

MUBAHILA

By: Naba', Organization

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In The Name of Allah

The incident begins from the land of Nijran. It is a flourishing and thriving place situated near the borders of Hijaz and Yemen. It is a land having seventy flourishing hamlets. A great river with plenty of water irrigates this area resulting in a yearly profit of ten thousand dinars for its owners.

Long before the advent of Islam, the people of Nijran had given up the worship of idols and got inclined towards the beliefs of Hazrat Isa (A.S.). Have you heard the story of 'People of the Ditch' which has come in Sura 'Buruj'? It is said that those believers who were cast alive into the vicious flames of fire by the infidels as a penalty for believing in the Unique God, were none other than these newly-converted Christians of this very place of Nijran. Unfortunately, just as almost all the Christians got deviated from the true and divine teachings of Hazrat Isa (A.S.), in the same way the people of Nijran too got deviated and started to believe that the spirit of Isa (A.S.) is the same spirit of God and he is the son of God.

The Christians of Nijran by imitating the Ka'aba had built big and magnificent churches in their own homeland. These churches were strictly respected by them and any one who took shelter in the church was given shelter and any needy person who visited it, was made needless. In these churches, Christian priests used to live.

Mecca, the biggest base of the infidels of Quraish had become liberated and Islam had rendered almost the entire Arabic peninsula submissive to itself. The call of echoed in every Arabic land and even outside the Arabic peninsula. The eminent personalities and the common people of Nijran too had heard about the event of advent of Holy Prophet of Islam. Moreover, it was the correspondences of Holy Prophet (S.A.W.A.) with all the great countries of the time and the religious centers that all of a sudden the representatives of Holy Prophet had reached Nijran and delivered the letter of Holy Prophet to an eminent Christian Bishop. The Bishop opened the letter of Holy Prophet and read as such:-

In the name of God, the Lord of Ibrahim, Ishaq and Yaqub.

From Muhammad Messenger of God to the Bishop of Nijran and the people of Nijran. If you accept Islam, then surely I shall praise the God of Ibrahim, Ishaq and Yaqub. Thus I call you to be the slaves of God instead of being the slaves of God and I call you to forsake the obedience and authority of the slaves of God and instead accept the authority of God. However if you do not accept Islam, you should pay 'Jazia' (poll tax) and if you refuse to pay 'Jazia' too, then we shall declare war on you.

Peace.

The translation of the verse, which had come at the end of the letter, is as such:

“O followers of the Book! Come to an equitable proposition between us and you that we shall not serve any but Allah and (that) we shall not associate ought with Him, and (that) some of us shall not take others for lords besides Allah; but if they turn back then say: Bear witness that we are Muslims.”

It was a brief, explicit and a striking letter. The Bishop trembled severely when he saw this letter –As thought this simple and clear letter with its strong and decisive wording pounded over him like a lightning and cast his apparent splendor and glory and all the eminent personalities of Nijran including the Bishop of Rome and Caesar into tremor and trembling.

Bishop of Najran was perplexed and puzzled as to what he should do. Finally he decided to have discussions and consultations with the leading personalities of Nijran so that each one of them may come out with a solution for this strange letter.

The leading and eminent personalities of Nijran came together for consolation. One of them who were wise and knowledgeable said: “I am not aware much of religious matters and so am unable to present a solution in this regard. However if I was asked to solve some other problem I would have been in a position to do so. Anyhow allow me to say something:

We have heard from our great religious leaders that a day will come when the honor of Prophet hood will be transferred from the generation of Hazrat Ishaq to the sons of Hazrat Isma'eel. Is there any reason to stop us from saying that this Muhammad who is from the generation of Hazrat Isma'eel is not the same promised Prophet?

With this expression, the puzzlement and perplexity of the leading personalities of Nijran increased to a greater extent. Finally they decided to send to Medina a few amongst themselves representing the entire people of Nijran and by this way have a close meeting and discussion with the Prophet. They were thinking that perhaps by some means or the other, they could condemn Muhammad and by way of debate and discussion they could conclude the incident to their advantage.

Sixty leading personalities of Nijran were appointed for the journey to Medina and among these sixty people, fourteen of them were aristocrats and three were high-ranking ones:

(1) Bishop Abu Haaris: - He was proud of being the official representative and the absolute authority of the Roman Churches in the land of Hijaz. He was the same person who for the first time received the letter of Holy Prophet (S.A.W.A.)

(2) Abdul-Messiah: - He was the chairman of the Board of representatives and was famous among the people of Nijran for this knowledge and insight.

