

HAVE YOU PREPARED YOURSELF FOR

RAMADHAN

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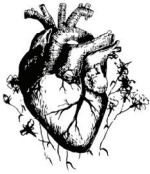
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RAMADAN KAREEM

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PRIVATE CIRCULATION

EDITORIAL

Maaz Ahmad Javed, M.Tech, AMU

Maulana Arshad Madani, president of Jamiat Ulema-e-Hind, addressed the Hindu Dharma Gurus in a mass gathering and said, **“I told them (the Dharma Gurus) that what you call Om, we call Allah”**. Maulana Madni, describing the virtues of India in this statement, said that **what the Hindu people call ‘Manu’, we (Muslims) call Adam, and Allah Almighty sent Hazrat Adam (AS) to India**. After listening to the full statement, it is known that Maulana was saying that *we are the followers of Hazrat Adam, the first man in the world, and the followers of the oldest religion. So these people who are chanting ‘Ghar Wapsi (return home)’ should understand that Muslims follow the religion of their forefathers, but these people have adopted a new religion, so they will have to return home*. If considered, this message is not a new and unique message for a religious Muslim. In the current situation of the country, this message coming from Jamiat’s platform would have been a bold move if it had been said in obvious and clear-cut sentences. But the tricks used to convey this message were completely reversed. Maulana’s words seem to complement the agenda of those whom he has apparently criticized.

Our country, India, consists of many traditions, religions, and sects. But the Indian religions do not have any clear evidence in the form of a heavenly book to substantiate their claim like the heavenly religions found around the world. **So it is difficult to give them a single name and a definition. Therefore, the most commonly used term for Indian religions, Hinduism, is itself a dilemma**. But this too is not an agreed name. Scholars of Indian civilization have tried very hard to

describe these religions under a single name or introduction, but almost every attempt seems to produce a new result. No one should be surprised by this fact about Indian religions because there are so many diverse and conflicting things in the books and records found in Indian history that it is not possible to present them under one outline. Maybe that’s why no one has done this work in the past. By understanding these characteristics of this civilization, some people seem to describe the inability to define it and not being able to give it a name as its quality.

After looking at all this background, it is clear that Maulana said such an important thing in such a stupid manner that the matter got confused and the purpose got lost. Maulana gave his own interpretation of the word “om” and likened it to the God of Muslims, Allah. Maulana made the same mistake by telling Hazrat Adam and Manu that they were the same. So after that, a dharma guru named Lokesh Muni humiliated Maulana and spoke harsh words.

Unlike Indian religions, Islam has an authentic book, the Qur’an. Many examples are readily available of how scholars of different religions have accepted the Qur’an as a heavenly word based on their research. Allah has promised in the Qur’an that He has revealed it and that He will preserve it. Therefore, some researchers compared the manuscripts of different periods with the first manuscript, which was compiled by the third caliph, Hazrat Uthman (RA), and found that every single letter is preserved. It appears to be a word preserved under a divine arrangement. **A special feature of the Qur’an is that it is free from philosophical subtleties and conveys its message to the readers in a very clear manner. The Qur’an has explained the existence of Allah Ta’ala in very clear words**. It has also been stated that all the prophets were sent with one religion and one call to Tawheed. It is not appropriate to describe Allah and His characteristics by any word that does not have a clear and

agreed-upon definition. If clear words are not used for the call to Islam, there is a fear that you will call to something other than Islam. Therefore, in the same speech, Maulana said that according to some people, ‘Om’ is wind. After this, attributing this word to Allah Ta’ala is a very misleading approach. As a result of such false arguments, Maulana lost his point. We should know that this way of calling towards Islam is completely deviated from the prophetic method.

Unfortunately, like in other countries of the world, in our country too, the call to Islam is being toyed with in the name of **‘inter-faith dialogue’**. And the result of this is that right and wrong are getting mixed together. It is extremely dangerous for the truth to be presented as equal to or similar to falsehood. As a result, this speech by Maulana only strengthened the lobby of the Sangh. They want a low interpretation of Islam that is acceptable to them. It has always been the case with anti-Islamic forces that they want to distort Islam, like all religions. We hope Maulana and his supporters will accept this in good faith and correct their mistake.



