

Poverty and its consequences

Ali looked at the world intently. He looked at every aspect of it without any exception. He kept the individual as well as the collective rights of the people in mind and did not ignore anything. He invited the people to look at the beauty of the world and the wonders of creation and simultaneously informed the individuals as well as the society of their rights so that they might acquire the greatest bliss and prosperity. He explained the rights of the individuals and the society so that the individuals should help one another by mutual co-operation and endeavour for the permanence and prosperity of the society and may benefit from it in their individual capacity.

Man is composed of three things viz. spirit, body and sentiments. Body is the material part of man. It also enjoys a right which must be respected.

Ali whose efforts were centred on the refinement of the self and good morals also endeavoured to lay the foundation of the society on equity and justice and to enact just laws for the material and worldly life of man.

It was also the object of Ali to guide the people to the purity of heart and the acquisition of good conduct, and to nurture and train their conscience in such a way that they might shun bad habits of their own accord and adorn themselves with good qualities. However, it is not possible to develop good habits until one has food to eat and dress to wear and the people cannot acquire means of livelihood until justice prevails. Hence the program of reformation and refinement should commence with the provision of necessities of life like food, dress etc. The people can become interested in the refinement of self and good morals only after these necessities have been provided. This was the object of desire of Ali before as well as after he attained to caliphate.

How can a labourer, who works hard throughout the day, enjoy the sceneries of the world and ponder over the signs of the Might of God when he does not get his full wages and is exploited by the profiteers and the money-lenders? How can he become inclined to virtues and good morals when he is fed up with his very life?

How can those helpless persons understand the meaning of refinement of self who weep when whipped by their rulers and consider their lives useless – whose very lives are owned by the rulers, who are

expected to serve and assist them but who actually exploit them?

There are many indigent persons who do not possess even a penny. However, the collector of revenue confiscates whatever property they possess so as to fill the treasures of the pleasure loving rulers. They do not have even a loaf of bread to eat and their lives and property are also not safe. However, if they utter even a word against the rulers their very lives become subjected to trouble. How can such poor people reflect over the secrets and mysteries of the universe and make efforts to refine their conduct? When indigence has estranged a person from every goodness and has destroyed his peace of mind, and he has lost interest in everything, and tyrants have tied his hands and feet, and it is not at all possible for him to regain freedom, how is it possible for him to be truthful, pure-hearted and virtuous, and to be free from envy and grudge, and not to deviate from the path of goodness and piety?

When hunger has inflamed a fire in the heart of a person which consumes every drop of his blood and eliminates his faith, how can he enjoy life, and believe in the justice of the people, sympathize with his brothers, and live kindly with his kinsmen and relatives?

How can a person love others when his hands and feet are tied with inferiority complex and servitude, and when he has no interest left in life and considers it to be useless?

A person who does not have anything to eat cannot possess the qualities of goodness and piety, because food is the first support for every class and the means of peace of mind. It is food which enables a person to reflect, and makes him adopt good morals, and show good behaviour towards others.

Freedom from indigence is the thing which extricates man from abjectness and affliction and elevates him to the top of prosperity. Indigence slackens human sentiments. Poor and helpless persons consider themselves to be strangers in their own city. They feel that their city is not their city and their relatives are not their relatives and they themselves are good-for-nothing.

As the indigent and needy persons do not consider themselves to be fit for good deeds and excellent qualities, they can get rid of this inferiority complex only when they become safe from poverty. Only at that time can they believe that they too can become good citizens and can free their hearts from the feelings of envy and grudge.

There were some hypocrites who used to say that the only means of maintaining law and order was that the people should remain divided into two groups – those who were satiated, and those who were hungry. According to them it was not necessary for the satiated to submit before the exigencies of life – the life which is loved by all – nor was it necessary for them to desire any change in their own condition or that of others. They wanted that status might be maintained in the world. According to these hypocrites the hungry were also not entitled to claim their usurped right nor could they cry for the loaf which had been snatched away from them and placed on the dinner table of the capitalists.

