

# How And Why Ka'b Bin Al-Ashraf Was Killed, And Abu Rafi

Found in the Sahih ("authentic") collection of Bukhari (who is considered to be one of the two most authoritative muhaddithin – Muslim is the other):

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*Volume 5, Book 59, Number 369:*

*Narrated Jabir bin 'Abdullah:*

Allah's Apostle said, "Who is willing to kill Ka'b bin Al-Ashraf who has hurt Allah and His Apostle?" Thereupon Muhammad bin Maslama got up saying, "O Allah's Apostle! Would you like that I kill him?" The Prophet said, "Yes," Muhammad bin Maslama said, "Then allow me to say a (false) thing (i.e. to deceive Kab). "The Prophet said, "You may say it." Then Muhammad bin Maslama went to Kab and said, "That man (i.e. Muhammad demands Sadaqa (i.e. Zakat) from us, and he has troubled us, and I have come to borrow something from you." On that, Kab said, "By Allah, you will get tired of him!" Muhammad bin Maslama said, "Now as we have followed him, we do not want to leave him unless and until we see how his end is going to be. Now we want you to lend us a camel load or two of food." (Some difference between narrators about a camel load or two.) Kab said, "Yes, (I will lend you), but you should mortgage something to me." Muhammad bin Maslama and his companion said, "What do you want?" Ka'b replied, "Mortgage your women to me." They said, "How can we mortgage our women to you and you are the most handsome of the 'Arabs?" Ka'b said, "Then mortgage your sons to me." They said, "How can we mortgage our sons to you? Later they would be abused by the people's saying that so-and-so has been

mortgaged for a camel load of food. That would cause us great disgrace, but we will mortgage our arms to you." Muhammad bin Maslama and his companion promised Kab that Muhammad would return to him. He came to Kab at night along with Kab's foster brother, Abu Na'ila. Kab invited them to come into his fort, and then he went down to them. His wife asked him, "Where are you going at this time?" Kab replied, "None but Muhammad bin Maslama and my (foster) brother Abu Na'ila have come." His wife said, "I hear a voice as if dropping blood is from him, Ka'b said. "They are none but my brother Muhammad bin Maslama and my foster brother Abu Naila. A generous man should respond to a call at night even if invited to be killed." Muhammad bin Maslama went with two men. (Some narrators mention the men as 'Abu bin Jabr. Al Harith bin Aus and Abbad bin Bishr). So Muhammad bin Maslama went in together with two men, and said to them, "When Ka'b comes, I will touch his hair and smell it, and when you see that I have got hold of his head, strip him. I will let you smell his head." Kab bin Al-Ashraf came down to them wrapped in his clothes, and diffusing perfume. Muhammad bin Maslama said. "I have never smelt a better scent than this. Ka'b replied. "I have got the best 'Arab women who know how to use the high class of perfume." Muhammad bin Maslama requested Ka'b "Will you allow me to smell your head?" Ka'b said, "Yes." Muhammad smelt it and made his companions smell it as well. Then he requested Ka'b again, "Will you let me (smell your head)?" Ka'b said, "Yes." When Muhammad got a strong hold of him, he said (to his companions), "Get at him!" So they killed him and went to the Prophet and informed him. (Abu Rafi) was killed after Ka'b bin Al-Ashraf."

And then there was the killing of Abu Rafi, who as a Jew, even if he had not mocked Muhammad as Ka'b bin Al-Ashraf was said

to have done, also deserved to die:

*Volume 5, Book 59, Number 370:*

*Narrated Al-Bara bin Azib:*

*Allah's Apostle sent a group of persons to Abu Rafi. Abdullah bin Atik entered his house at night, while he was sleeping, and killed him.*

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*Volume 5, Book 59, Number 371:*

