



**Over whole six months,
the Turkish forces have been attrited and depleted
of their powers behind the walls**

According to the testimony of “Mangan” ...

Upon tracking the enmity through which Ottomans became hostile to Saudis; and upon becoming aware of the financial, military and human efforts they have exerted; as well as the firmans they have issued, and the years they have spent in order to eliminate the first Saudi state, the fall of Diriyah would not be a surprise. Rather, one would think deeply of the power that Saudis had, as well as the ferocity that enabled them to stand with their modest means in the face of an imperial power that remained for centuries and expanded east and west.

Upon closely tracking the Ottoman enmity towards the first Saudi state, one would believe that the policy of Ottomans required to suppress any Arabian movement; and insisted on overthrowing Saudis in particular because they were the sole source of the expected Arab renaissance which Turks feared for centuries. Inevitably, it was going to restore the state and ancient glory of Arabs. Therefore, Ottoman Empire recruited all its military and media forces in that time against Saudis. It started with the previous deliberate distortion of the ideology of their country by spreading lies and deceptions; and giving it descriptions such as Wahhabism for the purpose of isolating them from their Arab surroundings, and in order not to be a role model for the others in the Arab world. Ottomans were also convinced that such a country could only be eliminated by military force and through the widest militarization. This was previously indicated in previous topics of tracking the process of driving the military campaigns of Ottoman governors in Iraq, Levant, and Egypt that invaded the Saudi state. Such Ottoman policy that started with the establishment of the first Saudi state in (1744), and particularly two years later with its first publically declared hostile attitude that was reflected in its failed campaigns which it launched from Iraq.

By reviewing the Ottoman interaction with the first Saudi state, we notice that they considered the Muslims of Diriyah to be more dangerous to them than Europe that was incompatible with their religion and doctrine. Therefore, during that period, Ottomans practiced peace before Europeans and exchanged interests and diplomatic envoys with them. This means that Ottoman Sultan and his governors were afraid of the dignified Diriyah that was located in the heart of the desert and of which Turks were ignorant. It was near the terrifying Sand Sea with its prestige that was similar to that of its inhabitants. They feared it more than Europe with all of its countries.

This explains the excessive, brutal, and inhuman use of Ottomans of military force against Diriyah in their last battle with Saudis. Thus, it was proved that Ottoman Empire fought Saudis with terrorism more than military force and without giving any weight to honor, courage and chivalry by Turks and their governors in the battlefield. Therefore, they killed defenseless children, women, and men without mercy. They betrayed without bravery, and had the audacity to shed infallible blood and kill innocent civilians with full meanness, without batting an eyelid.

All this because the great epic of Saudis against them was greater than they imagined, and stronger than they expected; starting from the arrival moment of their invaders from Iraq, then Egypt. However, they started from Yanbu, passed through Al-Medina Al- Munawwara where Wadi Al- Safra battles took place; then Taif and Turabah, as well as Wadi Basl, Al- Qunfudhah, Al- Bahah, Asir, and finally the capital of the first Saudi state Diriyah.

Perhaps the most dangerous thing that Ottoman Empire has done and failed at, the same time, was its attempt to eradicate the ideology and identity of the first Saudi state from the bottom of the Arabian Peninsula so that it would not rise again after their crimes in Diriyah. Therefore, Ottomans did not leave any manuscript or book without confiscating it; neither did they leave a scholar without killing or deporting him from his homeland in an effort to keep the Saudi country in ruins, without cognitive memory that would resurrect and establish the country once more.

Ottomans were not aware that the Saudi country was established in the hearts of people, and drew its homeland whose borders were the hearts of the Saudis who were attached to their Imams and their thoughts. This is proven by the fact that as soon as their armies left the roads and squares of Diriyah, Saudis returned to their former condition, spreading the sound tenets of Islam, as well as establishing schools and seminars. It was only few years until the second Saudi state was launched.

Before the barbarian Turkish Ottoman Empire attacked it; destroyed, and burned its walls, Diriyah was the best city of all cities of the first Saudi state. It was also its capital after it had been turned into a meeting point of science and politics in the Arabian Peninsula that did not include a unified state since early period of Islamic history. However, Diriyah came to awaken the glory and power of Arabs once more after the identity had been lost for centuries.

