

Arab Civilization on the Eve of the Prophet's Arrival

When the Holy Prophet (S) arrived, a part of the Arab land was under Iran's rule and a part under the Byzantine government. The remaining areas were ruled by tribal Chiefs (Shaykhs). Mecca and Medina were similarly under the rule of their respective Shaykhs. The Sheikhdome of Mecca was in the family of the Holy Prophet (S), who were called Bani Hashim; but their other relatives, Bani Umayyah, were having more power and wealth. There was no love lost between Bani Umayyah and Bani Hashim. Yet there had been no major bloodshed either before or after the arrival of the Holy Prophet (S).

The ways of life of these two tribes were not similar. Normally the Bani Hashim were faithful, brave, kind, generous and sincere, whereas the Bani Umayyah were remote from all these attributes. Though both belonged to Quraish tribe, their behavior was very different from one another. If a comparison between to people each from the said two clans is made, the difference will be quite obvious. For this purpose let's take up the case of Abdul Muttalib from Bani Hashim and Abu Sufyan from Bani Umayyah. All knew about the courage, faithfulness, kindness, truthfulness, foresight, generosity and thoughtfulness of Abdul Muttalib.

On the other hand, Abu Sufyan had nothing to do with these virtues. He was a selfish, evil, greedy, a malicious drunkard and a mischievous fellow. Besides many other virtues, the generosity of Abdul Muttalib was so great that he was prepared to fulfill the need of the needy before the latter could even describe it fully. It had also happened that this chief of Bani Hashim was once about to leave for Syria with trade goods, when at the last moment a needy fellow came to his door and asked for a big amount in charity. Abdul Muttalib at once complied with his request and could not undertake his trade journey due to lack of funds.

Even the greatest enemy of Abdul Muttalib is unable to show that he had on any occasion grabbed anyone's wealth or had ever fled from the battlefield or behaved badly and unjustly with anyone or wished evil of anybody or drank wine or committed adultery etc. Undoubtedly, such evil deeds can never

be committed by a man from whose loins, the two divine radiances, viz. the radiance of Muhammad (S) and the radiance of Ali (a.s.) were to be transferred to the loins of Abdullah and Abu Talib (r.a.). Doubtlessly, Abu Sufyan did not possess these graces.

Obviously, this book is not aimed to abuse anyone, otherwise, many sour affairs would have to be recalled; then if Abu Sufyan is to be compared with Abdul Muttalib it will be asked: Can a dead lamp be compared with the bright sun?

Similarly, if a comparison is made between Muawiyah and His Eminence, Ali (a.s.) and of Imam Husayn (a.s.) with the son of Muawiyah, the distance between the behaviors of Bani Hashim and Bani Umayyah will become all the more obvious, even to the unaware. Lastly, if a comparison is made between Marwan bin Hakam, Abdul Malik bin Marwan, Walid bin Abdul Malik, Sulaiman bin Abdul Malik, Hisham bin Abdul Malik and Walid bin Yazeed bin Abdul Malik and people like Imam Zainul Aabideen, Imam Muhammad Baqir, Imam Ja'far Sadiq (a.s.) and other members of the holy family of the Prophet, the difference between good and evil will become crystal clear.

In Bani Umayyah tribe, a man named Marwan looks like the head of all mischief- makers of the world. Then Hakam bin Aas, Walid bin Uqbah etc. were also outstanding examples of the character of Bani Umayyah. The truth is that almost all the people in this tribe, with the sole exception of Umar bin Abdul Aziz, are such that to call them humans is like killing humanity.

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