Al-Islam.org
Ahlul Bayt Digital Islamic Library Project
Published on *Al-Islam.org* (https://www.al-islam.org)

The Youths of Medina and the Idol of ‘Amru ibn Jum□h

Ibn Hish□m writes, “The people who paid allegiance to the Noble Prophet (S) at ‘Aqabah were mainly youths. Most of the elderly people of the tribes of Arabia continued to worship idols. There was a man among the elderly people of the tribe of Ban□ Salmah named “‘Amru ibn Jum□h” who, like everyone else, had bought an idol for himself. The name of his idol was “Man□t”.

He had placed this idol in a special place inside his house. One of the youths who had newly converted to Islam was “Ma‘□dh”, the son of ‘Amru ibn Jum□h. Ma‘□dh had just returned from Mecca and paid his allegiance to the Noble Prophet (S). He conspired with the other youths (his friends) from the tribe of Ban□ Salmah to dislodge ‘Amru ibn Jum□h’s idol and throw it in a pile of rubbish.

They were successful in their courageous act, and they managed to throw Man□t (the idol) into a pile of rubbish. Every morning, ‘Amru ibn Jum□h would set out searching and looking for his lost idol. Upon finding it, he would wash it and place it in its usual special place. He used to say, ‘I swear by Allah that if I ever find out who is showing this disrespect to my idol, I will punish him severely.’

When he noticed that this action was continuing nonstop on a daily basis, he got a sword and placed it on the idol’s neck and said, ‘I do not know who comes and acts in this disrespectful and insolent manner with you. I, therefore, hang this sword around your neck so that you may defend yourself with it, if there is any power in you.’

That night, the youths of Ban□ Salmah came to carry out their daily duty. They carried the idol Man□t together with the sword that was hung in his neck. When they reached the usual pile of rubbish where they had always dropped him, they removed the sword that was hung around his neck and instead, placed a clay puppy dog in its place. The puppy dog was placed in the same way that the sword had been hung. Finally, they dropped the idol in the rubbish pit as done on the previous days.

‘Amru ibn Jum□h went looking for his idol in the rubbish pit. He was taken aback by what he saw and

sank down in deep thought. Some of the youths from the tribe of Ban Salmah pretended to loiter around walked lazily by. Their actual intention was to see how ‘Amru ibn Jumh would react upon finding his idol in its humiliating condition, and whether it was going to wake ‘Amru ibn Jumh from his deep sleep of ignorance and make him accept the truth.

When ‘Amru ibn Jumh saw the state in which the idol had been in the pile of rubbish, he was extremely disappointed. He came near it and tried to make it move wondering how it could help him when it couldn’t help itself. The youth of Ban Salmah approached him after some time and invited him to accept the divine truth.

The words of the youth had such a deep effect on him that, finally, he converted to Islam. Afterwards, he composed and recited poems reproaching and castigating the idol-worshipers and thanking Allah for the great gift of Islam. He remained a Muslim up to the end of his life and attained martyrdom in the Battle of Uhud and was buried right there in that holy place.”[1]

1. Ibn Hishm, Al-Srah al-Nabawiyyah, vol. 1, p. 245; Zendegn-ye Hadrat-e Muhammad (The Life of Prophet Muhammad), vol. 1, p. 242.

Source URL:
https://www.al-islam.org/exemplary-youths-during-early-days-islam-muhammad-ali-chenarani/youths-medina-and-idol-amru-ibn#comment-0