do not return back to me with all your difficulties. We will bring your passport later. If anybody asks you, tell them that you are a Kyrgyz from Jirgatol and coming back to home from Dushanbe where you went to sell potatoes." After numerous problems and troubles on check-points I reached Garm and went to their mosque to pray Asr [*evening*] Namaz. I met there with a commander named Sherali. We talked a lot and I told him everything that I went through. Apparently, he did not trust me or may be was frightened. "If they get to know that you are Uzbek you will be imprisoned, so will I. They will close our mosque and madrasah [*Muslim school*]," said he and locked me in a room. "There are no mujahids here," told he when came back after ten days, "You better go back where you came from," added he, gave me money to pay a fare and sent back to Dushanbe.

With the same troubles I returned back .

The days went by on streets in hope to meet some kind person. I could not forget the home of that raisin vendor. To go to him... but his words "do not return back to me" were still in my ear. I did not have enough money on me to buy a loaf of bread, I was exhausted of traveling and in addition to that my starving stomach started to hurt me. Rat-trapped I headed towards his home and thought, what I would do if he was not at home, or even if he was in, what I would tell him when he asked, "Why are you here?" When I reached his home I stayed a little being at a loss and knocked his door. Grey-bearded Abdurahim-ota came out shortly. When he saw me he blanched with terror and asked me, his voice was confused, "A-are you here?" He quickly examined both ends of the street. I remembered a Hadith saying that if a traveller spends night in the street, a sin will be upon the entire inhabitants of a village. I asked him, "Will not you allow me into your home?" "Well, come in," said he hardly. His neighbour Qori guy was in his sitting-room. After almost an hour some food had been served.

Food was so tasty. I told them about all the things that had happened to me and asked for any job to feed myself. "My friend," said the Qori guy, "if you are going to act this way you'll drag out a miserable existence or spend your life in prison. You'd rather go back home. You do not have any pennies, what can you do alone." "I went out to make Hijrah in the way of Allah and His Prophet (Peace Be Upon Him), to escape from the tyranny of Kuffars. I have no doubt that Allah Himself will guide me," answered I. Next morning Abdurahim-ota showed me a day-labourers' bazaar. "Well my friend, this is a day-labourers' bazaar. Now look after yourself in some way or other and please do not come to us again. My neighbours work for KGB, they will sell you out and I'll be in trouble too," said he and went away into the bazaar. There were several hundreds of labourers at that bazaar. A car came there and all of them ran towards it and gathered around so that one could not see the car. If a lucky one could get into the car, nobody would be able to make him out.

Despaired I left the bazaar and wandered around streets like trap where I faced a potato vendor. After

exchanging cold greetings I told him why I had come from Uzbekistan and asked for help in finding a survival job. He told me about a state farm where lived devout muslims. Without any doubt I headed for that farm. When I came there and saw two young girls in Hijab walking down the street, the light illuminated my darkness. I followed them. They did not pay attention to me and reminded me of my younger sisters left back at home. After the turn they disappeared behind one door. I stopped not knowing what to do. A young guy of my age was walking down the street. We exchanged greetings and I asked him, "Do you pray Namaz?" "Of course," answered he and we shook hands. I told him that I was from Uzbekistan and made Hijrah and asked if he could help me. He told me about devote people living in his mahalla and explained how I could find their homes. When I said, "Please lead me to them," he answered, "No, if you come with me, they will not let you in, because I am a son of the chairman of the mahalla committee." I went there myself and knocked the door.

“He is not at home,” answered a woman’s voice. I did not know what to do and asked, “Can I pray my midday Namaz here?” “ There is a mosque over there across the street,” answered the woman, “You may pray your Namaz there.” When I came into the mahalla mosque people had already finished their prayers and were having their tea after charitable dinner, some of them were chewing tobacco. There was nothing left at the table-cloth but a few rice grains. After performing ablution and finishing my Namaz I approached them and told after greetings, “I am from Regar and want to find a day-labourer’s job, please help me to find one.” “I hope you are not from Uzbekistan,” said one of them passing me a bowl with strong green tea in it, “Our local militiaman warned us to report him if any person from Uzbekistan would come to our mosque.” I took that bowl of tea and sipped it on my empty stomach. “Where do you spend a night, do you have any relatives here? Recently somebody had stolen pots and pans used by mahalla at wedding parties. Now we lock our mosque, you can not stay here. There is a bigger mosque on the other mahalla, it would be

better for you to go there. There are more people over there too, may be somebody will hire you if he has a job,” continued they. I went to that mosque they had spoken about, but it did not do any good. By the Shom *[after sunset]* Namaz I returned back to the first mosque. After the prayer one man approached me, “Is that you the guy who wants to work? Do you have strength in your muscles? Let’s go then,” kindness was on his face. “You are lucky enough,” joked others, “You’ve got a job, you’ve got a place to stay.” That person brought me to his home and treated me as a guest. “At first sight I understood that you are from Uzbekistan,” said he, “My purpose was to make something good for you, but nobody should know that. I have a good friend in Moscow, I will send you to him and he will help you.” “When I have the Receptacle-of-Islam why should I go to a Receptacle-of-Kuffar? I want to go to Afghanistan - the Receptacle-of-Islam,” answered I. We talked a little then I ate my fill, washed myself and my cloths and went to bed. The next morning after finishing a breakfast that man gave two twenty-dollar and one ten-dollar bills. “I put them aside as a tith of

this year's harvest and had nobody to give, Allah sent you to me, my younger brother, please take them," said he. "You are on a very dangerous path, be careful, you are too young," added he and after giving me many pieces of advice said goodbye.

I was on my way glorifying and thanking Allah and from time to time touching those bills. "O my Allah, you granted me this with Your great dignity. Where was I and where was that man." I exchanged ten dollars at a roadside bazaar and rushed to a railway station. I loaded up the Kumsangir bus going towards Afghanistan border. Militiamen in twos were patrolling the railway station. I was afraid to come down from the bus and spent about two hours in it hiding on back seats. It turned out that the bus would not go until it would be full with passengers. Somebody from the outside of the bus called my name and said, "Step down." I looked out and saw that Qori guy, the raisin vendor's neighbour. I ran up to him. "Let's go from here," told he. "If you take this bus they will catch you. That place is a military zone, there are soldiers with Kalashnikov rifles and

five-six checkpoints on the road. They will ask a permit from you,” he told me, “Guys from Kumsangir who came here to sell potatoes are agree to take you with themselves, let’s go to them.”

“I have money. Allah granted me it,” I showed him dollars. “Let me see, they may be fake,” answered he, and started to study the bills looking at one side and another. To make a long story short with two guys from Kumsangir we hired a taxi and started our journey. Somehow they arranged that we passed all checkpoints. Along the way to Kumsangir I told them what had happened to me and got some information concerning getting over to Afghanistan. We reached our destination and left the taxi. It was cold and dark. “Do not tell anybody that you’ve come with us,” warned they and went to their home. And I went after my nose. In a short while they had called me, “Hey, where are you going? Do you have anybody here?” asked they. “Nobody,” answered I. “Let’s go with us,” said they, “You can crash with us for tonight and will go tomorrow morning.” I was glad of that and followed them. They threw a party for twenty-thirty friends and

play cards till midnight. The room was filled with a tobacco smoke. I had tried to give some of them Da'wah*.

