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Fadak had been one of the villages around Medinah situated at a distance of 140 kilometres from Khaybar. In the year 7 ah when the forts of Khaybar fell one after another to the soldiers of Islam and the central power of the Jews was smashed, the inhabitants of Fadak approached the Noble Prophet (S) in submission and handed over one half of their land and gardens to him retaining the other half for themselves. In addition, they also agreed to shoulder the responsibility of cultivating his share of the land and used to receive some benefits for this effort of theirs.

In view of the verse of booty (Fai), this land was specific to the Noble Prophet (S) and he could utilize it for himself or use it in other instances as stated in verse 7 of Suratul Hashr and accordingly, he gifted it to his daughter Fatimah (s.a.). This is a fact, which has been emphasized and stated by numerous Sunnite and Shi'ite historians and commentators. In the commentary *al-Durrul Manthur*, it has been narrated from Ibne 'Abbas that when the verse:

وَآتِ ذَا الْقُرْبَىٰ حَقَّهُ

“Then give to the near of kin his due”¹

was revealed, the Noble Prophet (S) gifted Fadak to Fatimah (s.a.)²:

أَقْطَعَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ فَأَطِمَةَ فَدَكُ.

In the chapter of silah rahim (establishing bonds of consanguinity) of the book *Kanz al-'Ummal*, written as annotations for the book *Musnad* of Ahmad ibne Hanbal, it has been reported from Abu Sa'id Khudri that when the above verse was revealed, the Noble Prophet (S) sought Fatimah (s.a.) and said to her:

يَا فَاطِمَةُ لَكَ فَدَكٌ.

“O' Fatimah! Fadak is for you.”³

Hakim Nishaburi has also reported this same meaning in his book, which deals with history.⁴

Ibne Abil Hadid too, in his commentary of Nahjul Balaghah, has mentioned the incident of Fadak in great detail⁵ and so too have numerous other books.

But after the Noble Prophet (S) those, who perceived this economic power in the hands of 'Ali's (a.s.) spouse as a danger to their political power and were determined to isolate his supporters in every respect, confiscated it on the basis of a fabricated tradition:

نَحْنُ مَعَاشِرَ الْأَنْبِيَاءِ لَا نُورَثُ.

And despite the fact that Fatimah (s.a.) was in official possession of the land – and one in possession of something is not asked to present witnesses – she was asked to present her witnesses (that Fadak belonged to her). She presented them, who testified that the Noble Prophet (S) had personally gifted it to her, but they disregarded these witnesses.

In later periods, those Caliphs who desired to express their inclinations towards the Ahlul Bayt (a.s.), would return Fadak to them but soon after another would come up and confiscate it once again! This was repeated on numerous occasions during the time of the Umayyad and the 'Abbasid caliphs.

The incident of Fadak and the events associated with it during the initial stages of Islam and in the later eras are of the most painful, sorrowful but at the same time, the most admonitory portions of the history of Islam which ought to be placed under meticulous study so that it illuminates various other incidents of Islam.

Significantly, the Sunni narrator – Muslim ibne Hajjaj Nishaburi – has reported the incident of Fatimah's (s.a.) demand for Fadak in detail in his book Sahih Muslim and reports from 'Aishah that after the first Caliph's refusal to return Fadak to Fatimah (s.a.), she was enraged with him and did not speak a word to him for as long as she was alive.⁶ and ⁷

1. Suratul Rum (30), Verse 38

2. al-Durr al-Manthur, vol. 4, pg. 177

3. Kanzul 'Ummal, vol. 2, pg. 158

4. Refer the book Fadak, pg. 49

5. Sharh of Nahjul Balagha of Ibn Abil Hadid, vol. 16, pg. 209 onwards
6. Sahih Muslim, vol. 3, pg. 1380, no. 52 of 'The Book of Jihad'
7. Tafsir-e-Namuna, vol. 23, pg. 510

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