

Chapter – 36

Haroon Rashid

(764 - 809 AD)

In Muslim history, major Islamic governments were established and many families hold the throne, but the greatness and importance of the affluent Abbasi family did not come to anybody's part. Although its ruling area was less than that of the Umayyad regime, rather it continued to decrease, but as long as the name of the Abbasid government remained, it remained vital in Islamic governments. This Abbasi Caliphate spanned five centuries, i.e., from 132AH/750AD to 656AH/1258AD.

Haroon, whose title was Rashid, was the fifth Caliph of the Abbasid Caliphate. His father Mahdi bin Mansoor was the third Caliph of the same Caliphate who ruled from 159AH /775AD to 168AH/785AD. After him, his eldest son took over, but he died soon after. When Haroon was sitting on the throne in 169AH /786AD, he was 22 years old. He got the opportunity to perform Hajj in the first year of sitting on the ruling throne . Arriving at Hermain, he showered his blessings with gifts and aids on the local people. He removed prison and punishments from Aal-'Ali and allowed them to settle in Madinah.

The reign of Haroon Rashid was the golden period of the Abbasid Kingdom. In gaining this popularity his own persona undoubtedly played a major role, however, its credit goes to his distinguished Barmakid ministers as well. Barmak, an ancestor of Barmakid family, was the priest of the Buddhist Temple of Balkh. Therefore, the people of Khorasan looked at him with

great respect. The son of Barmak, Khalid, participated in the Abbasid feast of Abu Muslim. And his son Yahya was responsible for a number of services in the days of Hadi, the father of Haroon Rashid. Yahya also remained as a regular teacher of Haroon Rashid. So he became his advisor in the early days of Haroon's Caliphate. Rather, all the affairs of the kingdom had gone by the orders of Yahya Barmakid. After him Fazal, one of his son, replaced him, and the another son, Jafer, was made Haroon's right hand. When the ministry came into Jafer's hands, he took all the affairs in his hand with his intelligence that Haroon became simply a nominal King in those days. However, one day the Jafer's selfishness came to this stage that eventually forced Haroon Rashid to kill him.

In Haroon's period, internal strifes were prominent in various parts of the country, but he recovered from it in time. His era is distinguished by external victories. During his time there were many clashes from the Romans. Among those the most important was the invasion on Asia Minor (*comprises most of the Asian part of modern Turkey and the Armenian highland*). The new Roman king of Constantinople, Nancy Four, had demanded Haroon Rashid, that he should pay back all the taxes he had received, otherwise he should be prepared for war. On that, Haroon Rashid attacked with his army and defeated the Roman king of Constantinople.

Syria, which belonged to Romans, was the capital city of the Umayyad throne. And with this Muslims came into its influence as well, but since this area was similar to Arabia, their civilization did not create a significant difference. But when the Abbasids replaced them, they changed it altogether. The Abbasid Caliphate changed with non-Arab civilization into all walks of life, except religion. Politics, civilization, knowledge, arts, and almost the entire culture had fallen into the non-Arab

culture. In Haroon Rashid's time, the countries under Abbasids made great progress in academics, civics and politics. The institution with the name "Bait-ul-Hikmah" was established in his time, which opened the door of various sciences and arts. The scholars were produced and education flourished. During their time, a new Islamic civilization was also came into existence by the combination of Arabic and Iranian civilization. Thus the combination of both created a charming and colourful civilization, which eventually became the standard civilization of Muslims.

During the period of Haroon Rashid, the Empire was very strong, the country was rich, and the treasure was full. Baghdad city became a new world. It had one place like one city. In the vastness of the area, the abundance of the population, the knowledge, the arts, the commerce, the industry, the civilization and all the material qualities, no city in the world of this time could face Baghdad. Allah had bestowed all His blessings in it. Its two rivers, the Dajlah and the Furat (*Euphrates*), were giving the fertility of the city of Baghdad. Trade was also being carried out through these rivers. There were experts of every profession in this city, and there were sufficient supplies for every need. So the people were happy.

During the rule of Haroon Rashid, all the government departments, and the establishment of justice were based on Islamic principles. Haroon Rashid himself was also the strict follower of the Sharia. Zubaida was the beloved wife of Haroon Rashid, and for this reason she is also specially named in the history.