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يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا عَلَيْكُمْ أَنْصِبُوا كَيْسًا عَلَىٰ الَّذِينَ مَرُّوا بِكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُونَ

“Believers, fasting is decreed for you as it was decreed for those before you, so that you may be God-fearing.” [02:183]

FASTING: ITS NATURE AND PURPOSE

For the Muslim community, or ummah, duty-bound to undertake a campaign of struggle, i.e. jihad, as a means of establishing God’s universal order, to assume the leadership of mankind, and to stand witness against the rest of mankind, it is only natural that fasting should be made obligatory. **Fasting is a means of testing man’s determination and will-power, and an important aspect of man’s relationship with God.** It is a discipline that teaches man how to rise above his physical needs and overcome the pressure of temptation in order to earn God’s blessings and reward. These are essential ingredients for the discipline and training of the believers so that they may carry God’s message forward despite the temptations, the obstacles and hardships they are bound to encounter. Although I am not in favour of justifying religious obligations and practices, especially in matters of worship, on the grounds of their immediate material benefits, which become apparent with experience or through scientific discovery, I would not deny that fasting has several obvious health benefits. But in my view, the whole purpose underlying religious obligations is far greater and more comprehensive than any physical advantages gained from them. The overall aim is to adequately equip man for the fulfilment of his role in this world and for the perfection he is intended to achieve in the life to come. It is obvious that

all religious practices and obligations are ordained by God with full consideration of man’s physical needs and capabilities, but we should not justify them solely on the basis of what our knowledge, limited as it is, may discover. The scope of human knowledge remains limited and incapable of comprehending the divine wisdom behind the order and the system God has chosen for the discipline of man and the administration of the universe as a whole.

This important announcement begins by addressing believers directly to remind them of who they are and of their status with God. God is aware that for believers to fulfil any religious obligation, regardless of its immediate benefits, they need encouragement and motivation. Hence they are addressed by their essential quality of having faith. **The verse establishes that fasting had been made obligatory for earlier believers, and that the aim behind it is to open their hearts to God and make them more conscious of Him.** This, then, is the principal objective of fasting: to be God-fearing, or taqwā. Fasting, when observed in obedience to God and in pursuit of His pleasure, instils and revives this quality in the human heart and acts as a safeguard against evil and wrongdoing. True believers know and appreciate the value of being God-fearing in God’s sight. Hence, they constantly seek to enhance their sense of it. Fasting is a means to achieve just that. Fasting is prescribed for a specific number of days. It is not required the whole year round. Nevertheless, those who are ill or travelling are exempt from fasting until they recover or return home. On the face of it, the type and extent of the

illness and the travel to which the exemption applies are left unqualified. Therefore, any kind of illness or travel would exempt one from fasting, provided one makes up for it at some other time, after one has recovered or returned home. This would seem to be the most appropriate interpretation of the Qur’anic statement, truly reflecting the overriding Islamic objective of mitigating hardship and relieving discomfort. The concession is not conditional on either the severity of the illness or on how arduous the journey is, because in all cases people should not have to undergo any undue strain as a result of fasting. There could be other considerations, known only to God, for leaving the conditions so general. Fasting during illness or in the course of a journey could result in hardship or adverse effects that human beings cannot foresee or predict. We take the ruling as it is stated, in the certain belief that there are valid reasons behind it. Some people may fear that such a view may encourage a more lax attitude that could lead to abuse of such concessions, rendering them an easy excuse for neglecting religious observances and practices. This concern is said to account for the strict terms set by Muslim scholars on the use of these concessions, but it should not, in my view, justify the need to restrict an unqualified Qur’anic ruling such as the one under discussion. Islam does not lead people to obedience by force. It guides them through their consciousness of God, which is the ultimate objective in this particular case. Those who use concessions to evade religious obligation merely bring their own faith under suspicion, because their attitude negates the very purpose of the obligation.

HAVE YOU PREPARED YOURSELF FOR RAMADHAN



DR. FARRUKH ADNAN

Whenever there is a function at our house or a guest arrives, we are very excited, and preparations are started weeks in advance. So that there is no shortage of anything that we regret later. Are these similar preparations we also make before the arrival of Ramadan to change the environment of the home, to set aside a place in the house for worship, or to change ourselves and improve ourselves in the eyes of Allah?