(3) Aaiham:- He was very aged and the people of Najran respected him very much.

Anyhow, this group of sixty people, unaware of the great event, which was going to bring another glory in the history of Islam, started to move towards Medina the city of Holy Messenger of God.

On the way towards Medina the camel, which Bishop Abu Haaris was riding on along with his brother, suddenly slipped and fell. Brother of Haaris who reckoned Holy Prophet to be the cause of all these difficulties and problems started to curse him. Abu Haaris became angry of this and returned back the same curse to his brother. With great astonishment brother of Haaris said: "It is strange that you are defending Muhammad"!

Abu Harris in reply said: "He is the same Prophet which Massiah has given glad tidings about his coming. "Brother of Abu Haaris asked with greater astonishment: "Then why don't you bring faith in him?" Poor Abu Haaris who had sold religion for this world and had become a captive of the apparent manifestations and deceit of this world replied: "Don't you know that these people who have honored us and brought our comfort with their money and wealth will not be satisfied except by opposing him! (I.e. the Prophet)

Brother of Abu Haaris pondered over these talks until he escaped from his nation and joined the Muslims and narrated this incident to them.

Anyhow, the caravan of Najranites reached Medina – the city of Prophet, a simple and pleasant city, a city of love and faith, a city of sacrifice and courage, a city of Ansars (helpers) and Muhajirs (immigrants) and a city which with open arms, accepted Holy Prophet and the runaway Muslims from the clutches of the tyrant Quraish unbelievers. It was a city, which Holy Prophet liked and even after the victory of Mecca he had preferred to stay to there.

The unfortunate and foolish Nijranites imagining that they have come to visit the Caesar of Rome or Khosro of Iran or thinking that the Messenger of God and the Muslims would shiver by seeing their material majesty and splendor entered the mosque of Prophet with glittering and silk clothes, big crosses hanging over their necks, sword-belts on their shoulders, gold rings in their fingers and many other gold ornaments.

When Holy Prophet saw them with such abnormal condition, he became angry. The Christians of Najran too becoming aware of this, immediately left the mosque and went in search for Osman and Abdul-Rahman-bin-Auf who were having previous acquaintance with them to ask the reason for Prophet's anger. Those two replied that for seeking solution to this problem they should go to Ali (A.S.). Helplessly they went towards Ali () who in turn said: For going in the presence of Prophet, you should free yourselves from these apparent deceitful clothes and go to him in a very simple condition.

The Christians too acted upon the same and this time, they approached the Holy Prophet with simple clothes without wearing their gold ornaments. This time, Holy Prophet respected them and as the time of their prayers had approached they were even allowed by Holy Prophet to perform their specific prayers in the mosque of Holy Prophet.

The conversation between the Christians of Nijran and Holy Prophet is a lengthy and elaborated one. We shall produce here important pivots of it so that we come to know as to how Holy Prophet shattered their baseless talks with his firm and decisive proofs and logic and we realize that Islam is the true religion and what always prevails is the truth.

They asked Holy Prophet: 'O Muhammad, towards what do you invite us?

Holy Prophet replied: You bear witness that there is no god except the One and incomparable God and that I am the Messenger of God and Isa too is a slave (of God) who is a created being and someone who used to eat and drink like the others.

In this statement, these exists many fundamental points, which put the Christians to condemnation. One point is that God is only One, neither there is any partner or any son for Him. Secondly Hazrat Muhammad (S.A.W.A.) is the Prophet of God and obeying his commands is obligatory. Thirdly, Hazrat Isa whom they wrongly reckon to be the son of God is a slave of God whom God has bestowed His grace upon him.

Instead of replying to all the remarks of Holy Prophet, the Christians consideration only a part of it and said:

If by Islam you mean faith in the Lord of the Universe then we have already brought faith in Him from before and we act upon His commandments.

By giving such a reply they wanted to avoid by some means or other from bearing witness to the "Oneness" of God, Messenger ship of Hazrat Muhammad and admitting the matter of Hazrat Isa being a slave of God.

However Holy Prophet addressed them explicitly and decisively as such:

Islam possesses some signs whereas some of your deeds give indication that you have not brought faith in Islam, the religion which God is satisfied. How do you say that you worship God while in fact you worship the Cross?

How is it that you do not refrain from eating the flesh of pig and reckon Isa to be the Son of God?

When they heard these words they were forced to speak about Hazrat Isa and mention the reason for considering him to be the Son of God. They said: “We consider Isa to be the son of God and reckon him to resemble God for the reason that he gave life to the dead, cured the sick and made birds from mud and clay and then blew life into them and caused them to fly. Is it not that giving life to the dead, curing the sick and giving life to a bird made of clay sufficient proofs of Godhood of Isa?”

