

The Right of Companionship

In those days, Kufa was the Capital and Centre of the Islamic Government. All eyes of the vast and wide Muslim nation (with the exception of Syria) were fixed at this city waiting as to what orders were being issued and what decisions taken.

Outside the City two gentlemen, a Muslim and the other from People of the Book (Jew, Christian or Zoroastrian) met on the road one day. The Muslim was going to Kufa and the other gentlemen to another place nearby. Since a part of their journey was common, they decided to travel together.

On the way, they talked and talked on various topics of mutual interest and ultimately arrived at the point where their paths separated. The non-Muslim was surprised to see that his Muslim companion did not take the path leading to Kufa but accompanied him on the other path, where he was going. He asked:

"Well, didn't you say you were going to Kufa?" "Yes"

"Then why are you coming this way? The other one is the path to Kufa'."

"I know. I want to walk a few steps with you

to see you off. Because our Prophet has said,

` Whenever two persons travel together on the same path, they establish reciprocal rights upon each other. Now you have got a right upon me and for the sake of that right of yours I wish to walk a few steps with you, and then, of course, I shall return unto my own path."

"Oh! Such an authority and power which is wielded among people in such a perfect way by your Prophet, and the amazing speed with which his religion has spread in the world, must be, I am sure, because of his such noble character."

The surprise and admiration of these gentlemen reached its peak when he learnt afterwards that his Muslim friend was Ali bin Abi-Talib, the Caliph of that time. Soon after he embraced Islam and was

counted among the most devout and self-sacrificing companions of Ali.

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