If a hungry person claimed his rights and protested against bread being pulled out of the mouth of his children, he was styled to be an infidel and a mischief-monger, who disturbed the people leading a peaceful life.

These hypocrites resorted to new devices every now and then to protect the means of their lives of enjoyment and pleasure and to keep the indigent persons enslaved. They used various weapons in the remote as well as the near past, to achieve these ends. Their main weapon was the wrong interpretation of the religious orders. This policy has not been peculiar to the Muslims. It has been adopted by all hypocrites claiming to profess Buddhism, Judaism, Christianity or Islam.

The most simple weapon, of which the hypocrites took advantage, was their claim that the Prophets have invited the people to abstemiousness, insisted upon forsaking worldly pleasures and affluence, preferred indigence and poverty, and encouraged the life of contentment and inaction instead of making any effort. [1](#)

The hypocrites give much publicity to their abovementioned views and desire that the common man should accept them as correct, so that others may remain deprived, and they themselves may continue to be rich and may enjoy the pleasures of life. It is necessary that to counteract their false propaganda we should clarify the true position. It is only by doing so that we can find out the foundation on which the policies of Ali and the orders given by him were based.

It is true that the world was removed from under the feet of Muhammad and spread under the feet of others. All the worldly pleasures and adornments were prohibited for him. He was an extremely abstemious person. He never ate his fill and whatever food he ate was not very rich. He left the world in the manner as mentioned by Abu Dharr: "The Prophet never ate two kinds of food during one day. When he ate dates he did not eat bread. Often it so happened that food was not cooked in his house for many months consecutively".

It is also true that Ali considered only two sheets of cloth to be sufficient for himself and also contented himself with only two loaves of bread per day. His house also resembled the house of the poor people. The instances of his abstemiousness and contentment are numerous and so well known that it is not necessary to recount them here.

It is also true that his companions like Abu Dharr contented himself with dry barley bread. He as well as the members of his family ate such bread and were quite happy and contented with it.

All these things are true and correct. However, there is something else also which is also correct. All of them were responsible for the education and guidance of the people and held the high office of 'guide' and 'leader'. Realizing the responsibility attached to their office they considered a very small quantity of food and other necessities to be sufficient for themselves and remained contented. However, every person cannot be like them and cannot endure the hardships which were endured by them, nor can that light, which illuminated their hearts and made them active, kindle in every heart. Furthermore, they were

so much concerned about the welfare of their followers that they did not pay much heed to their own food, dress and comfort. [2](#)

Those who have studied the lives of these leaders of the world, must have realized in the very first instance that they were the standard-bearers of revolution, and their objects were associated with the revolution. Whatever they did was for the welfare of the people and they did it with the help of the people. In order to make the revolution successful they adopted the methods which were suited to their country. Some of the leaders of the revolution were those who were killed, for example Ali son of Abu Talib and some were those, whom the enemies could do no harm, for example the Prophet Muhammad.

It was not possible for the leaders of the revolution to live a life of luxury and pleasure, because the nature of the revolution did not permit them to do so. Peace of mind is a pre-requisite for a life of pleasure and such peace of mind was not enjoyed by these leaders.

The second thing is this that the first target of the enemies of revolution is the leader of the revolution. Until and unless the revolution succeeds, his life remains constantly in danger, and he remains subjected to oppression and persecution. Now how can it be possible for a man, whose life is constantly in danger, to enjoy the worldly bounties and pleasures? This can be possible for him only if his revolution succeeds or he abandons the revolution.

However, it is also a fact that the leaders of the revolution were free to lead the type of life they liked and to be contented with such necessities of life as they considered to be sufficient. None could object to their selecting or not selecting a particular thing for themselves. They had themselves adopted the life of abstemiousness and contentment, but had not compelled others to adopt it.

Besides all other things, was Jesus Christ not accused by the Romans of instigating the people to rise against Kaiser, and stopping them from paying him the taxes, as a consequence of which he (Christ) was tried and sentenced to death?

