

IDD - EL MUBAHILA

Mubahila means to invoke Allah 's curse upon. The occasion of this festival is agreed upon by all historians - non-Muslim as well as by Muslims of different sects.

In the ninth year after Hijra, deputations from a number of communities belonging to various countries came to Prophet Muhammad (s.a.w.) to enquire about his mission. Most of them on being convinced declared their acceptance of Islam.

However up till then the Nasranis of Najraan (a city in the province of Yemen) kept themselves aloof. The Prophet sent them a letter inviting them to Islam. They consulted each other and decided to send a representative deputation of fourteen members to Medina to study the facts pertaining the mission of the Prophet. The deputation was headed by three scholars of repute Abdul Maseeh Aquib, Saiyed and Abdul Haris. When these deputies reached Medina, they changed their clothes and dressed themselves in silken garments and put on rings of gold on their fingers. Then they went to the mosque to greet the Prophet who did not respond and turned his face away from them.

They were naturally stunned and came out enquiring as to the reasons for such response. Ali b. Abi Talib (a.s.) advised them to remove the clothes of silk and the rings of gold and put on instead their priestly robes. They then changed their garments as advised and presented themselves to the Prophet who responded to their salutations saying:

"By the Lord who has appointed me His Messenger, when they first came to me, they were accompanied by Satan."

Thereafter the Prophet preached to them and invited them to accept Islam. They asked him what his opinion was about Isa. They were told to rest that day and they would be given the reply later. The Prophet (saw) was in fact awaiting revelation from Allah on this question. The next day the following ayats of the Holy Quran were revealed:

"Surely the likeness of Isa is with Allah as the likeness of Adam; He created him from dust, then said to him 'Be' and he was. This is the truth from your Lord, so be not one of the disputers" (Al-e-Imran 58-59)"

When the Nasranis of Najran reappeared the next day, the Prophet explained to them that Isa was a Prophet like Adam who was created from dust. If Adam could be created without father so could Isa be. They remained obstinate and refused to be convinced of any logic argument. Thereupon the following Ayat of the Holy Qura'n:

"But whoever disputes with you in this matter after what has come to you of knowledge then say: Come! Let us call our sons and your sons and our women and your women and our people and your people, then let us be earnest in prayer, and pray for the curse of Allah on the liars." (Al-e-Imran 60)

The Prophet recited this ayat before the Nasranis of Najran and again urged them to accept Islam. As they refused, the Prophet then challenged them with 'Mubahila which meant cursing one another. They consulted each other and agreed to accept the challenge.

On command of Allah, the Holy Prophet took his Ahl-al-Bait to the appointed place and at a fixed time for the challenge of Mubahila. Who were these members of the prophet's household? On the Prophet's lap was the young grandchild Husain, walking along holding his fingers was the elder grandson Hasan, behind the Prophet was his daughter Fatima under her full purdah and behind her walked Ali, the son-in-law. The Prophet had directed them to utter 'Amen' when he prayed to Allah and invoked his curse.

For the deputation of Najran to see this composition of the close members of the Prophet's household and their impressive approach it overwhelmed and shook them with fright.

"Verily I see a divine light on the face of our combatants" said their leader to his fellow priests.