

Simplicity

Once upon a time there was a Khalifah whose rule was known for his kind and generous administration. He worked for the prosperity and well being of the people. But there were some distinguished people belonging to the house of the Ummiyads, who were the cause of constant worry to him. They shunned the ways of the God. They enjoyed life at the expense of the common man and indulged in merrymaking. The Khalifah thought of teaching them a lesson.

He invited some prominent people to dinner. Since the dinner was to be given by none other than the ruling Khalifah, they readily accepted the invitation. The Khalifah ordered his cook to serve the meal late.

On the appointed day, the guests dressed well, and proudly came to the house of the Khalifah in time. He greeted them well and made them sit in a comfortable environment. The guests felt exalted and honoured. They started chatting merrily while waiting for the dinner.

But nothing happened. The guests looked towards one another but could not say anything. They became restless and hungry. Looking at their condition the Khalifah shouted to his cook to hurry up. At the same time, he ordered some parched grams to be served which he and his guests ate to their fill.

A few minutes later, the cook brought steaming hot food. Had it been served earlier, the guests would have finished the last remains of the food but it came at an hour when they had already eaten grams and did not feel hungry anymore. The guests refused to eat, saying that they were full. Thereupon, the pious Khalifah spoke out, "Brothers! when you can satisfy your appetite with so simple a diet, why do you play with fire and snatch the properties and rights of the others." These words deeply moved the guests of the house of the Ummiyads who burst into tears. They never tried to be extravagant in future. This is how the pious Khalifah taught a lesson to those who had forgotten the teachings of the Holy Prophet (ﷺ).

The Khalifah was none other than Hazrat Umer Bin Abdul Aziz (رضي الله عنه), whose life was full of such incidents. He himself led a life of simplicity and honesty. His truthfulness and integrity have few parallels in the history of Islam. That is why, he is considered to be the fifth pious Khalifah of Islam.

Words**Meanings**

prosperity	state of being rich or successful
indulge	allow oneself the pleasure of
serve	work for somebody
prominent	important
exalted	lifted up
restless	impatient
refuse	deny
pious	having deep devotion to religion
extravagant	wasteful
appetite	physical desire for food
incident	event
integrity	quality of being honest

EXERCISES**1. Answer the following questions:**

- i. How did the Khalifah teach the distinguished guests to live a life of simplicity?
- ii. Write down the chief characteristics of the personality of Hazrat Umer bin Abdul Aziz (رضي الله عنه).

2. Tick (✓) the right answer.

- i. The guests invited by the Khalifah belonged to the house of the
 - a) Ummayyads
 - b) Quresh
 - c) Abbasids
- ii. The Khalifah asked his cook to
 - a) bring the food quickly.
 - b) delay the preparation of food.
 - c) serve the meal late.

- iii. The guest ate
 - a) roasted nuts.
 - b) parched grams.
 - c) steaming hot food.

- iv. The guests
 - a) tasted the food when it was served.
 - b) didn't eat the food.
 - c) served it to others.

- v. The Khalifah's words
 - a) moved the guests.
 - b) enraged the guests.
 - c) pleased them.

3. Fill in the blanks.

- i. The Khalifah's rule was known for his _____ administration.
- ii. He invited some _____ people to a dinner.
- iii. The Khalifah ordered his cook to _____ the meal late.
- iv. The Khalifah was none other than _____.
- v. He is considered to be the _____ Khalifah of Islam.

4. Match part of the sentence in column I with the relevant part in column II.

Column I

Column II

He worked for the prosperity and	expense of the common man.
They enjoyed life at the	parched grams.
The Khalifah thought of	exalted and honoured.
To satisfy their hunger he ordered some	well being of the people.
The guests felt	teaching them a lesson.

5. Answer the following questions.

- i. Why did the Khalifah invite certain people to dinner?
- ii. Why did he order his cook to serve the meal late?
- iii. What did he serve when his guests were hungry?
- iv. Why did the guests refuse to eat the dinner?
- v. What was the lesson taught by the Khalifah?