

Sinlessness of Prophets

“And We sent not an apostle but to be obeyed according to the will of God”. (Qur’an, 4:64)

God sent so many prophets and apostles to lead their people on right path. Some of them were sent to a small group; others to large communities or countries. In the end the Prophet of Islam was sent to the whole mankind.

The prophets were to be obeyed; their examples were to be followed. It required a very high degree of respect and prestige in the eyes of the would be followers. But could a prophet command a genuine respect if his own character was not without blemish? How could his community believe that his claim of prophethood was based on truth? After all, a man who had committed sins in past, could again commit another sin – that of false pretension. So, to carry on the work of God, the prophets must have been sinless, and free from mistakes.

This capability to refrain from sins is called ‘Ismat’ in Islam. And the Muslims accept that all the prophets were sinless.

Of course, some stories are told about some of the prophets which are not edifying, to say the least. But we know how the passage of time starts legends about historical personalities; and how human mind works out the details; and how every generation wants to justify its own morality (perverted or otherwise) by pretending that it is what was done by more wise men (in this case, the prophets). As a result of this mental exercise, the followers succeed in creating a not-very-lovely picture of their prophets – just to satisfy their own troubled conscience.

For example, this week a certain ‘man of religion’ (who lives in a country which has just now legalized a perverted sexual act) did suggest that his prophet also might have indulged in that kind of perversion. He did not mind tarnishing the name of his prophet if this could ease the burden of shame and guilt from his conscience!

So, be careful when you are told stories of sins of other prophets. Human nature does not change. People, even the followers, have been attributing nasty behaviors to the prophets of God since a very

very long time.

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