

## Chapter 18: The Event Of Ghadir (Part 1)

The global movement of Islam from the start encountered a lot put forth by Quraysh and the whole class of idolaters of the peninsula. They whole-heartedly tried to put out this divine light but the more they tried, the less they succeeded.

Their last perception was the great movement to shatter and spread apart its members, with the death of its founder [1](#).

The Holy Quran, which reveals most of their tricks in its verses, this time, uncovers their desire for the Prophet's death, depicted in the following verse:

أَمْ يَقُولُونَ شَاعِرٌ نَتَرَبَّصُ بِهِ رَيْبَ الْمُنُونِ ﴿١٠﴾

قُلْ تَرَبَّصُوا فَإِنِّي مَعَكُمْ مِنَ الْمُتَرَبِّصِينَ، أَمْ تَأْمُرُهُمْ أَحْلَامُهُمْ بِهَذَا أَمْ هُمْ قَوْمٌ

طَاغُونَ ﴿١١﴾

***“They say the Prophet is a poet, we a wait for him some calamity [we shall wait for him to die]. Say: Surely I too wait a long with you. Have their understandings bid them this? [Have their hollow imaginations caused them this?] Or are they inordinate people? [2](#)***

It is advisable for us to present here a list of the obstacles created by the idolaters in the path of Islam, and then see how Allah made void and obsolete their treason and offset their plots by raising of the issue of Ali's leadership.

## **1. Accusations**

By baseless allegations such as the following: the Prophet is a poet, he is a fortune-teller, he is mad, he is a wizard and a magician, the Qurayshi infidels tried to reduce the effect of the Prophet's speech.

However, the vast spread of Islam among different classes of people proved that these accusations could not be leveled against the Prophet.

## **2. The torture of the followers**

The other plot of the enemies of Islam was to torture and annihilate the Prophet's followers so they could stop the spread of Islam in this way however the Quraysh leaders could not accomplish much due to the perseverance of the followers. The foes of Islam were highly amazed at the sincerity and endurance of these followers. In this regard, Abu Sufyan once remarked: I have seen Caesar and Kesra but I have never seen anybody like Muhammad. Among the followers of these leaders who could have been so determined as the Prophet.<sup>3</sup>

## **3. Inviting the Arabs' great story-teller**

Being extremely astonished by the Quran's spiritual attraction, the foes of Islam assumed that people were attracted by the verses of the Quran because they contained ancient mythology.

For this reason, they invited Nasr Ibn Harith, the great Arab story-teller, to recite for people some stories related to the kings of Iran and Iraq so in this way they could stop the people from gathering round the Prophet. This plot was so ridiculous that the Quraysh became bored by listening to such stories.

## **4. Prohibiting the recitation of the Quran**

Another plot was to discourage people from listening to the Quran. This plot too was useless. People had become so attracted to hearing the Quran that they used to hide behind the Prophet's house at dawn to listen to the recitation of the Quran, when he was praying.

The Quraysh not only stopped people from reading the Quran, but made it hard for the people to meet the Prophet so much so that when Arab dignitaries, such as A'sha, and Tufail Ibn Omar entered Mecca to visit the Prophet, they were severely restrained from doing so by the Quraysh<sup>4</sup>.

## **5. The Economic sanctions**

Through an order published by the Quraysh, nobody was allowed to carry out any trade transactions with Bani Hashim or Muhammad's followers. For this reason, the Prophet had to lead a hard life in Shaib Abi Talib.

However, these sanctions were removed through the proceedings of some Quraysh leaders.

## **6. The plot to assassinate the Prophet**

Forty Quraysh youth from forty different tribes were appointed to attack the Prophet's house at night and cut him apart. But Allah, Who always protected His Apostle, let him know of the plot. The Prophet, commanded by Allah, asked Ali (as) to sleep in his bed and left Mecca for Medina. The Prophet's migration to Medina and the inclination of the tribes Aus and Khazraj towards Islam, provided Muslims with a sure place and led to the spread of Islamic troops to cooperate to defend the religion.

## **7. The Bloody conflicts**

The idolaters of the peninsula were frightened by the concentration of Muslims in Medina and by the establishment of an Islamic government. So they endeavored to put it out through bloody confrontations as soon as possible. Their bloody wars with Muslims at Badr, Uhud and Khandaq and Hunayn, with all their ups and downs, finally terminated in the supremacy of the Islamic military and belittled the idolaters in the peninsula.

