



A STORY TO READ ALOUD

The Story of Umar ibn al-Khattab

عمر

A strong, fierce man whose heart Allah turned toward faith.

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The Story of Umar ibn al-Khattab

“By the One in Whose Hand is my soul, Satan never meets you walking upon a path except that he takes a path other than yours.”

Sahih al-Bukhari · 3683

Come with me. Today, we're going on a journey... far, far away... and long, long ago.

But first, come and stand with me in a narrow street in the city of Mecca. The sun is blazing hot on the stone. A tall, powerful man is striding toward us, fast, his jaw set hard. And in his hand... is a drawn sword. He is the man the whole city fears most. And this morning, his heart is full of anger, he is marching through these streets to harm the Prophet Muhammad, ṣallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam, himself.

People press back against the walls to let him pass. No one dares to stop him. His footsteps are heavy and quick on the warm stone.

And yet... this very same man will one day become the gentlest, most fair leader these streets have ever known, creeping through the dark at night to carry food to hungry children on his own back. So what could possibly stop the fiercest enemy in all of Mecca... and turn his hard heart all the way around?

To find out, we have to wind the whole story back, to before that angry morning, and meet the strong man of Mecca just as everyone knew him. This is the story of Umar ibn al-Khattab, raḍiyallāhu ‘anhu.

Long ago... in the city of Mecca... there lived a man named Umar.

He was tall. He was strong.

When he walked through the narrow streets... people stepped aside to let him pass.

His voice was loud. His arm was powerful. His step was heavy on the warm stone.

Everyone in Mecca knew his name. And many of them were afraid of it.

Now... in those days... something new had begun. Something quiet. Something gentle.

A small group of people had begun to believe in Allah alone. Just Allah. The One who made the stars... and the sand... and the sky.

They followed the Prophet Muhammad, ṣallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam.

But they could not pray out loud.

They prayed in secret. In small rooms. Behind closed doors. With soft voices... so that no one outside would hear.

Because many in Mecca were angry at them. Angry at this new faith.

And the angriest of all... was Umar.

He loved the old ways of his people. He held onto them tightly.

And he did not understand... this gentle new thing... growing quietly in the city he knew.



The Strong Man of Mecca

I wonder what it must be like... to be so strong... and so sure... and still... so far from the truth.

I wonder... if somewhere deep inside... the strong man already felt something... waiting.

One day... Umar's anger grew too heavy to hold.

He took up his sword. And he set out through the streets... meaning to harm the Prophet Muhammad, ṣallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam.

His face was hard. His steps were fast. The sun was bright and hot on the stone.

But on the way... someone stopped him. And told him something he did not expect.

His own sister... Fatimah. And her husband. They had begun to follow the new faith.

His own sister.

Umar stood still for a moment. The words sank into him slowly.

And then... his feet turned. And carried him... to her house instead.

He came to her door. And there... he stopped.

Because he heard a sound.

Soft. Rising... and falling. Like nothing he had ever heard before.

Someone inside was reading aloud. Gentle words... flowing like cool water in the dark.

It was the Qur'an.

And the words... drifted out to him... through the doorway... and reached his heart before he could stop them.

"Indeed... I am Allah.

There is no god... but Me.

So worship Me... and establish the prayer... to remember Me."



The Day His Heart Changed

Something in the strong man's chest... went still.

The anger... that had felt so heavy... began to melt away.

He stepped inside. And he asked to hold the words. To see them with his own eyes.

And his hands... his strong hands... trembled... as he took the page.

And as he read... slowly... his eyes filled with tears.

The hardest heart in Mecca... was growing soft.

Like ground after the rain.

And Umar set out once more.

But not with his sword. He left his anger behind him on the floor.

He went to find the Prophet Muhammad, ṣallallāhu ‘alayhi wa sallam.

And there... the strong man bowed his head... and he believed.

That there is no god but Allah. And that Muhammad is His Messenger.

The man Mecca feared... had become a believer.

SubhanAllah.

For a long time... the believers had prayed in secret. In hidden corners. Behind closed doors. In whispers.

But now... Umar was one of them.

And his strength... was for Allah.

He walked to the Kaaba. In the open. In the daylight. Where everyone could see.

And the believers came too.



The Open Prayer

And for the first time... they stood... and they prayed... where all of Mecca could watch.

The man who once frightened them... now stood beside them. To keep them safe.

How strange... and how beautiful.

The hand that was once raised against the truth... now lifted in prayer... toward it.

Allah can turn a heart... all the way around.

Years passed. Quietly... the way the years always do.

