

## **Khalifa Umar bin al-Khattab - Inter-Personal Relations and Interactions**

### ***Aghlab and Labid, the Poets***

Aghlab and Labid were two well known poets of the time of Umar. They resided at Kufa. They were allowed by Umar a stipend of 2,000 dirhams each.

When Mugheera bin Shaaba was the Governor of Kufa, Umar asked him to call these poets and hear from them the poetry they had written after conversion to Islam.

Mugheera called Aghlab and asked him to recite some verses which he had written since his conversion to Islam. He recited:

"Do you want a battle song or a panegyric,

Verily you have made a simple demand."

Then Mugheera called Labid, and asked him to recite some verses.

He said:

"If you like I could recite for you the verses that I wrote during the period of ignorance."

Mugheera said:

"No, let us hear something which you have written during the Islamic period."

Thereupon Labid recited some verses from the Holy Quran and said:

"Since I have become a Muslim, the Holy Quran is my poetry."

Mugheera reported to Umar what Aghlab and Labid had said.

Thereupon Umar wrote to Mugheera reducing the stipend of Aghlab from 2,000 dirhams to 1,500 dirhams, and raising the stipend of Labid from 2,000 dirhams to 2,500 dirhams.

Aghlab felt grieved and he wrote the following verses to Umar:

" Umar asked me to recite my verses

I complied with his order

There was nothing wrong with my verses

But Umar reduced my stipend

That was a strange reward

For compliance with the orders of the Caliph."

Umar regretted the reduction in the stipend of Aghlab and passed orders for the restoration of the stipend

of 2,000 dirhams to Aghlab. The stipend of Labid was not touched and he continued to enjoy the stipend of 2,500 dirhams.

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*Source : Alim.org-Umar bin al-Khattab History*