

112966 - Virtues of ‘Antarah ibn Shaddaad

the question

Is there any saheeh hadeeth (authentic narration) about the virtues of ‘Antarah ibn Shaddad, which says that he combined all the attributes of a Muslim man?

Detailed answer

Al-Zarkali said in his biography of ‘Antarah:

‘Antarah ibn Shaddad ibn ‘Amr ibn Mu’awiyah ibn Qarad al-‘Absi was one of the most famous Arab knights of the Jahiliyyah (pre-Islamic days of ignorance) and one of the foremost poets, one of the people of Najd. His mother was an Abyssinian woman called Zabeebah, so he got his black colour from her. He was one of the best of the Arabs in character and one of the noblest. He was forbearing although he was so tough and strong, and his poetry was refined and sweet. He was in love with his uncle’s daughter, Ablah, and there is hardly any qaseedah (poem) of his that does not mention her. When he was young, he met the poet Imru’ul-Qays, and he was present at the battle between Dahis and al-Ghabra’. He lived for a long time and was killed by al-Asad al-Ruhays or Jabbar ibn ‘Amr al-Tai. A collection of poetry was attributed to him, most of which is fabricated. There is also the fictional “Story of ‘Antarah” which the Europeans regard as being among the most brilliant of Arabic literature. It has been translated into German and French, but it is not known who wrote it. The German Orientalist Thorbecke wrote a book about ‘Antarah that was published at Heidelberg in 1868 CE. And Muhammad Fareed Abu Hadeed wrote Abu’l-Fawaris ‘Antar ibn Shaddad and Fu’ad al-Bustani wrote ‘Antar ibn Shaddad. End quote.

Al-A’lam (5/91).

There is no report in the books of Sunnah (prophetic teachings) and athar (statements of the Companions), as far as we know, which suggests that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) mentioned ‘Antarah ibn Shaddad al-‘Absi (who died 22 years before the Hijrah) in

a single hadeeth. However, we find some people narrating that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: “I have never heard a description of an Arab that I would have liked to meet more than ‘Antarah.”

But this also has no basis, and it is not permissible to attribute it to the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), and it is not permissible to quote it as a hadeeth except by way of refutation and classing it as da’eef (weak).

And Allah knows best.