For our worldly lives, we spend money to make people happy and to maintain our position in society, and we also invest our precious time, but do we spend so much for our lives in the hereafter to get freedom from hell and the ticket to heaven? Don't we remember that every year Allah gives us a great blessing like Ramadan so that we can return to Him again? **The month of Ramadan is a training for us so that we live in the same way for the next eleven months, follow the commandments given by Allah, worship Him, strive to make ourselves good servants of Him, and try hard to keep ourselves away from sins so that even after Ramadan, we can worship Allah for eleven months of the year and live as His good servants.**

Allah says in the Qur'an:

The month of Ramadan [is that] in which was revealed the Qur'an, a guidance for the people and clear proofs of guidance and criterion.

(2:185)

Maulana Maududi comments "The Qur'an has been given to us so that we know the path of the pleasure of Allah, walk on it ourselves, and lead the world on it. To prepare us for this purpose, fasting is the best means available. Therefore, our fasting in the month of the revelation of the Qur'an is not only worship and not only moral training,

but also a proper and appropriate gratitude to the blessings of the Qur'an itself."



1) *Recognize the greatness of the month of Ramadan:*

In order to prepare for Ramadan and prepare ourselves for it, it is very important that we consider why Allah has blessed us with the holy month of Ramadan, what is Allah's strategy through it that we should know, and why Ramadan is called the month of glory.

Through the obligation of these fasts, Allah wants to create the attributes of piety and fear in the hearts of the believers so that we become His pious servants and do all things purely for Him and His commands. Fasting is the best act through which we fear Him.

2) *Purification of Intentions:*

Let us purify our intentions only for the sake of Allah, worship Him, and do good deeds. If you are doing a good deed but your intention is wrong, then know that Allah has nothing to do with your acts of worship; He wants His servant to purify every action for Him alone. Whatever good work you are doing or worshipping, check that there is no hypocrisy in this work and that you are not doing it to show off to others and to get praise.

3) *The cleansing of hearts:*

Before the arrival of Ramadan, you should cleanse your hearts from envy, malice, selfish desires, enmity, and ingratitude, so that when you fast in Ramadan, your heart will be free from all of them and you may find peace in your heart through remembrance of Allah.

4) *Repentance from past sins:*

You should pray to Allah for the sins you have committed and ask Him for forgiveness. At the same time, you should also keep in mind the blessing of Allah that He has once again granted you the holy month of Ramadan and has again given you the opportunity to be virtuous and righteous.

5) *Obligation of prayer:*

Allah has made it obligatory for us to pray five times a day, but sometimes we get so busy in our lives that it is difficult for us to find time for prayers, and those prayers either become qadha (not offered on time). You should perform sunnah and nafl along with the obligatory prayers so that not a single salah gets qadha by us.

6) *Excellence in Good Deeds:*

This Ramadan, make a plan to put yourself first in doing good deeds, because the more we progress towards goodness, the more we will move away from sins. In addition to the obligatory prayers, we should make efforts to perform the Nafl prayers, try to remember and recite the Qur'an, make time for the lessons of the Qur'an, do good deeds ourselves, and order others to do good and prevent them from doing evil.

7) *Attachment to the Qur'an:*

Allah revealed the Qur'an in the holy month of Ramadan. Therefore, we should also be attached to the Qur'an in terms of its greatness. Let us set aside time in our daily routine to read and understand the Qur'an. Let us try to find out how Allah wants to guide us through this Qur'an. Try as much as possible to understand and follow whatever instructions Allah has revealed in this Quran for us and for our welfare.

The illusion of FREE SPEECH AND IT'S CONCEPT IN ISLAM

Liberals, secularists, atheists often claim that their secular democracies uphold freedom of speech, whereas Islam doesn't (and they are correct that Islam doesn't).

As evidence for the superiority of secularism, they point to the fact that people in secular countries are free to criticize the president, prime minister, or ruling power.

Their view seems to be premised on this simple formula: A country has freedom of speech if you can criticize the ruling power in that country. But this formula conceals a critical fact about secular democracies.