Why did Christ stop the people from paying the taxes to the Kaiser? Was it not on account of the bread which Kaiser and his officials snatched away from the indigent, the hungry and the orphans? Did not the Jewish priests of Jerusalem tell the representative of Kaiser in order to support the Kaiser's system of government according to which the poor were exploited and the capitalists became rich that if he did not crucify Jesus Christ he was not a friend of the Kaiser?

It was Muhammad, the brother of Christ, who rose against the oppressive society of that time, wherein there was a great friction between the oppressors and the oppressed. The Qur'an addresses the people through him in these words:

“.. Walk on the earth and eat and drink what has been provided to you by God.” (67: 15)

Here the people have been directed to eat and drink because life depends on these acts. This direction has been given to all the people and not to a particular class. Every person is entitled to work and earn

his livelihood.

On another occasion it has been said:

“Man should have a look on his food, We sent rains from the heavens, split the earth, sowed the seeds in it and made the vine and sugar-cane and olive and date trees grow from it. We created green gardens and fresh fruits”. (80:24–31)

There is a hadith of the Prophet wherein he has been reported to have said: “There are three things in which the people have equal shares – water, vegetation and fire”.

Every person has an equal share in the water which God sends down from above, or lets flow on the earth. However, if a person digs a canal to procure water or stocks water, others are not entitled to take that water from him, because he has a prior right over it. Similarly the vegetation, which grows naturally and none is entitled to appropriate it to himself to the exclusion of others. Similarly if a person kindles fire he cannot deprive another person of it, because if someone lights his lamp with that fire it will not diminish.

During the age of ignorance it was the custom that the chief or the ruler appropriated to himself any piece of land he liked for grazing his camels and other animals. The animals belonging to other persons were not permitted to enter or graze in that area. His own animals could, however, graze in the common land utilized by all other people. This was one of the oppressive methods which were adopted during that age. The Prophet abolished this tyrannical custom along with many others.

The Prophet paid full wages to the labourers and also directed others to follow his example so that there might not remain any needy and poor person in the society. As and when revenue money was received by him from some place he distributed the share of his companions amongst them in the first instance and gave his daughter Fatima her share afterwards. His intention in doing so was that the needs of the common people should be met first.

We do not wish to dilate upon here on the subject of the attitude of Muhammad in the matter of wealth and indigence. We have already mentioned in detail in a previous chapter how Islam has encouraged the people to do useful work so that no needy person may remain in the society so much so that in Islam a useful work is more commendable than recommended prayers and fasting. Prophet Muhammad who did not like poverty and dependence on others has been reported to have said: “It is likely that indigence may change into blasphemy”.

In a subsequent chapter we shall explain how the far-sighted Prophet of Islam understood innumerable secrets and mysteries related to the society and how he encouraged the people to make their lives happy.

Abu Dharr Ghaffari was an abstemious and contented person who did not care much for worldly comforts. Although he chose to lead an insipid life, he put up a severe and serious fight against

indigence, and laid down his life while campaigning in support of the rights of the people. The following sentence uttered by him is very attractive: “When indigence proceeds to a city blasphemy requests for its company”.

The Umayyads and the latter rulers made their best endeavours for the continuance of their power and authority. To achieve this purpose they instigated their associates and employees to narrate forged traditions attributing them to the Prophet so that they might be helpful for exploiting the people and keeping them enslaved.³ Their proteges therefore coined and narrated

many new traditions wherein the people were advised to remain patient, bear the oppression by the rulers and carry out their orders indisputably.

The second question is that if these remarks of the Prophet are genuine from the historical point of view why did the companions acted against them at the time of his death when there was a dispute about the caliphate, succession and inheritance?

Furthermore, why were these traditions not put forth and the people advised to remain patient when there was a dispute about those who declined to pay zakat, being declared apostates or not, and also when the caliph Uthman was attacked and the people wanted to kill him?

Ayesha was the favourite wife of the Prophet and remembered many traditions by heart. Talha and Zubayr were also the close companions of the Prophet and had been given the good tidings that they would go to Paradise. Why did these persons not recollect these traditions and why did they revolt against Ali?

