

Mission of the Prophet of Islam

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In the Name of Allah

On the way to Asia and Europe the dry land of Arabia had particular position. The goods from India and china were transported by boats to Egypt and to the West through the Arabian route. The Indian goods such as' precious stones, a variety of perfumes, animals of rare species, were considered in Europe of those days to be of the Arabian origin because they Came from that route. The Southern parts of Arabia had their own produce such as odorous gums and oil which had a large consumption in Europe as a fuel in temples.

Only one sixth of the population of Arabia lived in towns in the days of the Prophet's Mission. The rest of the population constituted the wider class of vagabonds and tent-dwellers. Pillage and plunder, assault and murder were their sport if not a regular business. Camels provided them company and swords gave them ceremony. One of the poets of that age, prior to Islam, says:

“Our business is plunder
And assault on our neighbor.

If we find not other than our brother Suffice we only on his plunder.”

The vagabond Arabs were fond of individual liberty and a self-determined life. Therefore the irksome life offered by desert was in much preference to them. Hospitality and bravery was their salient trait although ruthless in plundering and looting. A few who lived in towns took up commerce for their livelihood while a few others to cattle growing or any other income the desert could provide. But the vagabond Arabs mostly lived on pillage and theft.

Each tribe was an independent unit and stood strange to other tribes. Murder was a common business among them, whether citizens or vagabonds. Shanfara, a poet of pre-Islamic days, was insulted. He killed ninety-nine men. A woman named Biswas had a she -camel, which she had named SURAB. This SURAB entered into the lands of Qulaib and an egg of a bird, which had nested there, got broken under her hoofs. Qulaib hunted this she-camel, SURAB, and wounded its udder by an arrow. Jassas, son of Biswas' sister, took to defense and killed the man. This trifle incident which had originated by an animal ignited a bloody feud between the two tribes Bahar and Taghlab and kept alive the bloodshed for

forty years.

Religion of these tribes was the worship of idols. Laat, Ozzi, Habul, Ba'al were of much renown of the idols made in the shapes of man, animal, and tree. Sometimes a cave or even a well stood sacred for them to worship.

Restriction did not bind them. As many women as they wished they could have. Woman was to them a commodity-liable to be sold and bought. To have a female child was a matter of shame to them. Therefore, the girls were used to be buried alive once born.

Poetry was a Common sport among Arabs. It was so widely in as fashion that it took to itself as entity of art. This craft brought forth many poets. But their versification was shallow and pitiless because of the trifle ness of the contents. There were a few poets, however, whose poetry carried weight and was gestant with light thoughts. The greater part of their poems in general was to spur a battle or to brag with pride, about what they looted or whom they murdered.

The economic sources of these tribes were only those obtainable in a desert. They also enjoyed commercial connections, although very limited ones, with the neighboring countries. Sometimes these connections extended *en route* Yemen to the Far East.

It is worth mentioning here that the House of Kaba was the major source of income for a group belonging to the tribe of Quraish. Kaba was respected and honored by all tribes. The reason was partly due to its past and partly because it housed 300 to 360 idols - each representative for a tribe or a group.

Such was a brief account of the life of the people and their culture, moral and sources of income in Arabia. The other countries of the world in those days too had a life similar to that of the Arab Bedouins. The well-known country, Iran, of those days was having its own problems and crisis. For instance, there were several religion practiced in Iran. People were divided but united in anxieties and worries. The tyranny of the rulers had kept them in a constant fear. To kill their subjects was the easiest thing for the rulers. Concubines served the lust of the rulers. Some-times their number reached to three thousand. Zoroastrians and Christians were always at war. The religious leaders of Zoroastrians had a strong grip on the people. They were always in coordination with the ruling class. Learning was only the privilege of a few who constituted the upper class of the society. It was not to all to learn or go to school. The society was divided into classes, high and low. The low one was subordinate to the high. Such a division had come into being on the family distinctions. This is a rough sketch of the society in the pre-Islamic days.

Men were undergoing difficulties and confronting great many problems in Rome, France, Spain, Britain, Egypt, India, Japan and China. The history of those days has recorded the details. Apart from these problems thought was the heaviest one. It was divided into several schools such as Christianity, Judaism, Buddhism, and Zoroastrianism. Every school of thought or faith in a form of

religion was a burden on the shoulders of humanity.

In such a circumstance wherein man-kind was experiencing a sad crisis and facing a murky and obscure way in a life rife with atrocity, tyranny, conflict of opinions, killing and looting, transgression, abandonment of truth, dishonesty, superfluous thinking; the world was drifting like a boat with its torn sails at the mercy of the dreadful waves of a hurricane in the ocean of confusion and commotion without a gleam of light nor a ray of hope, being pushed this side and that-neither a shore in sight nor safety in certitude. No one knew where it was heading and where it would reach if not sunk. In the heart of the hills of Mecca there was a man worshipping God and pondering over the Values of mankind and the worth of morality and exhaled values.

