

Sayyidinaa Uways bin 'Amir al-Qarani Radhi Allahu 'anhu

Keep watch over thy heart.

- Uways bin 'Amir al-Qarani -

Hidden invocation (*al-du'a fi dhahr al-ghayb*) is better than visiting and meeting, because show off (*riya*) might enter in the latter two.

- Uways bin 'Amir al-Qarani -

*"O Allah, You created me when I was not worthy of mention;
And You provided for me when I had nothing;
And I wronged my soul and sinned, and I confess my guilt.
If You forgive me, that will in no way diminish Your sovereignty;
And if You punish me, that will in no way augment Your authority.
You can find others to punish besides me,
But I can find no one to forgive me but You.
Truly, You are the most merciful of those who show mercy."*

- Uways bin 'Amir al Muradi bin al-Qarani -

His name was Uways, he was known as Uways al-Qarani because he lived in a village called "Qaran" in Yemen. Uways bin 'Amir al Muradi al-Qarani (Radia-*Allahu'anhu*) was a very pious and noble person. Although his life was insignificant from a worldly point of view, he is renowned and honored amongst all Muslims, Sufis in particular, for his piety, practice of *zuhd* (asceticism) , as well as a deep love and affection for the Beloved Messenger of Allah (Salla'llahu' alayhi was salaam). It is said that he spent all his hours in solitude, fasting, night vigil and *salat* (prayers). Uways al-Qarani was presented the blessed cloak of Rasulullah (S.A.W.) on the Holy Prophet's instruction. It is preserved in Istanbul, Turkey.

He had embraced Islam while the Beloved Prophet was still alive. He naturally had a very strong desire to see the Prophet but since his mother was very old and she needed his constant care and attention, he could not visit the Beloved of Allah. As a reward of his service to his mother, he was treated as a *Sahabi* (Companion of Prophet) by the Prophet even though he could not see him personally. His name entered the list of Sahaba only because of his strong intention to see the Allah's Beloved Messenger. When Uways al-Qarani received a message about the Beloved Prophet, that he had lost a tooth in the battle of "Uhud", Uways pulled one of his own teeth out (because of his love towards the Beloved Prophet).

Once the Companions asked the Beloved Prophet: "Has Uways Qarani ever visited you? The Beloved Prophet replied: "No, He never watched me physically, but spiritually he met me." Sufism is based on the spiritual connection or link that was between the Beloved Prophet and Uways al-Qarani, in Sufism

that spiritual connection is known as "Nisbat-al-Uwaysiya ". During his last days, the Beloved Prophet asked 'Umar bin al-Khattab and 'Ali bin Abi Talib (Radiallahu'anhu ajma-een) to take his shirt (Jubbah Mubarak) to Uways and ask him to pray for the forgiveness of his followers (*Ummah*). The reason for this was to show his companions the very high status of Uways.

During his Caliphate, 'Umar and 'Ali asked the people if there was anyone from Qaran. One man came forward and told them how to find the place. They set out to that place. When they arrived, they asked the people where Uways was. The people answered their questions, but were very surprised to see the two prominent Companions asking for an unknown camel shepherd. When 'Umar and 'Ali reached to him, they saw Uways saying his prayers. As he finished his prayers, he said, "It is the first time anyone has ever seen me praying. The two men passed on to him Beloved Prophet's message asking Uways to pray for the forgiveness of the followers of Muhammad. This he did. After a while he said, "Allah has forgiven and rewarded as many of Muhammad's followers as the hair of the sheeps of the Rabi'a and Mazhar tribes. They asked Uways, "If you loved Muhammad so much, why didn't you visit him more often during his life time?" He did not answer, but asked if they took part in the battle of Uhud? And if so, which tooth had Muhammad lost there? 'Umar was greatly impressed by this simple person and asked Uways to pray for him. Uways replied, "I pray for the forgiveness of everyone at the end of every prayer. If you keep your faith in Allah and His Messenger Muhammad, you will receive my prayers in your graves."

Many times in the company of his followers, the Beloved Prophet (S.A.W.) stated: "I can smell the beauty of my friend from the land of Yemen". This statement is in direct reference to the spiritual greatness of Uways. The prophet also said: "I feel a sweet, peaceful breeze (*nasim-al-rahmat*) from Yemen". Concerning the hadith of the Prophet, upon whom be peace and blessings, "More people shall enter Paradise through the intercession of a certain man from my Community than there are people in the tribes of Rabi'a and Mudar," Al-Hasan al-Basri said: "That is Uways al-Qarani."