Furthermore the traditions are directly opposed to many Quranic verses and authentic traditions and they have no relationship with the nature of the Prophet and Islamic philosophy. For example: It has been said in Surah al-Baqarah:

“Fight in the path of God and remember that He is the Hearer, the Knower”. (2:244)

In Surah al-Ma'ida the Qur'an says:

“The punishment for those who fight against the Prophet of God and create mischief in the world is that they should be killed or hanged or their hands and feet should be cut off”. (5:33)

In Surah al-Mujadilah it is said:

“You will not see those who believe in God and the Day of Judgment befriending the enemies of God and His Prophet even though they may be their fathers, sons, brothers or kinsmen”. (58:22)

In Surah al-Mumtahinah it has been said:

“O you who believe! Do not befriend those who have become subjected to the wrath of God...”

(60: 13)

These are some Qur'anic verses which are clearly opposed to the aforesaid forged traditions. Now we quote below some traditions which are opposed to them.

Imam Muslim quotes from Abdullah son of Mas'ud on different authorities that the Prophet said: "Amongst the followers of the Prophets, who were appointed to the prophetic missions, they were their apostles and companions, who followed the traditions and orders of the Prophet concerned. These apostles and companions were succeeded by persons who said one thing and did another thing, and performed acts which were not allowed. Whoever fights against such persons with his hands, tongue or heart is a believer". (Sahih Muslim, Vol. 1)

Ahu Sa'id Khudri has been quoted to have said that he heard the Prophet saying: "Whoever sees such persons committing indecent acts should stop them with his hands. If he cannot stop them with his hands he should stop them with his tongue. And if he cannot do even that he should condemn them in his heart. And this is the lowest stage of faith". (Futuh al-Zahabiya)

In short whoever has studied the lives of the Prophets carefully knows that they disliked indigence and warned of Hell-fire those hypocrites, who invited the people towards poverty. If it had not been so the capitalists would not have been enemies of these prophets and the weak and helpless persons would not have gathered around them.

The sayings of the ancient sages of Arabia go to show that they knew well that the actions of a person in his individual capacity have a close relationship with the system of the society. They were well aware that the availability of the means of livelihood has a great effect on the purity of the disposition, morality and habits of man. The contentment which is commendable does not mean that man should do nothing and should be concerned only with self-indulgence, which brings about indigence, destroys good habits and eliminates faith.

It is also not right to say that man's entire attention should be directed towards the training of his soul and the body should be neglected, because obedience to law is not possible when one's belly is empty. It is only great men who remain patient like Abu Dharr, even if they are indigent, and every person does not possess the patience and perseverance which was peculiar to Abu Dharr.

According to Sa'adi of Shiraz the Prophet's remark: "Indigence is a matter of pride for man" refers to those people who were champions of the field of obedience to God and Divine pleasure and not to the poverty of those who wear the dress of righteous men and take food regularly at the expense of others. And the sentence: 'Contentment is an unlimited treasure' has not been uttered for the idle persons who do nothing. It has in fact been uttered with reference to those covetous wealthy persons and unjust rulers who are not contented with anything and are not satisfied even if all the bounties of the world are placed at their disposal.

The entire life of Ali was spent in improving the condition of the people and relieving them of need and indigence. As we shall explain later this was the very basis of his government. Ali himself was the greatest abstemious person, who was free from all worldly taints. However, he did not at all like that others too should remain contented with poverty. If it had not been so he would not have started a campaign against the rich and powerful persons, and against those who usurped the property acquired by them unlawfully, and distributed it amongst the poor and the needy.

Tha`labi narrates an incident in these words: "One day during my childhood I went to the ground of Rahba in Kufa. There I saw Ali standing on two heaps of gold and silver. Later he began distributing that wealth and distributed all of it. Then he returned home in such a condition that he did not take anything with himself. The same Ali who did not take anything out of the said wealth says addressing the people: "Remain busy for your worldly profit in the same way as if you had to stay in this world permanently".

Nothing was more important in the eyes of Ali than eliminating the indigence of the people. In this connection he has made an explicit statement which cannot be explained away in any other manner. He says: "If you continue to walk on the highway of truth the paths will welcome you and none of you will get involved in indigence".