Muhammad had reached fortieth year of his age. He had tested the life from every angle during forty years. He knew what an orphanage was because he himself was one. He was a shepherd too and later a young businessman. He had seen much because of the journeys he had made. He had enjoyed the inner ecstasies of a corollary of worship because he was worshipper of God. In that desert he was the one obsessed with thought and conjecture. Among his people he was the upright judge because the people referred to him their plight and their fight. He was the one called by the people as 'the honest'. As such he had displayed his perfect ness in all respects and his perfect ness had not lost the sight of the nation. In the day lacking civilization, culture, and the title 'the honest' and now he saw himself at the threshold of a great responsibility.

During those days when he was yet to proclaim his Mission he used to steal himself away from the bustle of town and its gurboil. Every year he used to spend a month in the Cave of HARA worshipping God. Any needy person who visited him in the cave during the month did not return unless well fed by Mohammed. At the expiry of the month he used to return first to Kaaba where he would go round the House and then return to his residence. The year approached and Mohammed was to proclaim his Mission. He first went to the Cave HARA. The Angel, Gabriel, came to him. Mohammed narrates the story thus:

"I was asleep. Gabriel came to me and said 'Read'. I told him that I don't know how. He pressed me hard and then asked me to read. I asked him what to read. He told me: 'Read by the name of your Lord who has created you'. I read it as though it was inscribed in my heart. I came out of the cave. As I reached near the middle of the hill I heard a voice coming to me from the sky telling me: 'O, Mohammed, you are the Messenger of God. And I am Gabriel'. I lifted my head up and saw Gabriel in the shape of a man standing in the horizon telling the same. As I was dumbfounded I kept only looking at him."

Thus Mohammed was delegated by God and vested with the Mission for the guidance of mankind. In the life of man lie brought a great change- that of thought and that of action.

The Prophet was born in the year of elephant. He was delegated to prophethood on the 27th of the month of Rajab in the fortieth year of elephant at the age of forty.

Let me explain the elephant year. Abraha, the Christian King of Ethiopia invaded Arabia with the aim of devastating Kaaba. But his army was defeated. His army made use of some elephants. Therefore, among Arabs it became a calendar as the year of elephant. The date of the birth of prophet corresponds with the year of 570 AD and the date of his Prophethood 610 AD.

Muhammad returned from the cave of HARA and announced his Prophethood. The first ones who believed in him were Khadijah, his wife, and Ali Ibn Abi Taleb, his cousin. The Prophet did not make public his invitation to Islam for three years. The Prophet invited the people to his Mission under this banner: "Say there is no god except Allah and get prosperous."

He invited the people to the Oneness of God. He stressed on this standard and principle that: "the most endeared ones among you before God are the most God fearing."

Amidst the men of that time he educated the great ones who stood paragons in moral and purity. He turned the vagabonds into a united nation. Men who were wallowing in rancor and malice turned into honest ones whom sincerity associated with and whom the standards of sacrifice and truth rested upon. Such was the case with women too. Whoever entered his school came out a human being in true sense.

The religion of Islam expanded and extended far and wide. Its teachings were such that group after a group entered into development in the society of that time was not to the advantage of many whose interests laid in the servitude of men. A religion that seeks liberty of men rejects serfdom offer equality to all endangers their status and weakens their station in society. Hence they got united in creating obstacles on the way of the Prophet. Those who believed in him such as Yasir, Summiya, Ammar, Qubab, Suhaib, Bilal fell victims to their torture.

When their torture did not bear fruit they resorted to blood battles. The first one was BADR. The believers defeated the pagans. So, came the next one the second battle, UHUD. In this battle too the pagans were defeated. Then took place the third battle called AHZAAB (Parties). In this too they did not attain their errand. The fourth one followed known as QANDAQ that is the battle of trench. These battles show to us a turn in the movement. The Mission of the Prophet was not a limited one -only the religion. His Mission embraced every aspect of a human life and embraced the most important of all- the dignity of mankind. Therefore the Prophet made obligatory to defend the right and deny the subjugation to tyranny. Hence, the military movements entered into the Islamic Mission in the very lifetime of the Prophet.

The two aims went spall to spall and side by side. The propagation of faith

and giving to mankind its true stations in society. The students of his school when trained under his teachings got scattered, each to one side, and taught the others what the Prophet had taught to him. From each side Islamic teachings bloomed and in each corner a high moral flourished. Ignorance was thus assaulted upon and a new light dawned on the thick, long lasting, abject darkness. Indeed it was not an easy job or a simple task. The Prophet himself once described his sufferings: “No prophet experienced torture or aid he undergo troubles to the extent that I had to suffer.”

