

The Infallibility of the Holy Prophet in the Pre-Prophethood Phase

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Abstract: The Muslim theologians are generally silent over the question whether the Holy Prophet in particular and his august predecessors in general ever enjoyed any kind of infallibility before they assumed or blessed with Prophethood. There are a large number of *ḥadīth* and *ṣīrah* traditions that construe to show that the last Prophet (Peace be upon Him) did enjoy during his pre-*bi'thah* period a certain degree of infallibility, if not pure Prophetic *'ismah* in all its respects during this period, and he was protected by divine forces from committing mistakes or indulging in a conduct and which was not in consonance with his forth-coming position, of being the Prophet of God.

This study seeks to expose this pre-*bi'thah* infallibility or divine system of protection (it may be called pre-*bi'thah 'ismah* or divine protective system) provided to the last Prophet. It started working from the very inception of the creation for his pedigree (*nasb*) as it was protected by the Islamic way of *nikāh* and his lineage was also thoroughly divine as he was chosen one in this mundane life too. Purity was enshrined in his heart, and the physical organ (the heart) itself was also purified through a miracle called *shaqq al-ṣadr* in his early boyhood; besides he was not inclined miraculously to participate in activities which were not considered good for the pious and the chosen ones. On the positive side, the Prophet was guided, curiously enough, to follow the true rituals of the Ibrāhīmī faith and serve as a role model for his compatriots of the *Jāhiliyyah* days.

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