Besides attacking the ways and manners followed by the Arabs during the age of ignorance he also criticized their dervish-like contentment. He says: "O Arabs! You lived in hard stones, drank turbid water and ate rotten food like the indigent persons".

Ali's words show that it was not that he disliked delicious food, fine clothes and a magnificent house, what he did not like was that he himself should lead a comfortable life whereas others might not be possessing those facilities. His explicit remarks show that it was his earnest desires that every person should have sufficient means of livelihood at his disposal. Ali was the leader of the people and it is the duty of a leader to lead as hard a life as his followers do, till indigence in the society is eliminated. When there is no indigent person left in the society the indigence of the leader too will necessarily come to an end.

His way of living will be similar to that of the other people, because failing that leadership and chiefdom will become meaningless, Ali says: "Should I content myself with this that people call me the Commander of the Faithful and that I should not participate with them in the matter of the abominable things of the time?" By the 'abominable things' he meant the hardship of poverty.

Ali did not allow his daughter to adorn herself with pearls as the daughters of many others were not in a position to adorn themselves in this manner. As has been mentioned in the foregoing pages he ordered her emphatically to return the pearl necklace to the treasury saying: "O daughter of the son of Abu Talib! Do not deviate from the right path. Do all the women of the Muhajirs and the Ansar adorn themselves on Eid day in this manner?" He said "all the women" and not "the women of the nobility".

When Ali attained to the caliphate the first thing which he did was this that he endeavoured to do away

with the poverty of the people. And this was what Ali ought to have done, because he knew fully well that though man has to suffer many hardships, indigence is the greatest calamity for him. It was he who uttered these words: "God has not involved man in any hardship which may be greater than indigence". This sentence shows firstly that he considered the removal of the indigence of the people to be absolutely necessary and secondly that he had made a perfectly correct assessment of the condition and circumstances of the people and the outcome thereof.

Some persons have praised indigence much and have invited the people towards it. However, their thinking is not correct. Ali campaigned against indigence in the same manner in which the Prophet and Abu Dharr Ghiffari, the great revolutionary and foremost among Ali's supporters, and the victim of the tyrant Ummayyads, campaigned against it.

The Prophet as well as Ali and Abu Dharr knew that indigence destroys every quality so much so that it becomes the cause of blasphemy on the part of the pious believers. It was for this reason that Ali fought against it on every occasion and humiliated those who invited the people towards it. According to the belief of Ali indigence makes a wise person deaf and dumb. It is on account of indigence that the inhabitants of the same city become strangers and even enemies of one another. There is no doubt about the fact that death is a great calamity but indigence is worse than death. Ali says: "Indigence is the greatest death".

This is the sentence which Ali uttered against indigence and against those who preached indigence which pulls down the edifice of their falsehood and deceit: "If indigence comes before me in the form of a human being I shall kill it".

In the eyes of Ali the human society is like a body which is not composed of antithetical elements nor its system based on discrimination in the matter of rights and liabilities, so that some persons may do whatever they like without there being anyone to restrain them, and others should be helpless without there being anyone to assist them.

In the society which was liked by Ali it was not permissible that one group should grow fat and the other should be reduced to a skeleton or that one group should work and the other group should reap the benefits.

Although Ali was a great spiritual person whose attention was always directed towards God there did not pass even a day when he might have been unmindful of the affairs of the people, or might have ignored even their most trivial matters, because he considered man to be the best specimen of the most excellent creation. He looked at the world and its inhabitants exactly in the same manner in which the Prophet looked at them.

The Qur'an says:

"We have made the night to serve as a dress and the day for earning livelihood". (78: 10-11)

He made this divine revelation the basis for centralizing his attention on the human society. He revived the social laws and remained busy in correcting and improving them so that a lucky and prosperous society might come into being. He utilized his sermons and recommendations on their proper occasions and informed the people of their duties and responsibilities.

Ali was most anxious to enforce equity and justice. His main object was that justice should be established. After he attained to the caliphate some persons came to congratulate him and found him busy in mending his shoes. He said to them: "If I cannot establish truth and annihilate falsehood these shoes of mine would be dearer to me than the rulership".

