

Chapter 6: Childhood of The Prophet

History tells us that the life of the Prophet, the noble guide of the Muslims, was replete with a chain of wonderful events from his very childhood upto the time when he was entrusted with the prophetic mission and all these events had an aspect of greatness. On the whole these events testify that the life of the Prophet was not a usual one.

As regards the explanation of these events the writers are divided into two groups, the materialists and a number of orientalists.

1. The materialist scholars who look at the world from the material point of view and consider the organisation of existence as confined within the four walls of matter and believe that all the phenomena are material and dependent upon physical causes do not attach any importance to these events and even though they may be supported by a very strong authority, they do not pay any heed to them.

The reason for such an attitude on their part is that according to the principles of materialism the occurrence of such events is impossible. As and when, therefore, they observe such happenings recorded in history they adjudge them to be the offspring of the imagination, love and devotion of the followers of the particular religion.

2. There is also a group of the orientalists, who apparently present themselves to be theists and godly persons and express belief in the supernatural, but, on account of weakness of their faith, their pride about their knowledge and predominance of materialism over their thoughts, while analysing events, follow the principles of materialism.

We frequently come across this sentence in their discourses "Prophethood is the state of being a human genius. A Prophet is a social genius who illuminates the path of life of human beings with his brilliant ideas etc.... "

Discourses of this type originate from a sense of materialistic thinking which considers all religions to be the outcome of human reflection, although the doctrinal scholars have proved, while discussing 'general prophethood', that prophethood is a divine gift which is the source of spiritual inspirations and

connections, and, unless there is a diffusion from the side of the Almighty, not the slightest benefit can be derived by this side (i.e. by the Prophets).

However, as the Christian orientalist looks at these matters from the materialistic point of view and wishes to measure all events in accordance with the scientific principles, which have been discovered through tests and expert meets, he subjects to criticism all those events which have a supernatural aspect and denies their genuineness.

Worshippers of Allah

These are the people who believe that the properties and structure of the material world are under the management of another world and another power (the world of solitude and metaphysics) is responsible for the order of the physical world.

In other words the material world is not free and independent and all its fixed rules and natural and scientific laws are inspired by another world viz. the Will of the Creator which surrounds all things that exist. It is He who has created matter and enforced sound laws amongst its ingredients and erected it on the basis of a chain of natural and scientific principles.

Along with believing in the scientific laws and whole heartedly accepting the statements of scholars about the connections of physical beings upto the extent to which they have been substantiated by science, the people belonging to this group also believe that these scientific rules and principles and the wonderful system of the material world are connected with another organization, all parts of which revolve according to the Will of that High Being.

Furthermore, they do not consider these scientific laws to be permanent and unalterable and believe that watchful Power can change them at any time it likes, in order to achieve some special object. It is competent to do so and (not only competent but) has actually done this many times for such aims and objects as it has had in view.

They say that supernatural and surprising acts of the Prophets which do not accord with the natural laws have been performed through this channel. These people do not permit themselves unduly to reject or doubt what they come across in the Holy Qur'an and in the Hadith as well as in authentic and reliable history hooks merely on the ground that it does not conform With the standards of nature and scientific laws.

Now we mention two events from the mysterious and wonderful life history of the Holy Prophet relating to his childhood and when this narrative is kept in view no room is left for any improbability or doubt about them.

1. The historians have quoted Halimah as saying: "When I assumed responsibility for bringing up the new-born child of Aminah I decided to feed the infant with my milk in the same assembly and in the

presence of his mother. So I put into his mouth my left breast which contained milk, but the child was more inclined to my right breast.

However, I did not have any milk in my right breast since I had given birth to my first-born. The insistence of the child made me put my milkless right breast in his mouth, and, as soon as he began sucking it, its dry mammary glands were filled with milk and this incident made all those present wonder. [1](#)

2. She also says "From the day I took Muhammad to my house I became all the more prosperous and my wealth and herd increased". [2](#)

Undoubtedly in these matters the judgement of materialists and their followers differs from that of the persons who worship Allah, although none of them has observed these events and the only evidence for them is the statement of the nurse of the Holy Prophet. As those who follow materialistic principles cannot explain such incidents through natural sciences, they immediately say that these events are the creation of imagination.