*Narrated Al-Bara bin Azib:*

*Allah's Apostle sent some men from the Ansar to ((kill)) Abu Rafi, the Jew, and appointed 'Abdullah bin Atik as their leader. Abu Rafi used to hurt Allah's Apostle and help his enemies against him. He lived in his castle in the land of Hijaz. When those men approached (the castle) after the sun had set and the people had brought back their livestock to their homes. Abdullah (bin Atik) said to his companions, "Sit down at your places. I am going, and I will try to play a trick on the gate-keeper so that I may enter (the castle)." So 'Abdullah proceeded towards the castle, and when he approached the gate, he covered himself with his clothes, pretending to answer the call of nature. The people had gone in, and the gate-keeper (considered 'Abdullah as one of the castle's servants) addressing him saying, "O Allah's Servant! Enter if you wish, for I want to close the gate." 'Abdullah added in his story, "So I went in (the castle) and hid myself. When the people got inside, the gate-keeper closed the gate and hung the keys on a fixed wooden peg. I got up and took the keys and opened the gate. Some people were*

staying late at night with Abu Rafi for a pleasant night chat in a room of his. When his companions of nightly entertainment went away, I ascended to him, and whenever I opened a door, I closed it from inside. I said to myself, 'Should these people discover my presence, they will not be able to catch me till I have killed him.' So I reached him and found him sleeping in a dark house amidst his family, I could not recognize his location in the house. So I shouted, 'O Abu Rafi!' Abu Rafi said, 'Who is it?' I proceeded towards the source of the voice and hit him with the sword, and because of my perplexity, I could not kill him. He cried loudly, and I came out of the house and waited for a while, and then went to him again and said, 'What is this voice, O Abu Rafi?' He said, 'Woe to your mother! A man in my house has hit me with a sword! I again hit him severely but I did not kill him. Then I drove the point of the sword into his belly (and pressed it through) till it touched his back, and I realized that I have killed him. I then opened the doors one by one till I reached the staircase, and thinking that I had reached the ground, I stepped out and fell down and got my leg broken in a moonlit night. I tied my leg with a turban and proceeded on till I sat at the gate, and said, 'I will not go out tonight till I know that I have killed him.' So, when (early in the morning) the cock crowed, the announcer of the casualty stood on the wall saying, 'I announce the death of Abu Rafi, the merchant of Hijaz. Thereupon I went to my companions and said, 'Let us save ourselves, for Allah has killed Abu Rafi,' So I (along with my companions proceeded and) went to the Prophet and described the whole story to him. "He said, 'Stretch out your (broken) leg. I stretched it out and he rubbed it and it became All right as if I had never had any ailment whatsoever."

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*Volume 5, Book 59, Number 372:*

Narrated Al-Bara:

Allah's Apostle sent 'Abdullah bin 'Atik and 'Abdullah bin 'Utba with a group of men to Abu Rafi (to kill him). They proceeded till they approached his castle, whereupon 'Abdullah bin Atik said to them, "Wait (here), and in the meantime I will go and see." 'Abdullah said later on, "I played a trick in order to enter the castle. By chance, they lost a donkey of theirs and came out carrying a flaming light to search for it. I was afraid that they would recognize me, so I covered my head and legs and pretended to answer the call to nature. The gatekeeper called, 'Whoever wants to come in, should come in before I close the gate.' So I went in and hid myself in a stall of a donkey near the gate of the castle. They took their supper with Abu Rafi and had a chat till late at night. Then they went back to their homes. When the voices vanished and I no longer detected any movement, I came out. I had seen where the gate-keeper had kept the key of the castle in a hole in the wall. I took it and unlocked the gate of the castle, saying to myself, 'If these people should notice me, I will run away easily.' Then I locked all the doors of their houses from outside while they were inside, and ascended to Abu Rafi by a staircase. I saw the house in complete darkness with its light off, and I could not know where the man was. So I called, 'O Abu Rafi!' He replied, 'Who is it?' I proceeded towards the voice and hit him. He cried loudly but my blow was futile. Then I came to him, pretending to help him, saying with a different tone of my voice, 'What is wrong with you, O Abu Rafi?' He said, 'Are you not surprised? Woe on your mother! A man has come to me and hit me with a sword!' So again I aimed at him and hit him, but the blow proved futile again, and on that Abu Rafi cried loudly and his wife got up. I came again and changed my voice as if I were a helper, and found Abu Rafi lying straight on his back, so I drove the

sword into his belly and bent on it till I heard the sound of a bone break. Then I came out, filled with astonishment and went to the staircase to descend, but I fell down from it and got my leg dislocated. I bandaged it and went to my companions limping. I said (to them), 'Go and tell Allah's Apostle of this good news, but I will not leave (this place) till I hear the news of his (i.e. Abu Rafi's) death.' When dawn broke, an announcer of death got over the wall and announced, 'I convey to you the news of Abu Rafi's death.' I got up and proceeded without feeling any pain till I caught up with my companions before they reached the Prophet to whom I conveyed the good news."