Holy Prophet replied: “Never! He is the slave and creation of God and God placed him in the womb of his mother Maryam. All of these actions which he used to perform were a power which was bestowed upon him by God.”

By mentioning this point that Hazrat Isa has been born out of his mother, Hazrat Muhammad drew a cross upon all of their saying since God neither begets nor is begotten.

Apparently the Christians did not have any other reply. However at that moment, one of them, perhaps having discovered a new matter said: “Isa is the son of God because his mother Maryam gave birth to him without having got married to anyone. So surely his father is the same Lord of the Universe.”

Following this saying, an Angel of revelation descended upon Holy Prophet and told Prophet to address them as such:

“The example of Hazrat Isa before God is like the example of story of Adam (where) God created him out of dust. Then He (i.e. God) ordered him - Be and it was.”

‘Allah-o-Akbar’! A very firm and strong reasoning indeed firm like a mountain and sharp and cutting like a sword. Yes, if because of not having father, Isa is considered to be the Son of God then the creation of Adam is more astonishing than his creation because he (i.e. Adam) was not having even a mother. Really what is the limit of God’s power? Is it not that He is having power over all things? It is not difficult for God to create Isa without a father just as He created Adam who was neither having a father or a mother. He created out of soil.

When the discussion reached till this stage the helpless Nijrans remained stunned and dumbfound and had no other reply to give. However, unfortunately they did not submit to the truth also. It seemed that a curtain had covered their heartily vision and were unable to see the truth in spite of clearness and clarity. A part from being unable to reply to this strong reasoning they were also unwilling to submit. Thus an Angel revealed upon Holy Prophet as such:

“Truth is from your Lord. So do not allow doubt to enter yourself. Then to the one who quarrels and disputes with you after having gained knowledge and awareness (about Hazrat Isa) say: Let us call our children and your children, our women and your women, our beloved ones and your beloved ones and then

engage in mutual invocation of cursing (Mubahila)¹ until the curse of God descends upon the group telling the lie.

Astonishing! After so many logical and satisfying reasoning, what was this new recommendation? 'Mubahila'?

What does the Prophet say? Let us gather together our women, children and the beloved ones and call God to witness our truth and ask Him to send His curse and chastisement upon the group telling the lie.

What an astonishing confidence! What a hearty power! What a splendor and magnificence! Who is it that possesses complete faith in his own rightful path to such extent that he is prepared to keep at ransom his beloved ones for proving his truthfulness? It seems to be a dangerous affair. At that time, twenty-two years had passed from the date of commencement of invitation of Holy Prophet. If in this amazing battle which is different from all the other battles which takes place in the battlefield and its victory and defeat is even more sensitive and vital (than other battles), Holy Prophet is defeated then what would be the consequence? Would not the entire twenty-two years toil of Holy Prophet go in waste? Would not the objective and sincerity of Islam be threatened by the newly converted Muslims and even the Muslims with previous records?

It is obvious that by Mubahila is not meant that the Christians and Holy Prophet and his household members gather and curse the one telling the lie and then disperse from each other. It is apparent that this matter was not one simple matter of only sending a curse. Rather the intention was to ask God to manifest the effect of this invocation and curse at that very moment and subject the liar to His wrath and punishment.

When the matter of Mubahila was put forward the Christians who were till now disputing and fighting became feeble and asked for more time so that they could think over and consult each other on this matter. Thereafter they once again engaged in consultation. How surprising that after so much of talk and discussion and defeat in debate and after the declaration of Mubahila too, they were not ready to submit themselves and were trying to search for yet another way out.

What persistence!!

They had discussion with the Bishop. The outcome of this discussion was that it should be observed as to how Muhammad would come for Mubahila? If he would come to do Mubahila with his tribe and army with its apparent pomp and glory and with a bustling then they would engage in Mubahela with him and if

1-Mubahila is derived from the word () on the scale () of () and () means to set free. () Means supplication, lamentation and entrusting the affair to God. Mubahela too means the same – i.e. we lament before God and entrust our affair to Him.

he would come with his household members and beloved ones then they would not engage in Mubahila.

As an advice and counsel, Bishop addressed them as follows:-

You know that Mubahila is the Prophet of God and you are also aware that anyone, who engages in 'Mubahila' with a Prophet, will be destroyed and annihilated. Thus if you do not wish to forsake the religion which you are acquainted with, then make peace with Muhammad and pay the 'Jazia' (poll tax).