Secular democracies allow criticism of the ruler ONLY if that criticism does not threaten the ruling power. If the criticism does pose a threat, then that speech is quickly suppressed. This is very clear in the history of the West and even in the writing of liberal thinkers like JS Mill. Mill said: **“Despotism is a legitimate mode of government in dealing with barbarians, provided that the end be their improvement.”**

Anyone who does not agree with the Enlightened principles of liberalism is by definition of Mill and secularists more generally a barbarian. And the liberal state is justified in silencing the speech of barbarians, or even indefinitely detaining them or “neutralizing” them, i.e., killing them.

This is how the Enlightened colonial powers dealt with Muslims throughout their colonies. Anyone who opposed British, French, or Dutch power was deemed a “fanatic” threat who was to be crushed. And yes, these colonies were managed by liberal secularists. JS Mill, Alexis de Tocqueville, and other “fathers” of secularism were either colonial administrators themselves or advisors to the colonial project!

These practices have continued to this day. Whether we want to talk about CVE/Prevent programs aimed at Muslims, or we want to talk about government disinformation boards, or we want to talk about tech censorship, these are all secular tactics for suppressing speech.

The liberal state has, in fact, become extremely sophisticated in its ability to censor speech and silence illiberal voices. But, again, this is not new.

Liberal states have always been masters at controlling speech and this is because the existence of liberalism requires mass censorship. **Liberalism is so contrary to fundamental human nature that it requires massive technological and institutional control over the population in order to guarantee its persistence.**

How funny it is that atheists and secularists want to tout this oppressive system as some kind of savior for the human race!

All that being said, there is still one aspect of “free speech” Muslims should embrace. The ability to criticize rulers should be protected.

This is something liberal thought recognizes, at least in theory, and it is something Muslim historical precedent also supports. In different respects, the four righteous khulafa (caliphs) were criticized openly (and usually unjustly) and the khulafa did not react by having their critics silenced, imprisoned, or killed. If the righteous khulafa, who were the epitomes of just governance, could stand to be criticized, then how much more worthy of criticism are Muslim governments today?

It is a fact of human nature that those who are sincere, just, and honest do not care that they are criticized. In fact, they encourage feedback and appreciate being informed of wrongdoing and mistakes so that, if the criticism is valid,

they can correct themselves and rectify matters. The wicked, however, despise criticism because they only are concerned with preserving themselves and protecting their interests. They have no concern for truth or justice, so they suppress criticism to the extent of their power.

In a well-known hadith, the Prophet ﷺ tells us that one of the main signs of hypocrisy is that when a person argues, he behaves impudently and quarrels in an insulting and evil way. The idea here too is that the hypocrite doesn't care about the truth when he argues or debates. He cares about coming out on top no matter what the truth is. So, how much more is it a sign of hypocrisy that when a person or party raises complaints against a ruler, the ruler responds, not by investigation or a desire to address those complaints or an honest attempt to discover if those complaints are justified, etc., but instead the ruler responds with outright dismissal, crackdown, arrests, and even execution? What does that say about world governments today, especially in certain Muslim countries?

So yes, “free speech” is a significant part of Islamic ethics in this very particular sense and any rational person can see its importance. In all societies, whatever is considered sacred will be protected. The difference is, truly Islamic societies and governments — arguably none of which exist today — consider only God and His Message to be sacred and, thus, outlaw blatant blasphemy against God as that is attack on the very fabric of society and the very basis of justice and goodness. But all other regimes only consider their own power to be sacred and maybe a handful of other provincial notions as well, so they outlaw “blasphemy” against those while pretending to promote “free speech.”

ISLAM & HUMANITY

ER. AHMAD OSAMA JAFRI

We will start with clarifying a few things about “Islam” and “Humanity” which are two words used the most in today’s world. **“Islam” is a word which the developed as well as the developing countries love very much.** Their leaders have to repeatedly argue that Islam is a very good religion, etc. For example, former US President George W. Bush said on September 17, 2001, a few days after the terrorist attacks on the WTC, “When we think of Islam, we think of a religion and belief that brings peace and comfort to millions of people around the world”. Similarly, the quotes of different countries’ heads can be googled. Like the current P.M. of our beloved country, Narendra Modi, on March 17, 2016 said “When we read the 99 names of Allah, we find that none of the words are used in the sense of force or war. Instead, the first two words, Rahman and Raheem, are used for sheer mercy.”

