

Khalifa Ali bin Abu Talib - Ward of the Holy Prophet

The house of the Holy Prophet

When Ali came to live with the Holy Prophet that was some time in the year 604 C.E. By this time eight years had passed since the marriage of the Holy Prophet and Khadija. At the time the Holy Prophet was thirty-three years and Khadija was forty-eight years old. During these eight years, Khadija had given birth to seven children. Out of these three were sons and four were daughters. All the three boys died during infancy. The girls survived. These were Zainab, Ruqayya, Umm Kulthum and Fatima. There were no more births thereafter. All the source books that have come down to us are silent as to the activities of the Holy Prophet during this period. We know that Khadija was a rich lady and when the record is silent about any business activity of the Holy Prophet that tends to create the impression that the Holy Prophet depended on the wealth of his wife. The Holy Prophet being the greatest of all men of all times, and a personification of perfection in all spheres of human activity could not be supposed as living on the wealth of anybody else, howsoever close. Years later in a verse of the Holy Quran, Allah said, "Were thee not poor, and did We not enrich thee?" A person who depends on the wealth of another person cannot be regarded as a rich man. The test of richness is that such richness should be on his own account and because of his own efforts. We know that the Holy Prophet was a skilful Manager, and a man endowed with such qualities could not be expected to sit idle. We know that the Holy Prophet was known as "Amin". This means that he was a banker, and a person who practiced banking must necessarily be a rich man. The Holy Prophet undertook some trade journeys before his marriage, and such journeys proved to be profitable from the business point of view. There appears to be no ground to believe that the Holy Prophet stopped all business activity after marriage. On the other hand, the plausibility is that he undertook such activities on a still bigger scale. It appears that during this period, the Holy Prophet headed a trade organization whereof his wife and some other friends were partners. We can thus conclude that when Ali came to live with the Holy Prophet, he found in the house of the Holy Prophet, all the comforts that are found in the house of a rich man.

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