The first priority of Saudis across their capital, Diriyah, and all of their towns was to prevail safety and security, let sustenance to be expanded, spread justice and science so that the population would feel the state impact in their life and livelihood. Therefore, Saudi historian, Othman Bin Bashir, described the condition of Diriyah saying, “When one entered its scope, he could not lose anyone of the people of the surrounding countries such as, Yemen, Tihama, Hijaz, Oman, Bahrain, Syrian Desert, Iraq, their inhabitants, and other people of the surrounding horizons which are countless. Some enter it, some leave it, and others live in it”.

In spite of the major battles waged by the Saudi armies in several provinces in defense of their country against Ottoman invaders who came from the Ottoman garrisons in Arab countries under orders of Istanbul, starting from Al- Ahsa, Hijaz, then the provinces of Tihama, Taif, and Asir, such fierce resistance of Saudis against Ottoman army was exhausted due to the advanced weapons used by Ottoman Empire, as well as the great supplies and efforts harnessed by Istanbul for its armies with the aim of eliminating Saudis in their towns. This affected the fall of the Saudi towns, one after another, until the forces of Ibrahim Pasha reached the town of Diriyah, the capital of the first Saudi state, and clamped down on them by blockading them in (1818).

The cruel blockade lasted for several months during which Diriyah and its people have suffered from hunger, lack of medicine and water due to terrorist use of force against people during the attempts of raiding it. When Ottoman invaders penetrated the walls of Diriyah, this was the formal fall of the first Saudi state. Saudi forces were not able to repel the last attack despite the bravery of defenders and civilians of the people of Diriyah who united in one block against Ottoman terrorism.

The defenders had to retreat. With the constant pressure on the city, Imam Abdullah Bin Saud moved from Bab Samhan to Al- Turaif district where he was fortified after Ibrahim Pasha forces had seized the south of Diriyah. Imam Abdullah found that continuing the fight would result in a humanitarian catastrophe regarding his people in the face of an army and a state that did not estimate neither religion, nor values. Thus, after six months of Diriyah blockade, in Dhul Qa'dah of (1233 AH), he, May Allah have mercy on him, announced his request of peace and security for Diriyah and its people in return for surrendering himself. Imam Abdullah surrendered himself with his soldiers in order to redeem the innocent ones of his people. He was taken to Cairo, then to Istanbul, the capital of Ottomans where their sultans deceived him and betrayed their covenant by killing him as a martyr in spite of their promises to the contrary.

The overthrow of Diriyah by Ottomans was not just a military action, it was rather a termination of the project of renaissance and reform led by the first Saudi state since its establishment up to its fall. Therefore, after overthrowing the state and upon leaving Diriyah, Ibrahim Pasha has sought to take all books, as well as scientific and religious theses that he has found there. Upon his arrival in Huraymila, he picked ten loads of them, then, he burned the rest. Nothing was left of the documents, theses, and books that were once contained in the bookcases of Diriyah.

Correspondences between Ottoman governor, Mohammed Ali Pasha, and his son revealed that the battles between Ibrahim Pasha and people of Diriyah started once he arrived there in (1818). He dug in order to set ramparts opposite to the ramparts of Imam Abdullah Bin Saud. Ibrahim Pasha described the military plan of Imam Abdullah as follows: “Since Diriyah was located between two mountains, Abdullah Bin Saud divided his men to be deployed on the mountains and the edges of Diriyah strait and inside the various gardens- farms. The rest of his aides were inside walls and towers. He seriously fortified his ramparts so that no missiles could penetrate it”. This indicates that Imam took the initiative to shoot in defense of his town.

During the intensification of Diriyah battles and while men stationed on the walls, women had an important role. The Frenchman, Felix Mangan, who resided at court of Mohammed Ali Pasha and who reviewed the correspondences of soldiers and Ibrahim indicated this saying, “Imam Abdullah knew about the absence of Ibrahim Pasha from his camp so he ordered his men to hit all the lines of Turks. The battle continued violently and hard. The fire of guns and weapons lasted for several hours. The temperature was very high. We saw the women of Saudi state carrying jars full of water and passing in front of gunshots bravely to water defenders of soldiers”.