The second word, “humanity” is also used a lot globally. In the name of human rights, institutions and organisations run at the government level in every country, and there are extensive government aid schemes for such non-governmental institutions and organizations. Its importance is such that even in the most dangerous wars, the voice for the protection of human rights continues to be raised, and the countries involved in these wars continue to assure the protection of these rights. We all know whatever happens inside the prisons, but it is assured that the government has fully managed to respect and pay for human rights.

Understanding the inter-relationship of these two important terms is very important for this Ummah, which has been sent to the world for the good of people, so that it commands them to do good things and prevents them from doing bad things. Allah has clearly defined the cause of the creation of mankind, that

“I have created the jinn and humankind only that they might worship (serve) Me.”

Two facts became clear in this decree: **One, mankind was created by Allah and**

second, the purpose was to worship Him. The main characteristic of the worshipper or enslaved is that he is a human being. Allah also said, in relation to this creation,

“O people, we created you from a male and a female and divided you into branches and tribes so that you may recognise each other. Indeed, in the sight of Allah, the most honourable among you is the one who is the most pious among you. Indeed, Allah is all-knowing and all-aware.” (Al Hujraat-13).

The entire idea of human creation, as mentioned in the Quran and Sunnah, is completely opposite to other religions, thoughts, and ideas. According to Islam, humans were not sent into the world as a punishment, nor were they created by chance or without any intention. **In fact, Islam makes humans the best of creation. He does not consider humans as one of the other components and creatures of the entire universe but makes a connection between them all.** From this concept, the reality of humans according to Islam becomes clear which Dr Allama Iqbal described in this couplet:

*Na tu zameen ke liye hai na aasmaan ke liye,
Jahaan hai tere liye tu nahin jahaan ke liye..*

It doesn’t just stop there, but raises the value and importance of human life to a level which today’s ‘humanitarian’ world cannot even imagine.

“Because of that, We decreed upon the Children of Israel that whoever kills a soul unless for a soul or for corruption [done] in the land - it is as if he had slain mankind entirely. And whoever saves one - it is as if he had saved mankind entirely.” (Al-Maidah-32).

Islam also teaches its followers that a person may belong to a different community, caste, region, or speak a different language, but ultimately he is a human being. Nothing can break this relationship except how faithful slaves they are or rebels to their Creator. Despite this distinction, it strongly emphasises on giving them their basic rights.

(To be continued in the next issue Insha’Allah)



In modern India, the RSS has played a great role in making policies at the national level and spreading hatred between different classes. The idea of despising and enslaving other human beings is present in the Jew and the Brahmin alike. History testifies that they have always been ungrateful to their benefactors.

The current head of RSS recently gave an interview, which was also published in its Hindi ("Panchjanya") and English ("The Organizer") magazines. In this controversial interview, he said that Hindu society has been in a state of war for almost a thousand years. A war is being waged against foreign people, foreign influences, and foreign conspiracies. Similarly, many political people also say that 1200 years of slavery ended in 2014. The question is, "Have Indians really been in a state of war for a thousand years? If so, from whom? Were they at peace a thousand years ago?"

If we take the matter of a thousand years, then it is being understood from the attack of Mahmud Ghaznavi. And if we look at the matter of twelve hundred years, then this goes back to Muhammad bin Qasim. A Chinese traveller named Hiuen Tsang visited India between 630 and 645. According to Akbar Shah Najeebabadi: "He clearly mentions the kings of Kanauj, Maharashtra, Malwa, Gujarat, Kashmir, Awadh, Bihar, Bengal, Orissa, the Deccan, Mysore, etc. as followers of Buddhism. In every part of India, he saw idols of Buddha worshipped with great fanfare in temples. He has never seen a house in India without Buddha statues." (آئینہ حقیقت نما، ص: 88)

These historical evidences show that at the time of Muhammad bin Qasim's invasion, the religion of the Indians was Buddhism, and the Muslims fought against them. Buddhism was replaced by many modern sects such as Vishnu worshippers, Shiva worshippers, Ganesha worshippers, Brahma worshippers, etc. And this process continued until the sixteenth century. If the Muslim rulers had paid any attention in this state of chaos, the whole of India would have been Muslim.