At dawn I continued my journey. I had met nobody on my way. Only thirty miles left to Afghanistan border. My goal was kishlak Qoradum situated very close to the border. All of a sudden a wheeled tractor stopped behind me. There were those guys who had played cards at that night's party in a tractor's trailer. It had turned out, that they were going to Qoradum to chop saxaul trees. They held axes in their hands. I was helped to climb up the trailer and joined them. When we had reached Qoradum we met there an old man seventy year old, his name was Abdulhalim. "This guy is from Garm, he is Kyrgyz and is looking for his elder brother Abdulatif who supposed to live here," said they and left me with that grand-dad. "I lived so many years," he shook his head, "but never had heard about the Kyrgyz man living here." "I am from Uzbekistan," I told him, "my parents have gone to Afghanistan. Could you help me to go there?" The raisin vendor

*Da'wah - inviting others to Islam. Missionary work.

Abdurahim-ota instructed me to say so. “Yes, my son,” said the old man, “you are telling the truth. The night before last in several cars came here some people.” and continued, “Next morning I had hidden behind the hill and watched them crossing the border. They were Uzbeks with wives and kids, they even had their belongings with themselves. Their ferryboat had been broken in the middle of the river and a helicopter helped them. Your parents must had got across that night. Men were wearing military uniform.” I was surprised and just now had understood what that raisin vendor meant when he had told me to say that. “I am acquainted with one drug-dealer,” added the old man, “He goes to Afghanistan very often, I will tell him and he will take you with himself.” Grand-dad Abduhalim visited that man every three-four days to get some news from him. So we waited about a month but that man did not keep his promises. Everything we did together with the grand-dad, we had become very close like a son and a dad. Evenings we spent speaking about the faith. At one of those evenings I had told to the grand-dad all truth about myself. The grand-dad barely made ends meet, there were weeks when nothing boiled in their cauldron. In spite of that, they had

treated me as a guest and cooked for me dishes that neither he, nor his kids had opportunity to eat. After realizing that I started to watch them and found that they gave me their food and got by with tea and bread for themselves. Grand-dad's wife heated my room, even their own room was unheated, during cold nights she covered me with a thick blanket. To cut a long story short they said, "You are a traveller." And treated me much better than they treated their own kids. I was amazed by kindness of those people. As grand-dad told me they had a son who looked like me and he had been called up military service. They missed him so much and were very happy when I came to stay with them as if their own son had returned back. Later on fellow-villagers had learned about my stay with them. Despite the fact that our love was boundless, it had become dangerous for me as well as for grand-dad to remain in that place. It was February of 2001. "Please be content with me and give your blessing to me. I'll set all my hopes upon Allah and will try myself," I told him. We decided that I would leave next day, took a garden spade and went to check the frontier, access to that was blocked with barbed wire. Grand-dad was beside himself with worry, "My son, when you pass through the barbed wire walk back to front and if they see your footprints they will think that somebody

came here from Afghanistan. Meanwhile you'll swim across a river." He continued to explain some other things, "There could be landmines under the barbed wire, and that rushy place is swamp, be careful my son, there are wild boar, fox and snakes over there. Take bread and matches with yourself, just in case." At that time the fog fell down so heavy and thick, that at a distance of five-ten meters one could not see anything. The sun looked like the moon and disappeared from time to time. "Grand-dad," said I, "It seems that Allah, the Most High granted this day. The frontier guards will not see me in such fog, please supplicate for me, I am leaving now." I gave him all my money I had on me. Grand-dad said, "You are a traveller, you will need it," and returned money back to me. "I am going to the Muslim state," answered I, "In Sha'Allah* I will not get into difficulties there," and forced him to take money. Grand-dad took off his thick quilted jacket and gave it to me, wept and supplicated for me. Then he gave me a strong hug, said goodbye and vanished in the white fog.

*In Sha'Allah - When a person wishes to plan for the future, when he promises, when he makes resolutions, and when he makes a pledge, he makes them with permission and the will of Allah. For this reason, a Muslim uses the Qur'anic instructions by saying "In Sha'Allah." The meaning of this statement is: "If Allah wills."

And now I had panicked . I bent down and slowly moved towards barbed wire. “Bismillah tawakkaltu ala Allah wa la Hawla wa la Kuwwata illa bi-Allah [*In the Name of Allah, I place my trust in Allah and there is no power except with Allah*],” prayed I and started to undermine that wire. From somewhere I heard a strange sound like “bow-wow, bow-wow”. I closed my mouth and sound stops. It was my heart racing so fast and loud that I could hear it. Somehow I managed to crawl under the barbed wire. A part of grand-dad’s quilted jacket left on barbs. Soil was well-ploughed and very soft therefore, I walked up to my knees in that soil. About fifty meters I walked back to front then turned round and broke into run. It was impossible to understand by looking at my footprints whether I went forward or backward. I jumped over circles of barbed wire left at flat ground and ran and ran. At that time Russian guards noticed something and opened sub-machine-gun fire. I rolled down a steep bank and ran into the rushy field. They still were shooting. Within next two minutes I became panic-stricken.

It was the first time in my life that I had heard a burst of sub-machine-gun fire. It was a terrible din everywhere. The rushy field was so thick that I, covered with sweat, barely moved through it. I ran about two miles protecting my face from rush-cuts with my hands and finally came to a river. I thought that that was the river the grand-dad had told me about and without any hesitation jumped into it. The water was greenish and warm, quickly I swam across the river to the other side and again ran into the rush field. I ran about two-three miles through that rush field and out of the blue was faced with the real river. The other side was barely seen. The firing was still there and bullets whined and whistled around me. Again I jumped into the water. The water was so cold that I could not stand in it and got out. There was a small niche shape gully there, I ran into it and squatted down there. The gully was only a span high above my head. I heard dogs barking, peoples' moving above and was so fearful that I tried to shrink away and hide myself inside the gully. There was only a meters distance between me and the water. Shivering with cold I took off my high shoes full of water.

The dogs barking and people moving had not stop yet. “The frontier guards are looking for me,” thought I, “if they see me, they will kill me and if I jump into the river, of course , they will see me.” And I remained squatted. I did not want them to find out that I was from Uzbekistan in case they would catch me. Therefore I had torn to shreds my passport and threw it into the river. By midnight my clothes had become frozen and crackled when I moved my arm or leg. It was a full moon night, wild animals rustling in the rush field scared me. Every small shadow created a terrible picture in my head. The shadow stopped just above my head. I even heard it’s breathing. I was so scared, my heart sank and I almost gave up spirit, slowly I turned around and looked upward.... At a distance of 30-40 inches there was a jackal staring at me. I came to my senses, “Get out of here!” I yelled and threw a mud stone chasing it away. I gave myself up to despair and felt myself very bad. My feet swelled up and became big.