He always desired those pious persons, who were anxious for the Hereafter, to serve the public to gain the bounties of the next world. He said: "Only that person, who works for the welfare of the people, will be prosperous in the Hereafter. And the best things which can be done in connection with public welfare are these: to feed the hungry; to provide water to the thirsty; to provide dress to those who do not have it; to inform the people of their rights and duties; and to protect the rights of others".

One day the Commander of the Faithful paid a visit to one of his companions named 'Ala son of Ziad Harasi. When he saw how spacious his house was he said to him: "Of what use to you is the spaciousness of this house in this world, when you stand more in need of a spacious house in the Hereafter where you have to live eternally. Of course, if you also desire a spacious house in the Hereafter you should entertain guests in this house, behave well with your kinsmen and pay the rights of others on appropriate occasions. If you do so you will be successful in the next world".

While explaining the importance of fasting and prayers he said to Kumail son of Ziad: "O Kumail! It is not important that you should offer prayers, observe fast and pay Zakat. What is important is that you should offer prayers with a pure heart and in accordance with the desire of God".

Even before the Hereafter he was so anxious about the life of the people in this world that inspite of his being the caliph he went to the Bazars of Kufa as a matter of daily routine, stopped at every shop and said: "O merchants! Fear God. Seek proximity to the customers. Adorn yourselves with the forbearance. Don't swear. Don't tell lies. Avoid injustice. Be just to the oppressed and weigh and measure properly. Don't give the people lesser than their due. Don't spread corruption in the world".

Nauf Bukali has been reported to have said: "I went and saw the Commander of the Faithful in the Masjid of Kufa. I saluted him and he replied to the salutation. I said: "O Commander of the Faithful! Give me a piece of advice". He said: "Be good to the people and God will do good to you". I requested him to say something more. He said: "Nauf! If you wish to be with me on the Day of Judgment you must not help the oppressors".

In short the central point of the policy of Ali was service of mankind, meeting their needs and elimination of injustice. Once the Prophet looked at him and said: "O Ali! God has adorned you with an adornment which is the best adornment in His eyes. He has endowed you with love for the weak. May it be pleasing

to you that they should be your followers and happy and satisfied on account of your being their Imam”.

1. As much has been said about the excellence of the renouncement of the world and piety it is possible that some persons may think that the acquisition of worldly things is totally prohibited in Islam. It is, therefore, necessary to clarify that there are different stages of piety and the duties and responsibilities of the Prophets, saints and the other chosen servants of God are also different from the common people. So far as the common people are concerned the definition and the limits of piety recommended to them have also been specified clearly. Imam Ali said: “The essence of piety has been mentioned in the Qur’an in two sentences. Almighty God has said: “You may not grieve for what you have missed, nor rejoice in what God has given you” (57:23). By following this verse one attains perfect piety”. God says: “O you who believe! Do not make unlawful for yourselves the things which God has made lawful for you, and do not transgress the limits. God does not like those who transgress” (5:87). God also says: “(O Prophet!) Ask them as to who has made unlawful the ornamental things and the pure edibles which God has created for his slaves ?” (7:32) The verses quoted above go to show that just as it is not permissible to treat lawful the things which God has declared unlawful, it is not permissible to treat unlawful – the pure things and means of adornment declared lawful by God, and it is also not allowed to make a vow not to use lawful things. Such a vow is not enforceable in religious law. Imam Ali says: “Piety in the world means diminishing one’s desire, thanking God for His blessings and abstaining from things made unlawful by God”. (Jame` al-Sa`adat) Ali says: “Piety in the world does not mean that property should be destroyed or lawful things should be treated to be unlawful. On the contrary it means that you should not depend more on the worldly things which you possess as compared with that which is with God”. (Jame' al-Sa'adat)

Ali also says: “If one acquires possession of everything on earth and his object by doing so is to acquire the pleasure of God he is a pious person, and if he forsakes the entire world but his object in doing so is not divine pleasure, he is not pious”.