Akbar Shah Najeebabadi writes in this regard about how Hinduism benefited from the arrival of Muslims: "Therefore, at the time of the arrival and invasion of Muslims, the Buddhist nationality, religion, and government were being attacked by

MR. MOHAN BHAGWAT, Don't Fret!

DR. OSAMA AZEEM FALAHI

Brahmins and Rajputs. This conflict continued for about five hundred years, from the invasion of Muhammad Bin Qasim to the invasions of Shahabuddin Ghori. Modern Hinduism could not have destroyed the power and supremacy of Buddhism if Muslims had not come to this country. Because the Muslims in Sindh had to face Buddhist rule. While conquering Punjab, Mahmud Ghaznavi also had to face the Buddhist government. Muslims also wrested Bengal and Assam from Buddhist rule. Alauddin Khilji also conquered the Deccan after defeating the Buddhist government. All that can be said about Kanauj and Kalingar is that the kings here adopted modern Brahmanism. But Kanauj and Kalingar readily accepted Mahmud Ghaznavi's obedience."

(آئینہ حقیقت نما، ص: 185-183)

Swami Vivekananda is highly respected by RSS supporters. Bhagwat's statement is refuted by his statement: "The Muslim conquests in India came as an unexpected boon to the poor. This is the reason why one fifth of our population accepted Islam. It would be utter madness if we were to believe that the spread of Islam was made possible by sword and fire."

(The Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda, P. 294
-بحوالہ ہندوستان میں گراہ کن تاریخ نویسی، ص: 199-

Bhagwat states that Hindu society has been in a state of war for a thousand years, which raises the question: Were you in a state of peace thousands of years ago? History shows that Hindu society has always been at war with itself. Musa Malibari writes: "The northern region of India, where the Aryas settled, they named Aryavarta. Apart from this, they described all the areas as dirty and impure. There were a total of sixteen kingdoms in Aryavarta, which were always at war with each other. Mahabharata is the story of the war between them."

(ہندو دھرم، موسیٰ ملیباری، ص: 23)

There can be two reasons behind Bhagwat ji's statement. One is to regard himself as the most honourable and superior, like the Jews, and despise the rest. The basis of

this thought is Manu's caste system. Musa Malibari writes: "Hinduism is the name of the strictest and most coercive law. It is not ready to compromise on even a grain of rye in Manu's laws. The biggest proof of this is the murder of Shambhu."

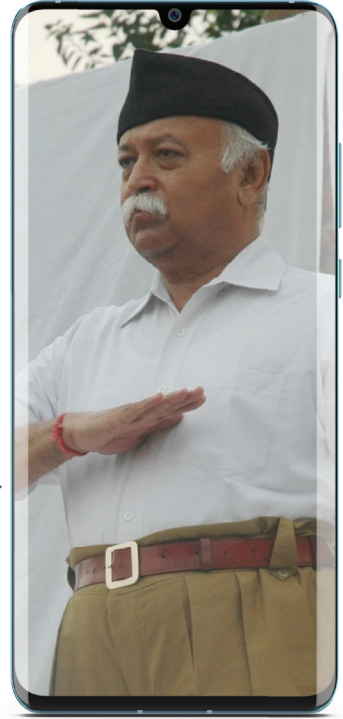
(ہندو دھرم، ص: 58)

The emergence of Buddhism and Jainism was the result of the oppression of the Brahmanical system. Brahmins gradually joined Buddhism and destroyed the Dharma itself.

Another reason is misleading historiography. It was started by the British and then carried forward by their disciples, the Brahmins, for their own interests, with the result that even educated people seem to be prejudiced. BN Pandey writes: "The history of India taught in our schools and colleges for generations has been compiled by European authors and is full of bias. It portrays Muslims as brutal people who destroyed Hindu culture and traditions, their temples, and their palaces. The Muslims offered the defeated Hindus a formidable alternative: "acceptance of Islam or the sword."

(ہندوستان اور اسلامی ثقافت، ص: 25)

Mr. Bhagwat! Abandon hatred and falsehood and take the path of truth. If you take the path of truth, you will come out of war and you will be freed from hatred and jealousy, and yes, then we and you together will make India Vishwaguru, and Muslims all over the world will support you. And God will help you. If you insist on telling lies, the fire of jealousy and hatred will not leave you. This is a historical fact.