Within three days my clothes dried out but I could not put on my shoes. I was unable of walking, let alone swimming in the river. However I always remembered Allah and had no doubt that He would always support me. It was the fifth day, after the noon Namaz the sun made air a little bit warmer. I fell asleep and saw a dream. As though I was in grand-dad's house and walking around holding it's walls and saying, "Grand-dad, where are you? Mummy why did you not light this stove?" As if I touched the stove and showed it to the grand-dad's wife. I woke up from my own cry. "Why did I call "mummy" to a strange woman?" I asked myself. When I had come around I found myself walking along steep bank on my right side with my feet stuck in the mud. And the things I had been touching in my dream and thought as if it was the stove were actually big pieces of clay fell off the steep bank. I returned back to my place. I was exhausted, not knowing what to do. Desperate and helpless I set all my hopes upon Allah. "Oh Allah, Oh Allah. You are the only One. Oh Allah, save me, I can not bear it anymore," I cried sitting there.

Suddenly I had heard sounds of steps above very close to me. I pressed myself into the gully trying to hide in it, after some time it was dead silent. Very slowly I raised my head and saw a man in his fifties wearing a long caftan and black turban. He was sitting, playing at something and looking towards Afghanistan. Carefully I cried out, "Hey, father!" I backed him. As soon as he saw me I put my forefinger to my lips, "Hush." He turned round and came down to me. He had grasped my hand and led me, my feet did not have a sensation of the ground and moved like logs. He brought me to a tent that was at a distance of twenty-thirty meters. I had eaten a little and sitting close to a hot stove became myself again. "Is it you that ran over the frontier last day?" asked he. It looked like he was sorry for me. He rubbed my feet with a horse grease and moved me close to the sandal (a small table above the charcoal brazier). "My friend," he said, "we are thousands here, do not go to other tents, there are different people here, some of them are good and some of them bad. There are such people too who will catch you and sell you to Russians. Whatever happens you

will do what people from this tent will tell you, otherwise you will be killed and thrown to the river.” I had been staying there three days and understood a lot. They threw a black substance to burning embers and inhaled its smoke through a reed straw. They spent nights in carousals, playing drums and watching dances of bachcha* and in sodomy. Blind and drunk they held idle talks and roared with laughter. They had enough food and were not short in anything. From time to time their commander had been speaking with Russians via walkie-talkie. The real name of commander’s younger brother was Husniddin. There were several armed people among them. I noticed that two armed men were always watching me. I tried to escape meanness and found myself in the abyss of meanness. They had run away from the Taliban rule, could not get over to Tajikistan and stuck in there not knowing where to go. One day I went into the reeds to perform an ablution. One of them told another one, “Hey, look, watch him. He is going towards the river. Do not let him run away.” I had pricked up my ears and quickly ran towards the river. After three may be four hundred meters I went out the reeds and jumped into the big river.

*Bachcha - is a handsome beardless youth who wears long hair and dresses in a woman's robe. He dances to the accompaniment of clapped hands and drums.

I swam a little then went down and then the river carried me down over a long distance. My shoes had become very heavy and I decided to take them off but could not do it under the water. Eddies had drown me in and again with Allah's permission I came to the surface. Everything was totally out of my control. When I was under the water I prayed, "Oh Allah, please help me. Please do not take my life without showing me the state of Islam. Let me see the land where rules your Shari'ah*." Every time when I emerged from the water I yelled, "Help!" to those who stayed on the other bank of the river. I could not control my movements. Eddies carried me somewhere. Finally my feet touched the ground and when I raised my head I found myself staying at a small island in the middle of the river. It was beyond my power to make my feet moved, I stayed with my hands on my knees barely catching my breath. Ten-fifteen of those dushmans** were firing at me from sub-machine-guns. Bullets whined and whistled around me and fell into the river. "Do not shoot me ! I am a traveller! Allah's damnation will be brought upon you! Why do you need my death?!" screamed I in death agony.

*Shari'ah - The Shari'ah is the revealed and the canonical laws of the religion of Islam.

**Dushman- enemy

Hundreds of talibs were staying on the other bank of the river. One of them yelled, "Do not go to the water, stay where you are, we will come, do not move!" The firing stopped and I saw that one of talibs jumped into an inner tube of the truck tire and started to sail towards me helping himself with a garden spade. I could not control myself and gave a shout of the takbeer, "Allah Akbar! Allah Akbar!" My voice was reflecting from gullies of the river banks and echoing back to me. The talib came to me, took off his jacket and his hat and put them on me. Then he put me into the tube, got himself in with his legs on me and started to sail back. The piercing wind was much colder than the water. "Hurry up! I will die of cold! Hurry up," I was saying. As ill luck would have it, the whirlpools took us from the bank to different direction. I shivered with cold so severely that one could hear clacks of my teeth. Finally we reached the bank and talibs pulled me out the tube. All of them were strong young men in the black or white turbans and long robes, wearing thick black

beards. They brought me to their headquarters, took off my clothes, wrapped me into the thick blanket and laid me down close to a stove. Some of them rubbed my hands, some of them rubbed my feet to warm them up. They gave me a hot tea, unaware of each other, some of them put mashed rice into my mouth, some of them sugar, bread and other food. All of them were caring for me, it was like if I saw a dream, but my dreams had become true. They were my ansars whom I saw when I opened my eyes.

FROM THE AUTHOR

Oh Allah, You are the only One who educates the universe, of course all Your Words are solemn truth. Increase the faith of those who read Your Words and who turn them over in their mind and follow them in their lives and act according to them. Grant forgiveness to all muhajirs and ansars.

THE THIRD STORY

WE SWAM ACROSS THE RIVER

WE SWAM ACROSS THE RIVER

Essentially I am from Bukhara, my name is Abdulmajid. I am far from reading/writing or studying books or politically commenting any events. When I was at school my marks were “2”[*poor*] and “3”[*satisfactory*]. Usually I started to fulfill a task without much thinking over it. In spite of that my Allah, Most Gracious bestowed His Mercy upon me and the Light entered into my heart. As though I discovered a new world. Of course Allah exists, angels exist too. When I believed that the resurrection is true and that human beings will be revived for eternal life, everything completely changed my life.

My former behaviour, lavish parties, gatherings that went off in drunkenness, carousing carried out under the name of charity, going to and receiving guests just to make a parade of it, they all looked like a puppet-play that people played with each other. I was laughing at my past life. Was it possible that I like other human beings was to spend my life in vain?! Was it possible that mankind had dedicated his life, that had been given to him only once, to such useless and meaningless things?!

Now since my life had been devoted to Islam I understood these true words, I started to teach them to my wife. Like me she accepted them. As I was not given a gift of eloquence I could not say any influential words to my relatives and friends when I saw their reprehensible doings even if my tears came to my eyes. And they did not pay attention to simple words but my elder brother shared my thoughts. When he said to me, “Your wife can not go outside wearing Hijab, you can not grow a beard, if you serve in the way of Islam

they will call you a terrorist, extremist! This land is the land of Kuffar, if it continues in this way you will be imprisoned! See how many Muslims spit blood in prisons. Now Hijrah became the Fard*. One should go to a Muslim state, In Sha'Allah one will be able to find ansars." I started to think about Hijrah.

