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On the Eve of the Proclamation of His Mission

Notwithstanding the fact that Arabia was a pit of iniquity and the bastion of idolatry and polytheism, Muhammad himself was never contaminated by any vice or sin, and he never bowed before any idol. Even before he formally declared that he came to establish the Kingdom of Heaven on earth, his own conduct and character were a reflection of Qur'an –the glorious. Even his critics have not been able to point out any divergence between his conduct and the precepts of Qur'an at any time, before or after the Proclamation.

After the Proclamation of his mission as the Messenger of God, he placed pagan practices and customs under proscription, but there is no evidence that before doing so, he himself ever committed a pagan act, or indeed any act repugnant to Qur'an.

It appears that Qur'an, the Book of God, was etched on the heart of Muhammad from the beginning, and it also appears that he “preached” Islam even before the Proclamation but only through his deeds and not with words. His deeds were just as eloquent as his speeches, and they proclaimed to the world what manner of man he was.

After all, it were the pagans who called him Amin (the trusted one) and Sadiq (the truthful), and they were the same people who, in later years, persecuted him, hunted him, Banushed him, and set a price on his head.

Depraved and wanton as the pagan Arabs were, they admired truthfulness, even in an enemy. Yet their admiration for Muhammad's truthfulness did not inhibit them from seeking his destruction when he denounced their idolatry and polytheism. They thirsted for his blood ever since he invited them to Islam but never questioned his trustworthiness. On this point there cannot be a testimony more unimpeachable than theirs.

The citizens of Makkah admired not only Muhammad's integrity but also his judgment. At one time, the Quraysh were rebuilding the Kaaba, and in one of the walls they had to fit the Black Stone. Someone had to bring the Black Stone to the site of construction, lift it from the ground, and put it in its place in the

wall. Who was going to do it?

Each clan claimed the honor for itself but the other clans were not willing to yield to anyone in this matter. The disagreement led to violent speeches, and hotheads threatened to decide with the sword who would place the Black Stone in its place in the wall.

At that moment, an old Arab intervened, and suggested that instead of fighting against and killing each other, the chiefs of the clans ought to wait and see who would be the first man to enter the precincts of the Kaaba on the following morning, and then submit the case for adjudication to him.

It was a wise suggestion, and the chiefs wisely accepted it. Next morning when the gate of Kaaba was opened, they saw Muhammad entering through it. They were all glad that it was he, and they all agreed to refer their dispute to him, and to abide by his decision.

Muhammad ordered a sheet of cloth to be brought, and to be spread on the ground. He then placed the Stone on it, and he asked each chief to lift one of its corners and to carry it to the foot of the wall of Kaaba. When it was done, he himself lifted the Stone and placed it in position.

Muhammad's decision satisfied everyone. By his wisdom, he had saved faces and he had obviated bloodshed. The incident also proved that in moments of crisis, the Arabs deferred to his opinion. He was a charismatic leader of men.

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