Anyhow they accepted to do 'Mubahila' and it was decided to collect at one place and engage in Mubahila over there.

The Christians were waiting with anxiety and fear to see how the Holy Prophet was going to approach. How was it that the destiny itself depended on his manner of coming? Yes they had come to this conclusion in their discussions that the destiny of this event was related to the manner of Prophet's coming for Mubahila. If he comes with pomp, glory and material splendor along with his nation and army they would to 'Mubahila' with him and if not, then...

And now... O God! What an astonishing science? It seemed as if all the heavens and the earth had fixed their observation on this arena. As if the entire history was watching this scene. It was the Prophet of God who was coming. In what manner he was going to come? The hearts were beating, the eyes were restless and bewildered of what lay ahead, the legs became shaky and unstable and doubt and uncertainty befell the Christians of Nijran.

Yes, the prophet was going to come. It was his Hussein who had taken comfort in his warm hand; it was Hassan who had kept his hand in his affectionate hands; it was Fatimah his daughter and it was Ali his brother, his 'Wazir', his 'Wasi' and cousin i.e. his own life.

Holy Prophet came with them. As per the narration of Ayesha wife of Holy Prophet, on the same day before coming to the place of Mubahila, Prophet had gathered these four people under a clock and recited this verse:

"Allah only desires to keep away the uncleanness from you, O people of the House! And to purify you a (though) purifying."

Thereafter Holy Prophet told these purified and immaculate ones as such:

Whenever the Christians get ready for 'Mubahila', I will pray and you all say: Ameen.

On the day of Mubahila, a large number of Muhajirs and Ansars had come near the place of 'Mubahila', but Holy Prophet had departed from his house with only these four personalities. When he reached the rendezvous he hung his cloak over two trees which had grown besides each other and made a shady place. He stood there with his household members and beloved ones and called the Christians for Mubahila.

When the Christians observed this scene they began to tremble with fear as Prophet had gone for ‘Muhbahela’ with his most beloved ones. And just as it was said before, ‘Mubahila’ was not a simple and ordinary curse but a requested for descending of chastisement at the very moment upon the group telling the lie. Moreover it was Muhammad who had decisive faith that his that his path and his words were the truth that he went to the arena with his beloved and dear ones.

Abu Haaris, the Bishop who was overcome by fear and anxiety told the Christians as such: I see such faces that were they to lift their hands in prayers and ask God to pull out the biggest of the mountains from its place, God would fulfill their demand. Do not engage in ‘Mubahila’ for if you do, then all of us will be annihilated and the scope of punishment will engulf the entire Christians.

Yet, Abu Haaris was fully aware that in the event of accepting Mubahila, what gloomy fate was awaiting him and all the Christians of Nijran and even all the other Christians.

Holy Prophet too said:

“I swear by God in whose Hand is my soul, God had spread the shadow of chastisement over the heads of the Nijranites. If they would have engaged in Mubahila, they would have been metamorphosed into apes and pigs and their entire land would have been filled with fire and God would have destroyed all the inhabitants of Nijran and even its birds resting on top of the trees. Moreover, within less than a year all the Christians would have been destroyed by the divine chastisement.”

In this way, this sensational and history-making epic ended in the submission of Nijranites to peace and giving of ‘Jazia’ (poll tax). As such the shining sun glows over the apex of the glorious history of Islam and (this epic) became the certain and decisive proof of the superiority of Ahl-e-bait of Holy Prophet and their virtue as compared to all the companions and other near ones of Holy Prophet- A superiority which none has superseded the Ahl-e-bait in that and a virtue which no human-being has reached to it and a honor which none entrusted with it.

The same Ahle-bait which Holy Prophet in return for his reward of Prophet hood said:

“I do not ask you of any reward (in return for the Prophetic message) except for love towards my kin.”

The Sunni exegetist and scholars have confessed this reality in their book. Among them we may mention the name of Zamakhashari who was one of the greatest Sunni scholar. In his book of Tafseer by the name of ‘Kashaf’, after narrating the incident of Mubahila he says: “In the story of Mubahila there is a proof which besides this, there is no other stronger proof which shows that the ‘companions of the cloak’ (Ashaab-e-kisa) are possessing superiority and virtue and there also exists a clear proof in this story upon the love for the Prophet

hood of Hazrat Muhammad (S.A.W.A.) Even if this incident alone is taken into consideration in the entire 23 years of struggle and endeavor of Holy Prophet (S.A.W.A.), would it not be enough to prove the Imamate of Hazrat Ali (A.S.) and the truthfulness of the Shias!!!????

Please ponder.

THE END