As days passed by, our lives became worse, opportunities diminished. For any business you wanted to do you had to go to Kuffar and ask their permission. All things in this world, starting from the birth of a child and up to the passing away of old people conducted through bribes. "We will go to the Receptacle-of-Islam and will live with Muslim people where rules the Shariah of Allah," decided we. A country we wanted to move to was Afghanistan. We barely made ends meet. The main problem for me to make Hijrah was how to find enough money. I could not stay any longer after my elder brother maid Hijrah to Chechnya to fight against Kuffar. I set my hopes upon Allah, took my family and started my journey.

*Fard (Farz) - something that is obligatory to a Muslim.

It was August of 1999. Our first preliminary plan was to visit my younger sister who had been married to a man from Tajikistan. Safe and happy we came to our destination. My sister could not accept my goal. To add insult to injuries because of her poverty she was not able to give us any help. After ten days we returned back. And now started all reproaches we could barely stand. "Where can you go? Is not it better for you to peacefully do what the authorities tell you to do? A bull calf can run away only to hay-loft." All those reproaches scratched my already suffering heart.

Even one day of our life spent in this land that was under Kuffar became too much for us. After that we quickly sold whatever we could and padded the hoof. To make our way shorter instead of taking an asphalt paved road we went straight on through hilly steppe and remote villages towards Termez city. Our eight month old son Abdulboriy was with us and we carried him by turns. We wrapped our spare light clothes into a small bundle and two motorcycle's inner tubes and a small pump into a sack. My goal was to swim across a river to Afghanistan. The nights we spent in steppes and hills in places where it was appropriate for stay.

The money we had with us we used to buy bread and when we had found a place with fresh water we had a bite. We tried to save money for bread only and did not ride any passing vehicle. We had money left enough to buy food for two days only. We were walking along endless roads, and the thought that we were like those persons whom our Lord had called muhajirs in His Words, came to our minds. When we came to a halt we were talking about our faith and looking at Abdulboriy, it helped us to forget for a little while the difficulties of our journey and again we continued our way.

Finally our Lord had sent us the first ansar. We spoke a little with that ordinary tractor driver and he strongly insisted on taking us to his home as guests. He was an ordinary human being. Quickly we understood each other and kept talking till midnight. He was a poor guy but next morning he gave us some money, wrote down the address to be in correspondence with him and gave us his sincere blessing. We took a bus going to the center of Kashkadariyo region and from there we boarded a train that went to Termez. As we did not

have money to pay the fare we did not buy tickets. I approached a conductor, explained him our situation. “If you allow us we will go, if not we will leave at the next stop, or you can take this as a payment,” said I and showed him my robe. Indeed Allah is Merciful, he was a nice guy and allowed us to stay. There were no many people in a car. In the train fellow passengers gave us advices how we can get over to Afghanistan. It became known that going to Termez was a real danger, as there were many uniform guards on the way and if one wants to go to Afghanistan he should pay a lot of money. The guards caught the people who did not have money and handed them over to the authorities. The fellow passengers gave an advice that it would be better for us if we got off the train near Kelif village and tried to go to Afghanistan through Turkmenistan. We left the train at the place they told us about and after walking several days came to the place with barbed wire. We did not see any frontier guards. Very slowly we made our way under the wire. We walked a little when from somewhere someone opened a fire at us. We ran and hid ourselves in a rush field. The firing stopped. We stayed in the thick rush field and waited before it got dark. Praises to Allah, Abdulboriy did not

cry. If Turkmen frontier guards heard his cry they could find us or shoot us. Somehow his mother was comforting him, clasping him to her bosom.

The sun, like a big plate, started to go down on the Afghanistan side. After performing ablution with the river water we prayed our Shom [*after sunset*] Namaz. I took two motorcycle tubes out of the sack, pumped them using a small pump, put them both on my wife and gave her Abdulboriy. Holding on to those tubes I went down to the river. The water was very cold. Strong waves were tossing the tubes. My wife was afraid to drop Abdulboriy and shouted in a whisper, "It will not do! We should go back! Go back!" We managed to swim around five meters and then returned back. We took our breath, had a little rest and took counsel from each other. The side of the river was at a distance of about four hundred meters but we could hardly believe that we would be able to reach it. Using my belt I tied my son to myself, and sincerely supplicating Allah for

giving us the strength, again we went down to the river embraced each other and quickly started to swim. That time we were able to swim about thirty meters. I was very tired and understood that I would not be able to swim even to the middle of the river and would possibly drown. I returned back. My wife returned back too. Whirlpools took her down the river, she hardly managed to come out on the flat bank of the river. We were sitting for a while, comforting our son, not knowing what to do. We were so exhausted that could not even discuss what can be done. Thank God, the frontier guards did not notice us. It seemed that we had done everything possible we could but swimming across the river was beyond our powers and endurances. The dragon-like river wanting to ensnare us was in front of us, the armed frontier guards were behind us. Returning back meant surrendering to Kuffar, swimming across the river meant a real disaster. “Oh my Allah, You are the One, if You do not help us we will perish, only upon You we set all our hopes,” supplicated we and put on those tubes. I put on the first tube and my wife put on the second one. Without

paying attention to his loud cry I firmly tied my son to myself with my belt. The currents could drift us in different directions, to avoid that I tied my tube to my wife's tube with a wire. Slowly we went into the water. We were in the middle of the river when the frontier guards noticed us. We heard firing sound. When I looked back I noticed that at a distance of approximately three hundred meters there was a hill with an observation post on it. Five-ten soldiers from that post were firing at us. We started to swim as quickly as we could. It was about fifty meters to the river bank left when my wife had been wounded and she began to groan. She was saying something. I tried to support her saying, "Bear it a little, a few left, a few left." Abdulboriy was twitching and crying shrilly and non stop. Bullets were whining and whistling around falling with a plop into the water. The main thing that worried me was that the bullets could hit the tubes. My wife could not swim. A few armed talibs had already heard this hell of a noise and stayed at the bank of the river closely watching what was going on and shouting something. It looked like they had talked with the

Turkmen frontier guards via their walkie-talkies and the firing stopped. With the wishes of Allah I safely reached the bank and talibs pulled us out of the water. A short time after the Turkmen frontier guards came to Afghanistan and demanded the talibs hand us over. Talibs in their turn started to argue something with them. We were sitting nearby in our soggy clothes trying to catch our breath. Blood was constantly running from the my wife's leg wounded by the bullet, but it did not touched a bone. We saw movements of different shadows around us, they were saying something to us in strange language. Now one of talibs came to us and asked in Uzbek language, "Are you Muslims? Do you now how to pray Namaz? Do you now Qur'an?" "Alhamdulillah, we are Muslims, we made Hijrah here," answered I. Talibs returned to the Turkmen frontier guards, "This side of the river is a Muslim state, we will not give you the Muslims who

had made Hijrah.” They could not understand that kind of answer from ansars and returned back at a loss. We had found our ansars.

Two months my wife and son spent in a hospital receiving medical treatment. There is always a light breeze in Afghanistan coming from the mountains. I did not see any beardless man or a woman not wearing Hijab on streets. Even kids were wearing turbans. It was considered shameful to wear a cloth that was above the knees. On some Fridays they held ceremonies of vengeance and offenders were punished according to the Shariah law.