If they are very much respectful they say that the Prophet of Islam did not stand in need of such miracles. There is no doubt about the fact that the Prophet did not stand in need of these miracles, but not standing in need of something is a matter totally different from a judgement on its being true or false.

However, a godly person, who considers the organism of nature to be conquered and subdued by the Will of the Creator of the world and believes that the entire Universe including the smallest being (viz. atom) and the biggest phenomenon (viz. the Milky Way) rotates according to His plan and control. After studying these events and their supporting evidence, he looks at all these events with due respect and, even if he is not satisfied, he does not reject them outright.

We come across a similar event in the Holy Qur'an regarding Maryam (mother of Prophet 'Isa) about whom it has been said:

When the time for Maryam, being delivered of the child, drew near she lay down by the trunk of a palm-tree and (on account of throes of childbirth, loneliness and fear of accusations) she wished to Allah that she might die. At this moment she heard a voice saying, "Do not despair. Your Lord has provided a brook that runs at your feet and if you shake the trunk of this (withered up) palm tree, it will drop fresh ripe dates in your lap. (Surah Maryam, 19:24 - 25).

Although there is a great difference between Maryam and Halimah from the point of view of their respective positions and virtues, but a similar difference also exists between the two new-born babes. And if the personal merit and excellence of Maryam made her an object of Divine blessings it is also possible that the position and rank which this infant (i.e. Muhammad) was to acquire later might have made his nurse worthy of Allah's bounties.

We also learn something more about Maryam from the Holy Qur'an

Her chastity and piety had elevated her so much that whenever Zakariyah visited her place of worship, he found heavenly food there, and when he asked her from where that food had come, she used to say that it had come from Allah. (Surah Ale Imran, 3: 32)

On this basis we should not doubt the correctness of such miracles or consider them to be impossible.

Five Years In The Desert

The Holy Prophet spent five years amongst Bani Sa'd tribe and was sufficiently grown up. During this period Halimah took him to his mother twice or thrice and eventually made him over to her.

The first time that Halimah took him to his mother was when his suckling period was over. She, however, insisted on her giving him back to her. The reason for her insistence was that this child had become a source of bounties and blessings for her, and the reason why his mother acceded to her request was that cholera had broken out in Makkah at that time.

The second time that she took him to Nakkah was when a group of Ethiopian clergymen came to the Hijaz and saw Muhammad amidst the tribe of Bani Sa'd. They observed that all the signs of the Prophet who was to come after Prophet 'Isa, as given in the Heavenly Books, were found in this child.

They, therefore, decided to take hold of him, in whatever manner it might be possible, and to take him to Ethiopia, so that the honour of having the Prophet might fall to the share of that country.³

This is not at all unlikely, because, as clearly mentioned in the Holy Qur'an, the signs of the Prophet of Islam had been narrated in the Injeel. It was, therefore, perfectly in order that the sages of that time should have identified the person in whom those signs were present. The Holy Qur'an says in this regard:

And of 'Isa, who said to the Israelites: "I have been sent to you by Allah to confirm the Taurat already revealed and to give news of an apostle who will come after me. His name is Ahmad". Yet when he (the Prophet about whom 'Isa had foretold), came to them with all the signs and proofs to support his truthfulness), they said: "This is plain magic ". (Surah al-Saff, 61 6).

There are other verses also which show that the signs of the Prophet of Islam were clearly described in the Heavenly Books and the earlier peoples were aware of them.⁴

¹. Biharul Anwar, vol. XV, page 345 quoted from Fazatil-i Waqidi.

². Manaqib-i Ibn Shehr Ashob, vol. I, page 24.

³. Seerah-i Ibn Hisham, vol. I, page 167.

⁴. Vide Surah al-A'raf, 7: 157.

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