

Imam al-Baqir(A.S.) Freed Islamic Money from the Domination of the Roman Empire

Ima`m Abu` Ja'far (al-Ba`qir), peace be on him, offered an excellent service to the Islamic world. For he freed Islamic money from the domination of the Roman empire, where Islamic money was made and had the Roman symbol.

Ima`m al-Ba`qir, peace be on him, made Islamic money independent with an Islamic symbol. Thus, he cut off the relationship between Islamic money and the Romans. The reason for that was that 'Abd al-Malik looked at a book embroidered in Egypt. He ordered the book to be translated into Arabic. The book was translated. The Christian symbol (Father, Son, and the Spirit) was written on the book.

'Abd al-Malik denied that. So, he wrote to his governor of Egypt, 'Abd al-'Aziz b. Marwa`n, to abolish that. Moreover, he ordered him to force the embroiderers to embroider books, clothes, and the like, with the Islamic motto: "Allah bears witness that there is no god but He." He also wrote to his governors all over the Islamic counties to abolish the books with Roman mottoes and symbols in their countries. He ordered them to punish those who had such books and clothes. The embroiderers wrote that on their books and clothes. Such books and clothes spread throughout the Islamic countries.

Then, they were carried to Rome. So, the Roman Emperor became very angry. Thus, he wrote to 'Abd al-Malik, saying: "Books and clothes had been embroidered with the Roman mottoes and symbols before you abolished them. If your predecessors were right, then you are wrong. If they were wrong, then you are right. Choose one of these two views. I have sent you a gift appropriate for your position. I would be grateful to you if you would adopt the previous embroidery.

'Abd al-Malik read the letter. Then he told the messenger that he had no answer to the letter. He also refused to accept the gift. So, the messenger went back to the Roman Emperor and told him about 'Abd al-Malik's words.

Hence, the Emperor wrote again to 'Abd al-Malik and doubled the gift for him. In the letter he asked him to return the previous mottoes and symbols.

However, 'Abd al-Malik refused to receive the letter and the gift. He insisted on his view. The messenger went back to the Roman Emperor and told him about what had happened. Accordingly, the Emperor wrote a threatening letter. The letter read as follows: "You have disparaged my letter and my gift. You have not helped me with my need. I thought that you had regarded the gift as small. So, I had doubled it for you. However, you went on your view. So, I increased it three times. I swear by Jesus Christ to order you to return the old-fashioned money; otherwise I will order the dinars and the dirhams to be engraved to abuse your Prophet. You know that the dinars and the dirhams had been minted in my country. No one of them had been minted during Islam. When you read the letter, prevent your head from sweating. I want you to accept my gift and to change the style (of money) into the previous one. That will be as a gift to show love towards me. So, the relationship between you and me will continue.

When 'Abd al-Malik read the Emperor's message, he became perplexed. In this connection, he said: "I think that I am the most unlucky baby born in Islam, for I will make this unbeliever (the Roman Emperor) curse Allah's Apostle, may Allah bless him and his family. This dishonor will remain to the end of the world. The Roman Emperor has threatened me to mint money. Such money will be passed around the world.

'Abd al-Malik gathered the people. He asked them about the affair. However, no one was able to give him a decisive answer. Then, Ru`h b. Zinba`' said to him: "You the person who is able to solve this affair. You want to leave him intentionally." 'Abd al-Malik blamed him for that, saying: "Woe unto you! Who is he?"

"He is al-Ba`qir, who is from the members of the House of the Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family," replied Ru`h b. Zinba`'.

So, 'Abd al-Malik submitted to Ru`h b. Zinba`'. He believed his view. He knew that he ignored Ima`m al-Ba`qir, peace be on him.

Immediately, he wrote to his governor of Medina (Yathrib). He ordered him to send the Ima`m to him. Moreover, he ordered him to treat the Ima`m kindly and to give him four hundred thousand dirhams. When the governor received the letter, he carried out 'Abd al-Malik's orders. Thus, Ima`m al-Ba`qir, peace be on him, went to Damascus.

When he arrived there, 'Abd al-Malik received him warmly. Then he told him about the Roman Emperor's threats. Thus, Ima`m al-Ba`qir, peace be on him, said: "Do not regard this affair as great. It is nothing for two reasons. The first is that Allah, the Great and Almighty, will

not allow the Roman Emperor to carry out his threat concerning Allah's Apostle, may Allah bless him and his family. The other is that there is a solution for this affair.

So, 'Abd al-Malik asked the Ima`m: "What is the solution?"

Ima`m al-Ba`qir, peace be on him, answered: "At this hour, summon some makers. Order them to make coins of dirhams and dinars. Then order them to engrave the Sura of al-Tawhid in one face and the name of Allah's Apostle, may Allah bless him and his family, in the other face. Then order them to mention the year and country of minting. Order them to make a dirham of ten weights and a dinar of seven weights.

'Abd al-Malik accepted that. He ordered the coins to be minted as Ima`m al-Ba`qir, peace be on him, described. When the Roman Emperor found out about this, he kept silent. Thus, all his efforts were in vain. Accordingly, Moslems passed the coins Ima`m al-Ba`qir, peace be on him, designed till the time of the Abbasids.[\(Al-Dimyari, Hayat al-Hayawan, vol. 1, pp. 63-64\)](#)

Ibn Kuthayr said: "Ima`m Zayn al-'Abidin, peace be on him, suggested the coins.[\(Al-Bidaya wa al-Nihaya, vol. 9, p. 68\)](#)

However, the Islamic world thanked Ima`m Abu` Ja'far (al-Ba`qir) for freeing its money from the domination of the Romans.