I talked with those who made Hijrah in the way of Islam and ran away from tyranny eighty years ago. I made close friends with muhajirs from Saudi Arabia, Sudan, Malaysia, India, Indonesia, China, Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, Russia and other countries. These states also were under the rule of Kuffar. They treated muhajirs from Uzbekistan with due respect as descendants of Imam al-Bukhari. I felt as

if our Lord gathered all true Muslims in one place.

In the fields and city streets I saw thousands of rusty, razed to the ground military vehicles, tanks, hundreds of military planes and helicopters left there by Russian aggressors. One feels as if one sees ugly faces of despicable and miserable Kuffar aggressors behind them. At the Namaz times streets of cities filled with Azan* and vendors were in a hurry to mosques leaving their commodities covered by a cloth. And noise in the city ceased even for a little. Friday were holidays and people from surrounding kishlaks did festivals at the city streets. And only the river that we had swam across separated the state where ruled the law of Islamic Shariah from the state where ruled the law of Kuffar.

If our Lord award us, certainly we will return back to our countries to take vengeance on tyrants who brought hard times to Muslim people.

=====
=====

*Azan - The Call For Prayers

THE FOURTH STORY

ICE CHANDELIERS

ICE CHANDELIERS

My name is Abubakir. I studied at the Polytechnic Institute. In spite of that fact that I was interested in everything, my views of life were not so strong. Voluntarily or not I had to live in the society full of evil like

Injustice and careerism, envy and aspersion, swindle, bootlicking and lie. You could barely survive if you are a tiny bit different from them. I tried a lot but could not find moral principles to replace this meanness. Questions like: "Where did we come from? Why we are here? Is it indeed that life had been done for existence only? What is a purpose of this life? Everyone comes to this world and everyone leaves it one after another, what is a goal of the life?," always tortured me .
I had even written down such verses into my note-book:

I had squeezed myself again,
Why I dropped my self-esteem.
Truth was that I told them, but
Where was I then with that.

Oh Allah, don't make me trampled
Only You I pin my hopes on.
If You gave this life to me,
Fill my heart with trust and faith.

One day my father asked me to come to his room and tearfully said, “My son, it had been almost two years since your younger brother Abdurahim left home and went to Tashkent to do a business but disappeared without any trace. We discussed that matter with your mother and decided that you should marry even your brother is no here. What should we do? Let people tell whatever they want to.”

I got married. When we were sitting after the wedding party with my close kinsmen who helped to organise it and were sharing our wedding party impressions with each other, a strange car had stopped in front of our door and kids ran inside shouting, “Abdurahim-aka has come!” All of us rushed outside. Everybody was standing silently at a loss because my younger brother had been changed totally. He looked more mature in a blue long robe with a long dress beneath it, a stick in his pocket. He was wearing a white hat that suited his face with a dark, black beard, pleasant aroma was exhaling from him. Because of his stateliness, nobody would dare to approach him. Somebody was busy with unloading his luggage. Only when he smiled with his warm eyes we started to come to him one by one to say hello and shake hands. Women who were

hanging among men, busy with wedding party bustle, had already put themselves apart. The same day that news had been spread around our kishlak. He told us, my father and me, what had happened to him and how he had been guided by Allah. In the end he said, "I came here to warn you, there is retribution of Allah." Everything had been changed in him - the way he sat, the way he ate, everything. He became a totally strange person for us. He did not stop saying words such "Astaghfirullah [*I ask Allah forgiveness*]", Subhanallah [*Glory be to Allah*], Mashaallah [*What God Wished (happened)*]. All that things astonished me and my dad.. He was very firm in his words, when some people decided to debate with him he gently defeated them. Ten days went by. One day my dad brought home our kishlak's mullah. The mullah could not continue the subject of debates and very often changed their topics. He asked my brother a lot of questions. Finally the mullah said to my dad, "You have lost your son, even he is alive. He will give up his own parents but he will not step back from his way. His brain had been poisoned, he will poison others too." And starting from that day all disputes and debates turned into reproaches and brawls. None of us shared his thoughts. It

was like he was in one world and we were in a different one.

Ultimately it was easier for my younger brother to leave us than to come. He was very quick to prepare for his journey. While father was giving me money and saying, "You will go with him to find out what kind of brigands he is now with," my wife suddenly burst into tears, "You were missing your son and were waiting for him anxiously, and now you could not accommodate him even for ten days. But he tells you the truth, why you do not accept it? You were together on the days of sin, you were missing him and crying. And now, when he calls you to the path of the truth, you've turned away from him and going to expel him from the house?" In reply to that my father reproached her, "Hey, look here, my daughter! That would be the last straw if you start to pray Namazes and became a religious." My wife had started to pray Namaz a long time ago and changed under the influence of my younger brother.

We were in a train and everything in my brother – the way he spoke, the way he moved, the way he behaved - looked very mysterious to me, I wanted to obey his commands. Was it possible that I who had graduated

from the university with honour could not understand the things known to him? My brother spoke to fellow passengers as if he knew them forty years or more, I tried to be close to him and eagerly listened to all his sayings. His words engraved in my memory like a bullet hit the mark. From time to time he told me, “My big brother, correct your goals, our journey should please Allah and ask him to let you know the truth,” and added, “Let Allah guide you.”

When we came to Tashkent my brother handed me over to his associates. “I will come back in three days,” he said and left. We were eight men, members of one group. Amir of our journey turned out to be a very good man. Three days passed and I had found what I was looking for. I understood that when I studied in the institute I was looking for all that in the garbage. All answers to questions I was thinking about were coming by themselves. I stayed another ten days and with every passing day I felt the genuine taste of faith. I did not know how to pray Namaz but when I performed Sajda* my heart was in real peace. Those days were my

*Sajda - Prostration, a unique position or stance in the regular prayers in which the forehead touches the ground.

first days when with words “Oh my Allah” the tears started to my eyes. How it happened that I did not acknowledge up to that moment my Creator? How it happened that I did know up to that moment, that the Messenger (Peace Be Upon Him) brought the Message that contained directions for the conduct of life? I understood the meaning of Namaz and it’s essence. I said goodbye to my muslim brothers when my journey had come to it’s end. My love to them was enormous. Another verses appeared in my note-book.:

You do not know the meaning of the faith
if you do not have it,

And that faith will be spiritless for you
if you are not by Sunnah guided .

You will not be able to say the truth

If your heart isn’t filled with wisdom

Your heart will not be filled with wisdom

If you do not destroy the evil of desires in your heart.

Start your way with the faith and you will be
in Paradise,

Do not step back, see how many are
in ignorance.

With the name of Allah go out of that
ignorance,

As the devil is a ruler of those who are
ignorant.

I understood this transient
world

I found the truth and will never
give it up.

My dear friends, the life is a test
We came today , but we'll abandon it tomorrow.

It turned out, that Allah had given me a Muslim family. My mother and sisters followed us. My father felt miserable because of that. "I've lost you too," said he. I was very close with my class-mates. Sixteen of them had finished school with gold medals. I hoped that they would understand everything very quickly. It turned out quite the contrary. I had tried all my wisdom to explain them the truth but everything ended with grave consequences and squabbles. I was like bearded insane to them.