Someone asked Imam Ali: “What is piety?” He replied: “To avoid unlawful things of the world”. In short the goodness or badness of worldly things depends on one’s intention. If the intention is good and the worldly things are acquired to serve as means of happiness in the Hereafter, one’s action is praiseworthy, otherwise it deserves to be condemned.

2. In order to keep the morals and mentality of the indigent persons high the representatives of the Islamic government have been directed to lead simple lives. They should keep themselves at the level of the indigent and associate freely with them as was the method of the Prophet.

It has been reported in connection with the ways and manners of the Prophet that he said: “I shall not abandon five things till my death viz. taking meals along with the slaves, sitting on earth, milking the sheep with my own hands, wearing woolen clothes, and saluting the children, so that it should become a general tradition after me”.

Imam Ali has said: “God has made me the Imam of the people and has made it obligatory for me to reduce my personal comfort and food to such an extent that my standard of living should become equal to that of the indigent, so that the indigent may follow the example of my way of life, and the rich may not become rebellious on account of their wealth”.

3. Sometimes Bani Umayyah themselves coined such traditions and at other times this task was performed for them by their associate or paid ulema. We give below some examples of such forged traditions and baseless anecdotes: Imam Bukhari has quoted from Abdullah ibn Umar as below from different authorities:

The Prophet said: “After me you will soon be faced with distinction without a difference and undesirable acts”. The companions enquired: “O Prophet of God! What are your orders for us (in such circumstances)”. The Prophet replied: “Pay those rulers their rights and seek your own rights from God” (Sahih Bukhari vol.8).

He has also quoted Ibn Abbas as having said: The Prophet said: “If a person observes something from his king which he abhors, he should observe patience, because whoever separates from the nation even to the extent of a span will die the death of ignorance”. (Sahih Bukhari vol.8)

Bukhari has reported on different authorities from Alqama bin Wail Hazrami as having said: “Muslim bin Zaid Jo’fi asked the Prophet: “O Prophet of God! What are your orders in the event of some persons becoming our rulers, who demand their rights from us but do not pay our rights? The Prophet turned away his face from him. Muslim repeated his question. The Prophet turned away his face from him once again. Muslim asked the same question for the third time. Thereupon Ash’ath bin Qais pulled him and the Prophet replied: “You must bear what they say. Their responsibilities rest with them and your

responsibilities rest with you". (Sahih Bukhari vol.2, page 119)

Bukhari has quoted Ajrafa as having said that he heard the Prophet saying: "Very soon untoward things will happen. If any person wants to create a split in the nation strike him with a sword, whatever the case maybe". (Sahih Bukhari Vol.2, p.211)

Bukhari has also reported Abu Sa'id Khudari as saying that the Prophet said: "When oath of allegiance for two caliphs has taken place kill the one for whom the oath has been taken later". (Sahih Bukhari, vol.2, p. 122)

There are numerous traditions on the subject and the purport of all of them is this that the Muslims must remain obedient to the government of the time and should not complain against the king however tyrannical he may be, because by doing so that will create split and differences among the Muslims.

The gist of all these traditions is given in the following Hadith: "Disturbances will appear soon. During these disturbances one who is sitting will be in a better position than the one who is standing, and the one who is standing will be in a better position than the one who is walking, and one who is walking will be in a better position than the one who is running. And if at that time a person finds a place of refuge he should go into it". (Musnad Imam Ahmad, vol.2, page 282)

The above quoted traditions show that fearing split amongst his followers the Prophet insisted upon their remaining faithful to their rulers even though they might be guilty of unlawful acts. This would mean that the Prophet was anxious that the unity of the Muslims should be maintained at all cost even though the religion brought by him was destroyed. In that case the first question which arises is this that if the Prophet was so anxious for the unity of the Muslims that he preferred it even to the religion of Islam why did he create a split among the polytheist Arabs by inviting them to Islam? The Arabs were united on the point of polytheism and idol-worship, but he created a rift among them by introducing a new religion. He broke their idols and trampled upon their beliefs although these were the things which they loved most.

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