## **8. The Prophet's demise**

The enemy's last wish was the Prophet's demise. They were under the assumption that the Prophet's end would also put an end to the Islamic movement for ever. To set off this crisis, two options could be available to the Muslims:

1. For the mental level of the Ummah to reach such a standard, as to be able to lead the newly-established Islamic movement and to protect it from any hazard, after the Prophet.

After the Prophet's demise, this condition unfortunately did not materialize we could not identify all the reasons for this.

However we could present the following remarks:

The wide-ranging and comprehensive revolution in the heart of a nation would not occur within one or, two days, nor a year or ten years. Within a short time this could not happen at all. Rather, in order to keep the very foundation of the revolution intact, a capable individual or individuals would be required to

handle the affairs of the nation after the demise of the revolution leader, and who could keep the nation safe and sound against poisonous indoctrinations until the older generation could pass and the new generations could come forth with the Islamic etiquette.

If this did not occur, then a great number of Muslims would withdraw from their ideology as soon as the founder of the revolution passes away.

Besides, out of all divine movements, Islam possessed another trait which made it urgent for such capable individuals to exist:

Islam found its way among the most retarded and backward nations of the world who were living in pure depravity. Out of religious traditions they were only familiar with the Hajj ceremony which they had inherited from their ancestors (and that too mixed with superstitions). Neither Musa<sup>1</sup> teachings, nor Christ's instructions had penetrated their land and the majority of the Hijaz population was deprived of such religious teachings. On the other hand, they were under the influence of the customs of the age of Ignorance.

The religious reform in its initial state, might not look difficult among such nations.

However, its continuity among people whose spirits are filled with negativity, is quite difficult. Such a continuity needs persistent care so that such nations do not go astray.

The distressing and depressing events of the wars of Uhud and Hunain in which the combatants left the Prophet alone on the arena, showed there were few genuine Muslims who wanted to sacrifice everything for the Islamic movement, and that the members of the community had not mentally progressed to the stage where they could be left guideless.

We see that after the Prophet's demise, such an Ummah divided themselves into seventy three sects.

From what was said above we can now understand that the Islamic Ummah, after the Prophet's demise, had not mentally reached the stage to be able to undo the enemy's plots for the complete annihilation of Islam. So there should have been another option to which we will refer to.

**2.** For the Islamic movement to continue, the easiest way is to elect a person for the leadership who is as firm in his faith as the Prophet so that he can lead the Ummah with prosperity.

This is the same issue which is raised by Shiism, and there are numerous historical documents which attest to the fact that the Prophet of Islam, on his return from the farewell pilgrimage [Hajjul Wida], on the 18th of Zihajjah, with Allah's assistance, solved this problem, and through the appointment of his successor ensured the continuity of the Islamic revolution. This event took place in the following way: in the tenth year of Hijra, the Prophet headed for Mecca to instruct the Hajj ceremonies. This year, his Hajj ceremony coincided with the last year of his fruitful life; for this reason, it is called "Hajjul Wida" [farewell Hajj]. Historians tell us more than one hundred and twenty thousand pilgrims accompanied the Prophet

in this religious ceremony.

When the ceremony was over, the great prophet of Islam headed for Medina. A great number of people accompanied him. The caravan arrived at a desert, called Ghadir Khum located three miles away from Jahfah. Suddenly the angel of revelation ordered the Prophet to stop. Subsequently, the Prophet ordered the caravan members to stop their movement in a desert on an extremely hot day which puzzled people greatly. They were whispering:

A command is going to be issued by God and the significance of the command is so great that people are ordered to stop their movement under such harsh conditions.

God's command to the Prophet was issued through the following Quranic verse:

﴿ يَا أَيُّهَا الرَّسُولُ بَلِّغْ مَا أُنزِلَ إِلَيْكَ مِنْ رَبِّكَ وَإِنْ لَمْ تَفْعَلْ فَمَا بَلَغْتَ رِسَالَتَهُ وَاللَّهُ يَعْصِمُكَ مِنَ النَّاسِ ﴾

***“O Apostle! Deliver what has been revealed to you from your Lord; and if you do it not, then you have not delivered His message. Allah will protect you from the people”<sup>5</sup>.***

Considering the content of the verse, we will find out the following points:

Firstly, Allah's command to the Prophet to announce such a divine message was so great that if the Prophet had not announced it immediately he would not have completed his prophetic task properly.

As we will find out later, his prophetic mission was completed.

In other words, by the expression “ what has been revealed unto you” could not have been meant the collection of the Quranic verses or the Islamic commands because of the fact that if he had not announced the divine commands, he would not have accomplished his prophetic mission, and such an obvious act would not have needed the revelation of a verse. Rather the content of such a verse was the revealing of a specific issue whose announcement was a complement of his prophethood, and without such an announcement his prophethood would not have been completed.