My brother Habibulloh decided to get married. As it was the first wedding in our kishlak that would be celebrated according to Sunnah, the entire kishlak talked about it. Thousands of people gathered to see what kind of wedding it would be. Most people were bearded men in long clothes whose moral principles were based on

Islam. Observing customs, exchanging gifts, visiting relatives and other wedding ceremonies had been done according to Islam, and left an ineffaceable impression on kishlak inhabitants.

The number of religious youths was growing, very often we learned that people whom we never thought about had found the guidance. Once a week we used to meet with muslim brothers, talked about Islam and made our plans.

Spies of Kuffar, officers of the Ministry of Internal Affairs were after us. The most devout guys were imprisoned on trumped-up accusations of possession of drugs and ammunition. We heard that they were under severe interrogations, they were not allowed to sleep for several days, tortured by electric current, hanged upside down and bitten. We also heard that they were doing such things to our muslim brothers that one would be shamed to talk about. I took cover too and could not go out.

We could not get along with dad. He expelled us from our house. Secretly together with my wife we moved to her relatives in Kyrgyzstan. Regardless of the fact that he had expelled us, militiamen did not leave him in

peace. They gave him a very hard time, demanding to find us. On the other hand he suffered from losing his two sons. It was dully for us to hide in Kyrgyzstan without having an opportunity to serve in the Islam way or to do any business.

After six months I heard that my dad also had found the guidance, started to pray Namaz, walked away from heresy, grown a beard and said to people being not able to conceal his tears, "My sons were right, I did understand it." I also heard that his health had become worse so did his heart-disease. I was by myself with worry about him.

My muslim brother Abdulkholik who used to live in outskirts of our kishlak was waiting for me in his house at the time agreed. My dad, mother, younger brothers and sisters were there too. I was told that armed men from the Department of Internal Affairs visited our house looking for me. They gave a very hard time to my dad demanding to find me alive or dead. They also questioned some guys who were close to me and even put them in prison. They issued a search warrant for me. We missed each other very much, but in

spite of that our talk did not last for a long time. My dad said tearfully, “My son, we are content with you. Now you should leave us quickly as we can not protect you. None of imprisoned Muslims has returned back yet. Wherever you’ll be, be safe and sound.” It was so difficult for me to leave them, when all of us, my parents, my child, my family, my kinsfolk were united in the way of Islam. I looked at everyone of them. What is more, I had to stay another five-six days and wait for my muslim brother who had gone on a business trip to Turkey. Not knowing what to do, I was sitting and staring at my loved ones, being unable to take away my look from them. I thought what would be a verdict if I did not make Hijrah and Kuffar would catch me. At that time the following Words of Allah came to me:

“(Oh Mohammed), Say: 'If your fathers, your sons, your brothers, your wives, your tribes, the property you have acquired, the merchandise you fear will not be sold, and the homes you love, are

dearer to you than Allah, His Messenger and the struggle for His Way, then wait until Allah shall bring His command. Allah does not guide the evildoers.' { Surah - 9 (Tawba), Ayah Number: 24}

And I feared of Allah and said to them, “Whatever will happen, I set all my hopes to Allah and will leave now. They performed a long prayer. My younger sisters took off their gold bracelets, rings and earrings and gave a handful of them to my mother. “My son,” said my mother, “take them, they will do some good at hard times” and she put them into my pocket. I could not reject them, however somehow on my way out I managed to put all that gold wrapped in a piece of paper into the pocket of my aunt’s robe, that was hanging on the wall. I bid my farewell to them and left. I did not know at that time that it was the last time I saw my father. Outside I hugged my muslim brother, the owner of the house, Abdulkholik, and said goodbye to him.

I

whispered in his ear, "I put the gold into the pocket of my aunt's robe," and left.

I was walking along the path moving away from my kishlak and felt myself as if I had not been there. From the hills our kishlak was spread before my eyes. It became clear that going to Kyrgyzstan would mean nothing but just sitting and hiding. I knew then there left no other way but to take a weapon against Kuffar. All ways towards the prosperity of our faith had been blocked. And I would kill them, otherwise they would kill me. Or else I would drive them out of their homes, In Sha'Allah. "Oh my Allah, please, make me to be with mujahids," I supplicated. And much more questions than I had answers to arose in my mind. First of all, the question, where should I go, made me very worried. I found on me some money, enough for my journey and a letter with a few addresses in it. Yes, it was my muslim brother Abdulkholik who did that. While I

was whispering in his ear about the gold, he was performing his unselfish duty in the way of Allah. (Later on I had learned that he was a mujahid who fought against Kuffar with a weapon in his hands. We were very close friends but he never mentioned it. I had learned it from the mujahids who happened to fight with him in one line.)

I headed to Tashkent. In one of the apartment buildings, located in the center of the city I found the apartment mentioned in the letter. When I was ringing the doorbell to that apartment everything was still unclear for me. A host looking at me very alarmingly said, "Wait," and went inside. In a couple of minutes he returned back saying, "Come in," and let me in. To my big surprise my younger brother whom I had not seen more than three years was waiting for me with open arms. There were several people there, and one of them, Jaloliddin-aka, was a mujahids' representative. That day I had learned from my younger brother that dad had passed away because of heart-disease.

We traveled several days from town to town, from kishlak to kishlak, changing buses and finally arrived to the city of Khodjent. In every town and kishlak we met by designated people. Guides who handed us

to each other did not talk much, they just asked some essential questions, and a new guide never knew the previous one. Among my fellow travelers who decided to make Hijrah there were guys from Tashkent, Namangan, Khorezm, Navoi and other cities. They never got tired of talking about Islam.

We reached the foot of big mountains and had a rest there for a few days. Other muhajirs joined us and altogether we were 21 people. Among them were Muslim scholars, six persons with higher education and four persons with technical secondary education.

A host cooked us pilaf with flaxseed oil, supplicated for us and accompanied us to the mountains. My younger brother returned back.

Every moment of climbing became more and more difficult for guys who grew up in the city. As our guide told us after three days of travelling we will be with mujahids.

It was July of 1998. The mountain's view was so beautiful, that sometimes we said that it was impossible to have such beauty in the world. Right in front of us was a high blue sky, big mountains and plain land. We went into the heart of the nature with flowers of different colors, trees, clear air, crystal-clear water and the thin pipe of the birds. We were walking through wild flower fields covered in red, blue and yellow flowers. A white steam going up to the sky caught our eyes. The water coming out of the mountain was so hot that one could boil eggs in it. We found a place where water was not so hot, took a nice bath there and stayed there waiting for the moonrise because we could not go through stones and rocks in the dark. Even one hour delay was dangerous for us. Any stranger who would see us could report about us to Kuffar. The 20 days old moon was shining brightly rose around 10 p.m., and we continued our journey. During our journey we

saw several springs like that one. It's water was much tastier than Tashkent mineral soda water. Sides of one spring were covered in rust iron, because of the iron in the water. Our muslim brother Doctor Abdulloh told us, "Drink this water, it is very healthy," and explained to us it's structure. A mountain stream roared and rushed down so impetuously that the heart of a person who looked down filled up with fear.