After whole 6 months of continuous fighting and blockade, Ibrahim Pasha could not end the battle against Diriyah except after the arrival of huge supplies which were sent by his father, Mohammed Ali Pasha. Thus, Ibrahim began preparing for the last attack. He began gathering his cannons around the four sides of Diriyah and mobilized his cavalry and soldiers at the southern side of Diriyah. Nevertheless, he focused his cannons on the northern side more than other sides. Ibn Bishr described this saying, “At dawn, cavalry and soldiers headed to Musheirifa in the southern side which was carefully checked by Imam Saud Al- Kabeer bin Abdulaziz, and he found it empty. They entered and seized it. After that, the general attack started everywhere to distract people of Diriyah from seizing Musheirifa”. Ibn Bishr continued: “Fighting intensified between the two sides. It was not long until the cavalry and soldiers of Ibrahim Pasha assailed the people of Diriyah from the direction of Musheirifa. People of Diriyah were surprised by them and were embarrassed, then defeated. Therefore, they left their positions and dispersed. All people of Nazla headed to their homes and deployed in the neighborhoods where they sought protection. They included Sa'd Bin Imam Abdullah Bin Saud Al- Kabeer who was fortified in Ghasaiba Palace with five hundreds of his followers. As for Imam Abdullah Bin Saud Al- Kabeer, he was in Samhan at its gate, at that time, with a group of the people of Diriyah who were fighting for it. When he knew about this advancement, he moved from Samhan to his palace in Al- Turaif where he was fortified. Soldiers of Ibrahim Pasha seized Samhan and started shooting the owners of homes with cannons. The people of the plain assailed them between the two mountains headed by Sheikh Abdullah Bin Sheikh Mohammed Bin Abdulwahhab Al- Tamimi and his son Sheikh Suleiman who were desperate to drive out the forces of Ibrahim Pasha. Their fighting continued in the streets and in front of the houses until night. They managed to dislodge the forces of Ibrahim Pasha after many people had been killed. They wanted to make reconciliation with Ibrahim Pasha regarding the whole country but he refused, except for the plain. Fighting between the two sides resumed. In addition, Ibrahim Pasha focused his cannons on the road where Imam Abdullah Bin Saud Al- Kabeer has sought protection. Some sides of the palace were demolished. Imam Abdullah got his cannons out of it and moved them to Al- Turaif mosque. He started shooting his enemy from there with a group of the people of Diriyah. This condition lasted for two days in fierce fighting. Then, the followers of Imam Abdullah decreased where all of the forts were overpowered on the second day of the attack and none was left but him.

Ibn Bishr added, “When Imam Abdullah saw this, he gave himself up and redeemed women, children and money. He corresponded the Pasha and requested reconciliation. The Pasha ordered him to come out to him. He came out and they reconciled, as he had to go to Sultan. That was the case according to which the reconciliation was concluded.

“Europe, including its countries and forces, did not embarrass Ottoman throne as Saudis did.”

“Ottomans have killed innocent people and prohibited people from having food or water in an effort to terrorize Saudis.”

“Imam Abdullah Bin Saud surrendered himself to the forces of Ibrahim Pasha to redeem the innocent ones of his people.”

“Ibrahim Pasha stole books; destroyed and burned libraries with the documents and correspondences which became in their possession after the fall of Diriyah.”

References:

- 1) Othman Bin Bishr, The Title of Glory in the History of Najd, edited by: Abdulrahman Al Al- Sheikh, 4th ed. (Riyadh: Ministry of Education, 1971).
- 2) Felix Mangan, The History of the First Saudi State and the Campaigns of Muhammad Ali on the Arabian Peninsula, translated by: Mohammed Khair Al- Baka'e (Riyadh: King Abdulaziz Foundation for Research and Archives, 2002).
- 3) Abdulrihim Abdulrahman, The First Saudi State, 5th ed. (Cairo: University Book Center, 1987).
- 4) Abdulfattah Abu Alya, Lectures on the History of the First Saudi State (Mohadarat Fi Tarikh Al- Dawla Al- Saudia Al- Oula) (Riyadh: Al- Marikh publishing house, 1991).
- 5) Fatima Al-Qahtani, Ibrahim Pasha Campaign against Diriyah and Its Fall (Hamlat Ibrahim Pasha Ala Al- Dir'iyyah wa Su'qotoha) (Riyadh: King Abdulaziz Foundation for Research and Archives, 2009).
- 6) Hamad Al-Anqari, The Manuscripts of the First Saudi State Libraries: Analytical Study of the Factors of Its Transition and Disappearance After the Fall of Diriyah (Maktabat Al- Dawla Al- Saudia Al- Ola Al- Makhtota: Dirsa Tahliyya Li'wamel Intikalha wa Inditharha Ba'd Sokot Al- Dir'iyyah) (Riyadh: King Abdulaziz Foundation for Research and Archives, 2009).