

Khalifa Ali bin Abu Talib - Early Days in Madina

Brotherhood between the emigrants and the Muslims of Madina

The Madinites felt honored to have the Holy Prophet and his companions in their midst, and in order to insure the comfort and well being of their friends from Makkah they were prepared to undergo any sacrifice themselves. Under the electrifying influence of Islam, the Madinites came to develop such traits of character which are unique and without a parallel in the annals of mankind.

The emigrants from Makkah were not to adjust themselves to the changed physical environments alone, they had to adjust themselves to changed social environments as well. To bring about such adjustment and rehabilitation the Holy Prophet established a fraternity among the Muslims from Makkah and those of Madina whereunder each emigrant was paired with a resident of Madina of the corresponding status. For their selflessness and help in the rehabilitation of the emigrants from Makkah in the society of Madina, the Madinites came to be known as "Ansars"-helpers. The brotherhood that was established in Madina during this period shows to what heights men can rise when they are motivated by some noble purpose. The bonds established as a consequence of this brotherhood surpassed the ties of blood relationship.

According to the accounts that have come down to us the Holy Prophet paired all emigrants except Ali with the Ansar. According to some traditions quoted by Arman Sarhadi in his book Ali b Abu Talib, Ali felt great disappointment in being passed over in the process of pairing. It is stated that Ali went weeping to his house where he was consoled by his wife Fatima. Later the Holy Prophet paired Ali with himself declaring that Ali was to him what Haroon was to the prophet Moses.

It is difficult to believe in the veracity of this tradition. By this time Ali was still unmarried, and it is prima facie untrue that his wife Fatima consoled him. Ali was a man of great courage who could face any ordeal, and he was not the man to weep because he was not paired with any Ansar. At this time Ali was a member of the family of the Holy Prophet. Ali had not acquired an independent identity of his own so far apart from being a member of the family of the Holy Prophet and the question of pairing him with any Ansar did not arise.

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