'Umar (RA) quotes the Prophet as saying "Oh! 'Umar, from Yemen a man will arrive whose name is Uways and he has a sign of leprosy on his hand, he cares for his old and frail mother. If for anything, he takes an oath in the name of Allah, Allah will fulfill his oath. If you can ask from him prayers for your own forgiveness, then you must do so."

Ibn-al-Sa'd (RA) quotes the Beloved Prophet as saying "In my *umma* (followers) I have a friend whose name is Uways al-Qarani"

Uways al-Qarani and His Mother

Uways once asked his mother's permission to visit Allah's Messenger, and she said: "You have my permission to go, see him once, and come straight back. If the Messenger is at home, you may meet with him; if not, come straight back here." Uways made a journey of three months on foot, from the

Yemen to Madinah the Illuminated. When he reached the prophet's house, he knocked on the door and A'isha (Radiallahu' anha), wife of the Chosen Prophet and Mother of the Believers opened the door. She told him that Rasulallah (S.A.W.) was in the Masjid. Uways remembered his promise to his mother and replied: "Please convey my salaams to my Beloved Rasulallah (S.A.W.). Kindly inform him that Uways came from the Yemen, did not find him at home, and is returning to the Yemen, since he does not have permission from his mother to meet him in the masjid."

When the Rasulallah (S.A.W.) came home from the masjid, he found the radiance of Uways in his house. A'isha (RA) told him what had happened, and conveyed Uways's salutations. His blessed eyes looked towards Yemen and the blessed Prophet said: "The fragrance of our friend is reaching us." The noble Companions asked: "If Uways is your friend, why did he not stay to see you?" Rasulallah (S.A.W.) replied: "He complied with a promise given to his mother and he is serving her."

The Holy Prophet said "Uways will come back to Madinah the Illuminated, to meet me, but we will not meet physically, for I shall then be united with my Lord." Rasulallah (S.A.W.) said that when Uways (RA) came back to Madinah he was to be given his cloak, and asked to pray for the Community of Muhammad (S.A.W.). He also mentioned that a mark of leprosy was visible on one of Uways's hands.

Usayr bin Jabir reported that a delegation from Kufa came to 'Umar and there was a person amongst them who jeered at Uways. Thereupon Umar said: Is there amongst us one from Qaran? That person came and 'Umar said: Verily Allah's Messenger (S.A.W.) has said: There would come to you a person from Yemen who would be called Uways and he would leave none in Yemen (behind him) except his mother, and he would have the whiteness (due to leprosy) and he supplicated Allah and it was cured except for the size of a dinar or dirham. He who amongst you meets him should ask him to supplicate for forgiveness (from Allah) for you.

[Saheeh Muslim, Book 31, Number 6170]

'Umar bin Khattab reported: I heard Allah's Messenger (S.A.W.) as saying: Worthy amongst the successors would be a person who would be called Uways. He would have his mother (living with him) and he would have (a small) sign of leprosy. Ask him to beg pardon for you (from Allah).

[Saheeh Muslim, Book 31, Number 6171]

Usayr bin Jabir reported that when people from Yemen came he ('Umar) asked them: Is there amongst you Uways bin 'Amir? (He continued finding him out) until he met Uways. He said: Are you Uways bin 'Amir? He said: Yes. He said: Are you from the tribe of Qaran? He said: Yes. 'Umar (again) said: Did you suffer from leprosy and then you were cured from it but for the space of a dirham? He said: Yes. He ('Umar) said: Is your mother (living)? He said: Yes. He ('Umar) said: I heard Allah's Messenger (S.A.W.) say: There would come to you Uways bin 'Amir with the reinforcement from the people of Yemen. (He would be) from Qaran, (the branch) of Murid. He had been suffering from leprosy from which he was cured but for a spot of a dirham. His treatment with his mother would have been excellent. If he were