We were walking along the edge of the stream. Without any fear Islombek walked with us through very dangerous places even along fifty meters deep canyons. We thought that he was a very good sportsman but later on we learned that he suffered from night-blindness. One time he fell down the canyon. His pack went down to the stream bumping against rocks like pillow and was carried away with strong current. By the will of Allah he was caught on the roots of a tree growing on the side of the canyon. Strong man Abdulloh with another man somehow managed to pull him out of the canyon. By the Shom [*after sunset*] Namaz we came to a place where we had to cross that canyon. A narrow like ladder rope bridge across the canyon was made of

small pieces of wood tied together with the rope. The bridge itself was tied to solid stone blocks on both sides of the canyon. The water level of the stream was high and ran over the rope bridge as if rattling waves tried to wash away the rope bridge. Anyone who stared at it felt giddy. Somehow four of us trying to set an example for others, and got across the bridge to the other side of the stream. But what happened afterwards was quite contrary, the others could not gather their courage to cross the bridge and decided to cross it tomorrow when the water level fall.

At midnight it seemed like the entire beauty of nature moved to the sky. Our earth was like a small piece of sand among billions of stars shining in the universe. As if we were spellbound we continued to stare at the firmament till our eyes got tired and returned back to ourselves without had having found any imperfection in it. Our Lord had created the nature in such order that did not exist before. And while the Creation was taking place He did not copy anything. If there were another one beside Allah, all those things, like the balance of the stars hanging above us, the falling stars would be a mess. Undoubtedly Allah is The

Absolute, Allah is The One. Is it indeed that on the Day of Judgment those stars will fall down? Is it indeed that those mountains will fall to pieces like scutched wool, the Sun will be taken away and put in one place, the Oceans will be red-hot and filled with fire instead of water and the Sky will be red hot like red tulips? Yes, indeed people will be resurrected to be reckoned because of their deeds. And those despots who had expelled us from our homes will be reckoned too.

Our journey had become more and more rough. Our Amir pointed to big snowy mountains. “Now starts the real journey, the trail ahead is very rough, there are mountains buried in eternal ice. If anybody thinks that because of his health he will not be able to go, he can return back, because the weakness of one will give troubles for all,” explained he. Our oldster returned back with the guide. Our muslim brother Ibrohim who was the weaker among us said, “There are mujahids behind these mountains, I set all my hopes to Allah, In Sha’Allah, I will perform Jihad, I feel the sense of Paradise coming from that side.”

Three days had already passed, we had nothing left to eat and our way seemed endless. It was pure white snow in front of us as well as behind. Nobody knows the depth of that snow. It was so amazing to see so much snow and ice falling from the sky. Yes, the real water reservoirs of the Kingdom of Allah was above. Our guide told us that he had lost the way because thick snow covered mountains and changed their shapes. He was ashamed of brothers and sorry for that. We continued our way based on guesses work. There was nothing to use as a target, everywhere was bright white snow that irritated our eyes, as if the entire world was covered by snow. Sky was covered with such thick clouds that we couldn't see the sun during the day or stars during the night. The guys were hungry and exhausted. When, with all our hopes, we climbed one peak, another one even higher rose in front of us. And then came the ice mountains. The thawed ditches with water coming out from huge ice reservoirs. The ice polished by running water was so smooth that you could easily

see your own reflection. We entered the world of ice. We were surrounded by crystal glass, small and big pendant ice chandeliers on ceilings with butterfly-like water drops glittering on their tips. Astonishing! Was it possible that such beautiful things had been created from the colorless ice?! There were such rifts in the ice that had enough room for a man. They were dark and bottomless, and when we threw a piece of ice into one of them, it soaked in soundlessly. Those ice rifts covered by thick snow were very dangerous. We tied ourselves together with a 30 meters long rope. We were told that the depth of the ice was about 300 meters. We had to walk days and nights. Otherwise we could be turned into ice very easily. Snow that was falling down at night became wet-snow during the days. We were soaked to the skin. We abandoned unnecessary things. Our movements produced some heat in our bodies and with the wishes of Allah this heat kept us from being frozen. Only our Creator knew where we were going.

When we climbed over one peak we found a small flat green area. Brothers gathered some edible roots and grass, showing them to each other and tasted them. Brother Ali said, "Come here!" And all of us rushed to him with some unknown hopes. He showed us a huge rock with a grotto in it big enough to accommodate fifteen-twenty people. One side of that grotto had an opening like a home and one could walk inside the grotto with the head bending down. We sat down in a circle, somebody stroke a match to light a piece of paper and others started to throw their dry clothes into the fire. Our grotto got warm a bit. Somebody even found an empty can and we boiled tea in it. We had a little rest leaning against each other. It was like that we took our last sleep. At that time our Amir Bakhtiyor stood up and said, "Everybody stand up! You will go! Otherwise we will all be frozen here! We have a lot of thing to do ahead!" He tried to wake us up, "Stand up, stand up! Sitting is equal to death!" Only three-four people stood up. Then he started to wake the others up.

pushing and shaking them. Again we started to climb snowy peaks. We were climbing and the smell of burned fabric was still with us. It was like it had been soaked into our clothes.

Brothers tried to encourage each other, talked about the Greatness of the Lord, reminded of being on the path of the great trial. Sometimes everybody was occupied with himself. Returning back was equal to catastrophe. Going ahead and not knowing where to go made brothers despondent. Only brother Sayidabbos helped those who stayed behind to carry their packs and even carried those who were unconscious. So Allah through His Perfection awarded him with the athletic strength and used him for actions pleasing Allah.

It was the fifth day of our journey, unbearably exhausted we stopped and gathered all together, no one was able to say anything, we just stayed leaning against each other trying to catch our breath. Exhaling, our breath turned to ice powder and dusted our moustaches and beards. Some of us fell asleep without paying any

attention to snow, rain and the cold, as if they gave up everything. Nobody was able to walk, even some of us were ready to be frozen and die. They prayed, "Oh, my Lord! If You take our lives, take them when we are walking in the way to You!" Under falling wet snow mixed with rain our clothes and shoes became heavy and full of water. In the wet shoes our feet got frozen. To sum up I could say that our Lord took away strength from those who relied on that strength, took away experience from those who relied on that experience, took away skills from those who said, "I am the expert", took away endurance from those who said, "I am patient", took away wisdom from those who said, "I am clever" and bound all of us to Himself. We were tested by coldness and starvation, fatigue and weakness. I was deep in my thoughts, "Is it indeed that I will meet with the Angel of Death among these ice mountains? Will my Lord accept me as a Shahid? What are the good deeds of mine? What are my sins? Will my sins be forgiven?"