And Umar became the leader of all the believers. They called him the Commander of the Believers.

But Umar did not rest on soft cushions. He did not hide behind tall walls. He did not wear fine robes.

At night... while the whole city slept... he would walk the streets. Quietly. Alone.

Listening... in the dark.

For anyone who might be hungry. For anyone who might be afraid. For anyone who needed help... and had no one to ask.

One night... as he walked... he heard a small sound.

The sound of children... crying.

He followed it... softly... through the dark... to a little fire.

A mother sat beside it. Stirring a pot.

And in the pot... there was only water.

She stirred it... and stirred it. Hoping her little ones would grow tired of waiting. And fall asleep. And forget... that they were hungry.

Umar's heart broke.

He turned. And he walked back through the dark streets... all the way... and he filled a heavy sack. With flour. And food.



The One Who Walked at Night

And he lifted it... up onto his own back.

Someone saw him. And offered to carry it for him.

But Umar would not let him.

He carried it himself. The Commander of the Believers... bent low... under a heavy sack of flour... in the middle of the night.

He came back to the little fire.

And he knelt down. And he cooked for them... with his own two hands.

He leaned close... and blew softly on the flames. Until the fire glowed. Until the food grew warm.

Until the children ate. Until their crying stopped.

Until they fell asleep... with full... and happy... hearts.

The strongest man in the land... on his knees in the dark... serving the smallest of all.

I wonder what the quiet stars must have thought... watching from far above.

Umar loved what was right... more than he loved his own pride.

One day... he stood before all the people. And he began to speak. About the gifts a husband gives... when he marries. Umar wished to make them smaller.

But a woman... from somewhere in the crowd... called out.

She reminded him of a verse. A verse that Allah had sent down... in the Qur'an.

And the whole crowd... grew quiet.

Umar... the leader of all... the strongest man in the land... stopped.

He listened. And he thought.

And then he said... for everyone to hear... that the woman was right. And that Umar was wrong.



The Truth Is Bigger

He was not ashamed. Not even a little.

Because the truth... is bigger than any one of us.

And even the mighty... bow their heads... before what is true.

The man that Mecca once feared... had become the gentlest of all.

In the quiet of the night... when no one was watching... Umar would stand in prayer.

And he would weep. Soft tears... falling in the dark.

He carried a worry... deep inside his heart.

That one day... he would be asked... about every soul in his care.

He once said... that if a small animal stumbled... on a road far, far away...

he feared that Allah would ask him... why he had not made the path smooth.

The strong man... made tender.

The loud voice... grown soft.

The same streets where a strong man once walked in anger...

a strong man later walked... in love.

Allah softened his heart. And Allah... can soften... any heart.

And now... slowly... we leave the quiet stone streets of Mecca behind... and travel back home. To right here. Right now.

But carry Umar with you, wherever you go. He was the strongest, most feared man in all of Mecca, and Allah took that hard, angry heart and made it the gentlest and the kindest of all. No one is ever too far away, and no heart is ever too hard, for Allah to guide. And when Umar's strength came back to him, he no longer used it to make people afraid. He used it to stand up for what was right... and to kneel in the dark and feed hungry children with his own two hands.

So carry these words with you, and ask Allah to keep your own heart soft and true. They mean... our Lord, do not let our hearts turn away, now that You have guided us.

Rabbanā lā tuzigh qulūbanā ba'da idh hadaytanā.

Talk about it

Read a question aloud and let your child answer before you show the choices. Then ask: what would you have done?

1. Who walked the streets at night to help people?

- a. Umar (RA)
- b. Prophet Yusuf
- c. Bilal (RA)

2. Before Umar (RA) believed, how did the believers pray?

- a. In secret, softly
- b. Out in the open
- c. Up on the rooftops

3. What did Umar (RA) hear at his sister's door?

- a. The Quran being read
- b. A baby crying
- c. A camel bell

4. What happened to Umar (RA)'s anger at that door?

- a. It melted away
- b. It grew louder
- c. It stayed the same

5. After Umar (RA) believed, where did believers pray?

- a. Out in the open
- b. Behind closed doors
- c. Deep in a cave

6. In Umar (RA)'s story, what was his strength for?

- a. To serve Allah
- b. To win praise
- c. To gather gold

Answers: 1a, 2a, 3a, 4a, 5a, 6a



Hear this story

Read it again online, or listen to it narrated in the Sukun Kids app.

sukunkids.app/stories/umar

Sukun Kids: stories of the prophets for Muslim children, narrated for bedtime.

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