to take an oath in the name of Allah, He would honor that. And if it is possible for you, then do ask him to beg forgiveness for you (from your Lord). So he (Uways) begged forgiveness for him. 'Umar said: Where do you intend to go? He said: To Kufa. He ('Umar) said: Let me write a letter for you to its governor, whereupon he (Uways) said: I love to live amongst the poor people. When it was the next year, a person from among the elite (of Kufa) performed Hajj and he met 'Umar. He asked him about Uways. He said: I left him in a state with meager means of sustenance. (Thereupon) 'Umar said: I heard Allah's Messenger (S.A.W.) as saying: There would come to you Uways bin 'Amir of Qaran, a branch (of the tribe) of Murid, along with the reinforcement of the people of Yemen. He had been suffering from leprosy which would have been cured but for the space of a dirham. His treatment with his mother would have been very kind. If he would take an oath in the name of Allah (for something) He would honor it. Ask him to beg forgiveness for you (from Allah) in case it is possible for you. So he came to Uways and said: Beg forgiveness (from Allah) for me. He (Uways) said: You have just come from a sacred journey (Hajj); you, therefore, ask forgiveness for me. He (the person who had performed Hajj) said: Ask forgiveness for me (from Allah). He (Uways again) said: You have just come from the sacred journey, so you ask forgiveness for me. (Uways further) said: Did you meet 'Umar? He said: Yes. He (Uways) then begged forgiveness for him (from Allah). So the people came to know about (the status of religious piety) of Uways. He went away (from that place). Usayr said: His clothing consisted of a mantle, and whosoever saw him said: From where did Uways get this mantle?

[Saheeh Muslim, Book 31, Number 6172]

The (real) Sufi is not the one who is always carrying the prayer rug, nor the one who is wearing patched clothes, nor the one who keeps certain customs and appearances; but the Sufi is the one to whom everyone's focus is drawn, although he is hiding himself.

- Abul Hassan 'Ali bin Ja'far al-Kharqani -

The people of God do not admire what they are doing; they act only out of the love of God.

- Muhammad bin Muhammad Baha'uddin al-Uwaysi al-Bukhari -

Sincere warriors and lovers of the ONE are most hidden,

Anyone who can see them, will remember the ONE,

Anyone who remembers the ONE with pure heart, will see (know) them.

- Wiyoso Hadi al-Jawi al-Jakarti -

During Umar bin al-Khattab's Caliphate, a number of Yemenis visited Madinah the Illuminated and 'Ali and 'Umar approached them and enquired about the Saint, Uways, from the village of Qaran. The Yemenis said they knew of no such saint, but they did point out that a camel herd from that village, who seldom mixed with other people, preferring to spend his time in worship, alone among the camels. 'Ali and 'Umar then approached Uways, greeted him, conveyed the greetings of the Messenger,

and presented him with his blessed cloak. But he was reluctant to accept. "Surely there is some mistake!" he exclaimed, in his desire to hide himself. Seeing the whiteness upon his hand, however, they cried: "You are the saint described to us by Allah's Messenger, for he told us about the whiteness mark on your hand." They also reported to him the wish of the blessed Messenger that he should pray for the Community of Muhammad.

Uways (RA) rubbed the blessed cloak over his face and eyes and kissed it. Then he asked to be left alone. When he was alone he held the cloak and began to pray: "O Allah this cloak is the cloak of Your beloved Messenger. He has presented it to me, but I refuse to wear it unless You pardon the Community of Muhammad (S.A.W.)." He then repeated his prayer in exactly the same words. As he was about to repeat his prayer a third time, 'Ali and 'Umar came beside him. He cried: "Oh, **you came too soon!** Upon my first supplication, Allah granted me forgiveness for one third of the Community; on my second, He forgave two-thirds of the Community. In my third request I was pleading for pardon for the entire Community of Muhammad - then you came along!"

As with people in every age, the Yemenis were unaware of the presence in their midst of such a saint, whose prayers were accepted. They imagined him to be an ordinary camel herd. The Friends of Allah, do not seek fame, and as such hide themselves away from other people. Uways bin 'Amir al-Qarani died in 37 AH/ 657 CE.

- <http://www.spiritualfoundation.net/stories.htm#97381108>
- <http://www.spiritualfoundation.net/sufishaykhs.htm#108911095>
- http://www.witness-pioneer.org/vil/hadeeth/muslim/031_smt.html#055