As we did not have enough strength to pray Namaz, we prayed it just by moving our eyes. Then we decided that brothers who still had enough strength to move should go ahead and return back with the help. We divided into four groups. I was in the third group. But I could not stand it and decided to join the fourth group. This group itself divided to four small groups. Two-three people were busy trying to support those who could not stand and fell down. At dusk we came in the front of big pass covered in snow. Those who went earlier looked like ants climbing up the hill. "There was a lot of snow here," our embarrassed looking guide said, "the shapes of mountains totally changed . I cannot recognize them." When we were halfway to a peak of that pass, Ibrohim said to us, "You should go, I am content with you, please be content with me too and leave me here." He nodded us like saying, "Don't touch me, go away." The submission to death was in his eyes. As if we were waiting for that, we agreed to join the path he chose and felt that the moment of our Shahadah*

*Shahadah - declaration of faith. The shahadah in Islam is: "I testify that there is no god but Allah and I testify that Mohammed is the Messenger of Allah." When death approaches a Muslim should recite the Shahadah. Another person can recite this if the dying person is unable to say it him/herself.

was very close. We thought that it would be better for us to be together when the moment of Shahadah comes or when our muslim brothers come searching for us. So we decided to find a more or less suitable place where we can wait. Because of the darkness and snow falling endlessly from the sky we lost the tracks of those who went ahead. Some of those who were walking beside joined us and sat next to Ibrohim. He was telling us his last will, "I have a wife and a daughter. If I die as a Shahid, please, somebody of you marry her, I don't want them be disgraced in the hands of the Kuffar." Some of us were so exhausted that fell asleep and did not feel the rain water running underneath them. Close to midnight the rain stopped and it became more colder. Our clothes got stiff with frost. We felt our feet started to freeze. An older man Tojiddin-aka who had grown up in mountains and used to earn his living as a hunter was among us. He stood up and yelled at us, "If we sit this way we all die before the sunrise. Stand up, we should go!" But nobody moved. Then he started to heat the guys saying, "Allahu Akbar, Allahu Akbar!" Muslim brother Abdulloh joined him and started to beat

Rahmatulloh trying to wake him up, but he did not awake from his deep sleep even though blood was running down from his lips. Tojiddin-aka cried, "Are you going to die here? If you are going to die, die while you walk! Stand up, let's go! Allahu Akbar!" Tears went down his eyes, "I know, this peak is the last one. There is no snow behind it, trust me, let's move!" The Amir of our journey Bakhtiyor stood up, "Stand up everybody, we must move," he said. One leg of our muslim brother Ahmad had been wounded and he could walk only dragging it. He started to move. We followed them repeating in weak and trembling voices, "Allahu Akbar, Allahu Akbar." The last part of that snow pass was very steep. We were grabbling and clambering up and we were moving. Our hands did feel the coldness of snow. Very slowly we moved up. Those who went ahead did not think about those who were left behind and those who were left behind did not think about those who went ahead. When we reached the peak of the pass we found that indeed there were no mountains behind it.

It was a steep slope behind it. It was close to the Bomdod [*before dawn*] Namaz, the sky was still dark and we could not see far. To go down was more difficult than to go up. We could not move in our frozen clothes, slipped on snow and fell head over down the steep slope ending up at the distance of two-three hundred meters down. We lay where we stopped unable to move. I knew that I was alive but could not understand what had happened to me, no part of my body was able to move. My muslim brother Ibrohim was behind the pass....

The sun rose, trees and fields were seen far away. My muslim brothers told me what happened afterwards. Three days mujahids who came to rescue us were searching for us. Last day everybody was looking for Ibrohim. They found paw prints of wolves there and lost their hopes to find him. When they decided to return back our muslim brother Abdulloh said, "I will not return back until I find him, dead or alive." He went back behind the pass and found him there. It was the tenth day of our journey. Ibrohim only was

able to open and close his eyes. He could not speak, he did not hear. They carried him by turn. When it was turn of Muhammad Olim he slipped and fell down. It was only two miles walking distance to muhajirs dwelling. They were able to catch Ibrohim. But at that time he had already bid farewell to this transitory world and became the first Shahid chosen by our Lord. They brought his body with his lower jaw bandaged to his head and put him on the same day to his last place of rest till the Day of Judgment. Now he was totally free from the hustle of this world. We all prayed, right from our hearts, supplicating for him. We were among mujahids who controlled Tavildara, Hoyt and other areas.

MEMOIRS

When I remember my muslim brother Ibrohim I can not forget him saying, “There are mujahids behind these mountains, I set all my hopes to Allah, In Sha’Allah, I will perform Jihad, I feel the sense of Paradise coming from that side.”

My muslim brother Abdulloh remembers, “It was a steep mountain on one side and a canyon on the other. We were able to walk in one row only. It was the fourth day. Everybody was tired and hungry, we were moving like somnambulists. Somebody from behind tapped my shoulder and gave me a loaf of bread. I was so tired that did not care to look back to see who that was. Bread was fresh and tasty. I recalled that after several days when we were in the camp. “How was it possible to have fresh bread in mountains and who was that person?” I asked about it other muslim brothers and they also were surprised, “Yes, he gave us bread too, who was that person?” Still that thing remains a mystery. When I climbed over the last pass and fell over heels down the steep slope I felt that my body was filling with heat, I even wanted to take my clothes off.

Somehow I reached the place without snow. I came to the creek with the cold water and put my feet in it, filled my cap and poured the water on my head and shoulders. I was lying motionless on my back enjoying myself. I did not know how long I was lying when two armed muhajirs shook me and woke me up. Barely I came to myself. They sit me down and gave me a biscuit. At that moment that biscuit was the most essential thing for me. I had never had such joy in my entire life afterwards.

My muslim brother Abdulmajid remembers, "Three-four times those who went in search for us passed by without noticing me. I was the one who found them, not they. Exhausted, I was watching them unable to shout to let them know that I was there. I was afraid that they would leave without me. That was exactly what happened, they left without me. Wolves came at night but they did not touch me and left. The next morning mujahids found me."

Mujahid Rasulkhon who went to rescue the guys remembers, “Our muslim brothers Ahmad and Rahmatulloh were not able to walk and we could carry them for five to ten meters only. It was extremely difficult to carry them for a long distance. We saw a herd of unbridled horses grazing on the meadow. I said to them, “Come here, who wants to serve in the way of Allah.” And one of them quietly came and stopped in front of us. We caressed and fed it a little, put our two brothers on it and went to the place where our vehicle was waiting for us”.

Mujahid Saidjon remembers, “When we were walking with our muslim brothers who we had found, everybody’s breath smelled like milk and cream.” I asked Bakhtiyor-aka, “Everyone’s breath smells like milk, where had you found milk, brother?” And Bakhtiyor answered. “Perhaps it was our mothers’ milk that came out of our mouths*.”

*Mother milk came out of one's mouth - Uzbek expression describing the high state of exhaustion.

FROM THE AUTHOR :

Oh Allah, You are the only One who educates the universe, of course all Your Words are solemn truth. Increase the faith of those who reads Your Words and who turns them over in their mind and follows them in their lives and acts according to them. Grant forgiveness to all muhajirs and ansars. Give victory to our small group over the Kuffar, and grant muslims the successful return to their motherlands with due honour and respect, and grant them success in implementing Your Shariah and rules of Qur'an there. We beg for your help in our deeds. You are All-Power and Wisdom.

Dear readers,

Thus we would like to say goodbye to you and hope that we will reading future issue of our book.

Oh Lord, make us firm in our faith. Assalamu Alalikum Wa Rahmatullahi Wa Barakatuh. *[May the peace, the mercy, and the blessings of Allah be upon you.]*

17.02.1422 of Hijrah, Lunar Year, Month of Safar
11.05.2001 of Christian Era, Month of May