SEALED NECTAR

The Second 'Aqabah Pledge

The next year, the thirteenth of Prophethood, June 622 A.D., during the pilgrimage season, over seventy converts from Madinah came on the trail of their polytheist people to perform the rituals of pilgrimage in Makkah. The oft-repeated question among them was "Isn't it high time we protect Muhammad instead of leaving him forsaken, deserted, and stumbling in the hillocks of Makkah?"

Shortly after arrival, they conducted clandestine contacts with the Prophet ﷺ and agreed to meet him secretly at night in mid-Tashreeq days (the 11th, 12th, and 13th days of Dhul Hijja) in a hillock at Al-'Aqabah, the last year's meeting place. One of the leaders of the Ansâr (Helpers), Ka'b bin Malik Al-Ansari, gave an account of the historic meeting, which changed the whole course of the struggle between Islam and paganism. He said: We set out for pilgrimage and struck a rendezvous in mid-Tashreeq Days. We were accompanied by a celebrity and a notable of ours called 'Abdullah bin 'Amr bin Haram, who was still a polytheist. We disclosed to him our intention of meeting Muhammad ﷺ and exhorted him to join our ranks and give up polytheism, lest it serve as wood for hell in the hereafter. He promptly embraced Islam and witnessed the serious meeting at Al-'Aqabah. That very night, we slept with our people in our camps. After a third of the night had elapsed, we began to leave stealthily and met on a hill nearby. We were seventy-three men and two women: Nusaibah bint Ka'b from the Najjars and Asma' bint Amr from Bani Salamah. We waited for the Messenger of Allah ﷺ until he came in the company of his uncle Al-'Abbas bin 'Abdul Muttalib, who (though himself not a Muslim) adjured us not to draw his nephew away from the protection of his own kindred unless we were fully prepared to defend him even at the risk of our lives. He was the first to speak:

"O you people of the Khazraj — the Arabs used to call them the Ansâr (Helpers) Khazraj, whether from Khazraj or Aws — you all know the position that Muhammad holds among us. We have protected him from our people as much as we can. He is honoured and respected among his people. There is no one else to join this party except you. So if you think you can carry out what you promised while inviting him to your town, and if you can defend him against the enemies, then assume the burden that you have taken. But if you are going to surrender him and betray him after having taken him away with you, you had better leave him now because he is respected and well-defended in his own place."

Ka'b replied: "We have heard your words, and now, O Messenger of Allah, it is for you to speak and take from us any pledge that you want regarding your Lord and yourself." It was a definite stance, showing full determination, courage, and deep faith to shoulder the daunting responsibility and bear its serious consequences.

The Messenger of Allâh ﷺ then preached the faith, and the pledge was taken. Al-Imam Ahmad, on the authority of Jabir, gave the following details:

The Ansâr (helpers) asked the Messenger of Allah ﷺ about the principles over which they would take a pledge. The Prophet answered:

1. To listen and obey in all sets of circumstances.
2. To spend in plenty as well as in scarcity.
3. To enjoin good and forbid evil.
4. In Allah's service, you will fear the censure of none.
5. To defend me in case I seek your help and you debar me from anything you debar yourself, your spouses, and your children from. And if you observe those principles, paradise is in store for you.

Syrians displaced by quakes fear cholera outbreak as cases surge

At least two people died in northwest Syria last month following a rise in cholera infections.

US issues more Iran sanctions amid stalled diplomacy

New measures target Iranian oil and petrochemical sales, as US says it is committed to reducing Iran's energy exports.

'Repugnant': US rebukes Israeli remark on Palestinian village

US State Department condemns Israeli minister's call for Huwara to be 'wiped out', calling it a 'disgusting' incitement.

Turkey's Erdogan indicates election will take place on May 14

Last month's earthquakes led to suggestions that Turkey's parliamentary and presidential elections would be postponed.

Death toll climbs above 50,000 after Turkey, Syria earthquakes

Nearly 240,000 rescuers continue to work in quake-hit provinces in Turkey, though no survivors have been found recently.

India's G20 meeting ends without consensus on Russia-Ukraine war

Gathering of foreign ministers is marred by disagreements as Russia and China reject a joint statement that calls for end to war.



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