Thus, the content of such a mission must have been one of the significant Islamic principles which was in harmony with the other Islamic principles. Secondly, the Prophet's calculation showed to him that he might be exposed to harm from the people. In order to strengthen the Prophet's determination, Allah declares:

والله يعصمك من الناس

***“Allah will protect you from the people's harm”.***

Now, we should find out which one of the probabilities<sup>6</sup> which the Islamic interpreters have assumed regarding the subject of the Prophet's mission comes closer to the above verse.

All Shiite narrators and thirty<sup>7</sup> Sunnite narrators believe that this verse was revealed to the Prophet on Ghadir Khum, i.e., the day Allah missioned the Prophet to introduce Ali (as) to the Ummah as “the head of believers”.

The Imam's supremacy over the Ummah was considered so important that the Prophet's mission would have been incomplete if he had not announced his successor.

And the Prophet was right to fear the situation because the appointment of Ali as his successor when he was not older than thirty three while others were much older, was extremely hard and problematic<sup>8</sup>. Besides many people, whose relatives were now among the Muslims, were killed in the wars by Ali (as).

Naturally, his government would not be easily accepted by their relatives. Furthermore, Ali was the Prophet's cousin and son-in-law and his appointment as the Prophet's successor would be reckoned as prejudice by the short-sighted people, whose number is not few in any community.

But despite these unfavorable conditions, Allah had determined to appoint a successor for the Prophet so that the universal movement of Islam could be eternal.

Let us explain this historical event in some detail:

1. . Like Waraqa Ibn Noofl, who through the study of the Christian books, left idolatry and adopted Islam.
2. . Quran 52: 30–32.
3. . Sirah Ibn Hisham, vol. 2, p. 172.
4. . Sirah Ibne Hisham, vol. 1, PP. 386–410.
5. . Quran 5:67.
6. . In his great interpretation (vol. 3, p. 635), Fakhr Fazi has put forth ten probabilities for the content of the prophet's mission, while none of them besides lacking proper documentation, possess the two conditions mentioned in the verse and most of them are so insignificant that not announcing could have neither jeopardized the prophetic mission or could it have intimidated him. Let us refer to these probabilities:
  - 1) This verse is concerned with the stoning of male and female wrong-doers;
  - 2) This verse concerns the Jews' criticism of the prophet.
  - 3) When the Holy Quran warned the prophet's wives that if they prefer the worldly ornaments, the prophet is ready to divorce them. The prophet's worry was that they would choose the worldly ornaments;
  - 4) This verse is related to Zayd, the prophet's step-son, whose wife the prophet had to marry due to Allah's command;
  - 5) This verse relates to the prophet's invitation to people and to the hypocrites to participate in Holy wars;
  - 6) This verse concerns the prophet's silence as to the criticism of idols;
  - 7) This verse was revealed to the prophet at the time of Hajj Al-Wida while he was performing the Hajj ceremony.
  - 8) This verse was revealed to the prophet to boost his morale because he feared the Quraysh, Jews and Christians.
  - 9) During one of the Holy wars, while the prophet was resting under a tree, an Arab was getting ready to attack the prophet with a drawn sword, asking the prophet: who can now protect you against my sword?  
The prophet replied: At this moment, the enemy was filled with fear and anxiety and started to retreat when he stuck a tree and broke his head.  
It was at that moment that this verse was revealed to the prophet:

﴿والله يعصمك من الناس﴾

The content of this verse, however, is not in harmony with some of the above-mentioned probabilities. Some of them are in harmony with the event of Ghadir.

7. . Allamah Amini has mentioned the names of these thirty individuals in his extraordinary work called Al-Ghadir (vol 1/pp. 196-209). Among them are Tabari, Abu Naeem Isphahani, Ibn 'Asâkir, Abu Ishaq Hamvini and Jalal Al-Din Siuti. These names have been mentioned earlier by Ibn Abbas, Abu Saeed Khadri and Bara Ibn Aazeb.

8. . Especially among the Arab nation, among whom it was customary to have their elders as leaders and the young were not given a chance under the pretext that they were raw and inexperienced. Thus, when the prophet appointed Attab ibn Usayd as the governor of Mecca and Usamah as the troop general, he was severely criticized by his followers. However, they ignored the fact that Ali was different from others and that he had achieved a sublime position in the light of Allah's assistance. A position which saved him from any errors and constantly protected him by the unknown World.

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