Jews of Medina used to throw dust and filth on the prophet. The youths of Tayif hit him by stones. Such was the daily reception accorded to him when he happened to be seen on the roads and public places. But the Prophet used to bear all this by a smile. The social aspect of the Prophet was miracle in itself. The very Jew, who used to harass him by throwing filth on him, got sick. The Prophet inquired after him. When he was informed of his illness, he went to his house and paid a visit to him. The Jew felt ashamed and embraced Islam. The character, conduct and behavior of the Prophet were a great helping element in the advancement of Islam. He did well in return of the bad he received at their hands. His humbleness had shaken the greatest empires of the world of that time. But he himself used to tie a stone upon his stomach so as not to feel the hunger. Such he labored in every front.

Equality was the main thing which the Prophet laid stress on. He declared that before God all are equal. Distinctions and differences, classes and stratum that were ruling the society were all annihilated by him. The very pedestal of slavery was shaken by his teachings. The lowest class of Medina came forward and took the same position, which so far was only for the upper class. This division was totally eradicated. Women who were the most hated ones in the society got for themselves a status and a position. Now they enjoyed social rights as well as legal the woman debauchery receded because the woman was no more a commodity. Above all, he made obligatory on all to learn and on the learned ones to teach the others.

In the lifetime of the Prophet almost the whole of Arabia had already embraced Islam. Then the believers and the faithful ones took this Godly gift Islam to other quarters of the world. They traveled far and wide and with them spread the teachings of Islam.

THE HOLY QURAN

This is the only Divine Book now in the possession of man. And this is the only Book that has preserved its originality as no deviation has occurred therein nor the word of God changed. Quran has always invited and today too invites man to justice, contemplation, sincerity, goodness, freedom and equality amongst all. Every and every evil rejected.

This Holy Book stresses much on pondering, thinking and reflection in all the things around so that the effect might to cause. The world is not an empty place. It is full of wonders; in every thing there is something to be pondered over.

Nothing is created vain nor without an errand. Water, sun, night, stars, moon, oceans, mountains, grass, tree, blooming, camel, spider, brat, ant, honeybee, birds, clouds, rain, lightening, sperm, embryo, composition of the matters constant expansion of the galaxies, death, life and the life of hereafter - all these are the things of great import and each points to its Creator, the God Almighty.

To mankind this Holy Book also gives a lesson by narrating the stories of the past nations as to how they lived and how arrogant they were and how far their tyranny carried. The good and bad is told in the rumples of the past events. It also gives good tidings to those who have a sense of judgment. This Book goes even far beyond. It calls on man to see the things with conjecture. To have an insight and to probe into the rhyme of things is a main invitation of Quran. In fact, a naked eye can not see all things. Sometimes things need to be seen through the eyes of the heart that is an 'inside light'. There are many instances where the Holy Quran emphasizes on the need to see things through reflection.

Experience of the world and the existence of universe provide cardinal element for man to think and then to benefit. This is the first stage toward elevation of the soul. Whatever we may think we will reach the conclusion that the world is ephemeral. Therefore man should strive for a world which is Eternal. The next world is eternal. To have belief in that and to get prepared for a living there; is recommended to us in the Quran.

The religion of Islam envelops several dimensions, and aspects. This religion gives perfection to man. For instance, Abuzar al-Ghiffari was a vagabond, a man rough and uncivilized. But later when he embraced Islam and got associated with the Prophet, he became one of the most renowned companions of the Prophet. Ali Bin Abitaleb was a child of eight years oh Mohammed took him and trained him. He became the most just and the truest one in the history. The school of Mohammed is the school of perfection. The town of Medina if compared with the towns of other countries such as Athens, Rome, Alexandria, Helio-polis, Banars which had one gate, had two gates. People entered into it, rough, ruthless, quarrelsome, insurgents, and stubborn. But when they came out they were polite, peaceful, kind, love of God gleaming in their foreheads. They were changed completely. Only a word or sometimes a little discourse of Muhammad was enough to change the bad into good. The companions of

Muhammad were those who created great events in history and extirpated great empires of the world. We cannot draw a line of congruity between them and the Roman soldiers or the Indian clergies or the Buddhist or Christians. Islam shapes men of piety and courage. He sees God before him and fears from God only.

However, what proceeded were only a brief account and a short epitome from the Mission of Muhammad, which brought a great civilization to mankind. The Mission of Mohammed is everlasting. It remains as long as remains the globe. In every age historians have written about the Mission. Sociologists have commented on it. As the time passes on they discover a new dimension of the Mission and rewrite its history. Albert Malle, the French historian says:

“After the dawn of Islam many idol worshippers of East have embraced Islam and prospered under the banner of Quran.”

THE END