

HADRAT MARIA QIBTIA (R.A)

The front of Makka was silent after the pact of Hudaibiah. This front had so far consumed the energies of the Muslims to a considerable extent. The Holy Prophet (SAW) was concentrating much of his time on this front, but now the circumstances allowed him to think on a wider plane. Invitations were sent to ten monarchs of different states for embracing Islam. This was the first step to introduce Islam as an international religion for whole of the humanity. The following four kingdoms surrounding Arabia were very strong and influential.

1. Persia ruled by Khusro.
2. Rome ruled by Heracles.
3. Egypt ruled by Maqooqas.
4. Abyssinia ruled by Najjashi.

Hadrat Hatib was sent to Maqooqas of Egypt carrying the letter of the Holy Prophet of Allah (*This letter now stands traced and discovered by anthropologist and has been preserved*). Maqooqas as a gesture of good will sent in return some gifts of gold, clothes, honey and two bond-maids, namely Seeren and Mary (*Both are said to be real sisters*) to the Holy Prophet (SAW) for strengthening the bonds of friendship between him and the State of Madina.

The Egyptian monarch had further written that these bondmaids enjoyed respectable status in Egypt. This shows that the two sisters were not ordinary bondmaids but belonged to the royal house of Egypt. In his letter, he also desired that these girls should not be given to common folks. According to Islamic law, two real sisters cannot be married to one man; Seeren was awarded to Hadrat Hassaan Bin Thabit (*A famous Muslim poet of Prophet's times*) and Mary was chosen for the service of the Holy Prophet (SAW). Mary was called Maria Qibtia, because in those days the Egyptians were known as Coptic's.

According to certain historians, Mary had embraced Islam even before she reached Madina while some chronologers report that she embraced Islam after reaching Madina. A few historians have insisted that after she embraced Islam, the Holy Prophet (SAW) married her and she lived as his wife thereafter. But most of the chronologers have mentioned her as a bondmaid. Infact as she gave birth to a son Ibrahim to the Holy Prophet, she assumed the position of his wife and not a bondmaid according to the Islamic law. Hadrat Maria gave birth to a son, Ibrahim, the son of the Holy Prophet (SAW). Prior to Ibrahim, two sons were born to Hadrat Khadija but they both died at a tender age. The birth of Ibrahim gave great pleasure to the Holy Prophet. He had a great love for little Ibrahim and wanted to see him daily. The love

of this son took the Holy Prophet (SAW) almost daily to Hadrat Maria's place. She was living a few houses away from Masjid-e-Nabvi. The other wives of the Holy Prophet (SAW), in the capacity of wife thought they socially better placed than Hadrat Maria and never felt at ease on the Holy Prophet's continuous visit to Hadrat Maria's place. This jealousy was natural but the Holy Prophet's attitude, behaviour and treatment with his wives was based on equality and justice.

Ibrahim died after attaining the age of only sixteen months and the Holy Prophet (SAW) was deeply grieved. He was escorted by Hadrat Abdul Rahman bin Auf to have a last glimpse of his son. Tears were rolling down his cheeks. Anguish was writ large on his face. When some of his companions expressed surprise, the Holy Prophet (SAW) explained, "I prohibit wailing with loud voice for the dead but I do not prohibit the expression of grief. It is but natural."

This sentence of the Holy Prophet has an ever lasting meaning and guidance. The Muslims in Pakistan and India still shout and cry, tear their clothes and utter unfair words in protest. All this misbehavior curse and disobedience towards the Creator. He, who has given life, can always take it back at any time.

The day, Ibrahim died, there was a solar eclipse. Superstitious people took it that the sky is darkened in sorrow because of the death of the Holy Prophet's son. The Holy Prophet readily corrected them and said:

"Don't say like that; the Moon and the Sun are not eclipsed because of any body's death".

He further said, "Offer prayers to Allah and always remember Him".

The Holy Prophet (SAW) thus made it explicitly clear that the earthquakes, storms, whirl-winds or other calamities have nothing to do with the death of anybody, however important or pious he may be.

In the tenth year of Hijra, Ibrahim died. The Holy Prophet survived him by only a few months. After the death of the Holy Prophet (SAW), Hadrat Maria lived for four years and died. Hadrat Umar Farooq, the second pious Caliph led her funeral prayers and Hadrat Maria was laid to rest in Jannat-ul-Baqi (*A famous graveyard situated near Masjid-e-Nabvi*).