



The Peerless Pearl

A Brief Account of the Life of Ḥaḍrat
Muḥammad b. ‘Abd Allāh (S.A.W.A.), the
Holy Prophet of Islam

Ahmad Ahmadi Birjandi

Translated by
Ahmad Rezwani

Islamic Research Foundation
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Publisher's Note

Studying the life and *sīra* of the Infallible ones (A.S.) is incumbent upon every Muslim, as their life is a full-length mirror reflecting the Islamic thought and they are considered as the symbols of the purified Prophetic Sunna. First of all, it is to be noted that both the Prophet Muḥammad (S.A.W.A.) and the Imams (A.S.) have all enjoyed Divine and human virtues and excellences. From this perspective, there is no difference between them; and if a virtue is more saliently symbolized in one of them, it is due to the circumstances and conditions that the Imam has been situated in.

In *Sūrat al-Shūrā*, (Q: 42/23), Allah (S.W.T.) says to His Apostle: ﴿Say, "I do

not ask you any reward for it except love of [my] relatives.” Whoever performs a good deed, We shall enhance for him its goodness. Indeed Allah is All-forgiving, All-appreciative. ﴿﴾

The Islamic Research Foundation of Astan Quds Razavi is honored to undertake the promotion of the thoughts and words of the Infallible Imams (A.S.), which represent the pure Islamic intellectual thought. Accordingly, with the translation of *Chahārdah Akhtar-i Tābnāk* into English (*The Fourteen Luminaries of Islam*) and publishing it in a single volume as well as six separate volumes, this Foundation has tried to take a step, however small, toward the introduction of these luminary figures and the dissemination of Islamic and human values.

Chahārdah Akhtar-i Tābnāk, originally written by the late eminent researcher

Aḥmad Aḥmadī Bīrjandī (a member of the Islamic Research Foundation), is such a valuable and concise work that has managed to address a great number of seekers after perfection and has been published several times. Being decided to be published in English; however, the Persian version was assigned to the IRF Department of History of Islam to be revised and then handed over to the Translation Department to be rendered into English.

It is hoped that as a part of the above-mentioned translation, this volume may pave the way for further familiarization of the interested readers with the profound and prominent Islamic culture.

**Islamic Research
Foundation
of Astan Quds Razavi**

**The First Infallible Ḥaḍrat
Muḥammad b. ‘Abd Allāh
(S.A.W.A.), the Holy Prophet of
Islam**

Over fourteen hundred years ago, a baby was born in Mecca on the 17th of Rabī‘ al-Awwal (April 25, 570 CE).

His father, ‘Abd Allāh, died on the way back from Shām (Syria) in Yathrib (Medina), unable to meet his newly born son, Muḥammad. ‘Abd Allāh's wife, Āmina, was the daughter of Wahb b. ‘Abd Manāf.

Based on a custom among the dignitaries

of Mecca, Āmina left his beloved son, Muḥammad, with a wet nurse called Ḥalīma, to be reared on the vast expanse of the desert away from the corruptions of town.

The affectionate, pure-hearted Ḥalīma got highly attached to this lovely child whose presence in her tribe brought a source of blessing and abundance. Not for a single moment was she neglectful of taking care of him. Nobody knew that this orphan child, whom the other wet nurses had refused to look after, would one day become the Prophet of Mercy; his sublime name would be uttered by millions of Muslims throughout the world and from top of minarets, and become an honor to the world and its people.

When Muḥammad was five, Ḥalīma took him back to Mecca as per his mother's insistent demand. Two years later, when

Āmina went to Medina to visit her parents and her husband's tomb, she took her beloved son with her. One month later, Āmina and her son returned to Mecca, but on the way back she died at a place called Abwā', and Muḥammad who was now six years old, lost his mother too and his pure heart and delicate soul deeply felt the agonies of being orphaned.

Thereupon, a woman named Umm Ayman took this orphan boy, the withered newly-blown flower, back to Mecca with her. It was God's will that the boy be parted from his parents at the outset of his life having to taste the bitter and heart-rending sufferings of this world and be severely tested in the crucible of hardship so that in future he would be able to commiserate with the sufferings of mankind, and comprehend the way the underprivileged feel.

Since then, he was reared and looked after by his grandfather ‘Abd al-Muṭṭalib who treated, with deep kindness, his noble grandson whose forehead was radiant with greatness. Two years later, on the demise of ‘Abd al-Muṭṭalib, Muḥammad was deprived of his grandfather as his guardian. ‘Abd al-Muṭṭalib's great concern at the last moments of his life was about his grandson. Perforce, at the age of eight, Muḥammad went to his uncle's house, Abū Ṭālib (Alī's father), and lived under his guardianship.

Abū Ṭālib protected and took care of his beloved nephew with utmost benevolence and kindness to the last moments of his life, i.e., for over forty years. Even in the most adverse and unpleasant events, when the nobles of Quraysh and black-hearted rebels had vilely associated to kill Muḥammad, he made himself a shield of protection for him, as he was scared of nothing and took no

heed of reproaches.

Muḥammad's repose, grace, and thoughtful mien were fully recognized among his peers since adolescence. Abū Ṭālib loved him to such an extent that he always wanted to be with him and caress him in order to remove the agony of being an orphan.

He was 12 when his uncle took him to Shām (Syria) on a business trip which at that time was common in Ḥijāz. On this trip, at a place called Buṣrī, an area in Shām, Abū Ṭālib visited a Christian monk called Buḥayrā. The latter, upon meeting Muḥammad, assuredly found out the signs and cues he had read in the Holy Scriptures, that this boy would be the Prophet of the end of time.

In order to be further assured, the Christian monk asked him to swear on the Lāt and Uzzā – two of the idols of Mecca –

to tell the truth in what he was asked about. Getting perturbed and agitated, Muḥammad replied, "I am an enemy to the idols you just mentioned. Swear me on God."

Buḥayrā was certain that he would be truly the great messenger of God, who believed in no one and nothing but the one God. So he strongly admonished Abū Ṭālib to protect him against the evils of the enemies, especially the Jews since soon he would be assigned to a great mission to carry out. Muḥammad passed through his days of adolescence and youth. During this period of time, which for the common people is an age of pugnacity and indulgence in lustfulness and transient fads, for the young Muḥammad was replete with purity, righteousness, and honesty. Truthfulness of words, honesty in manner, leniency, and patience were manifest in his behavior. He was aside from the corrupt

milieu of Mecca and kept aloof from the impurity of idolatry to such an extent that everyone was amazed, and he was so trusted that he became renowned as “Muḥammad the Trustworthy” (*Muḥammad al-Amīn*).

Since the very beginning of his youth, traces of grace, power, and bravery were evident in his countenance. At the age of fifteen, he took part in one of the battles of Quraysh with Hawāzin clan, where he defended his uncles against arrows. This can reveal his spiritual and physical strength.

Later on, this bravery became more and more brilliantly evident in wars waged for Islam. Accordingly, ‘Alī (A.S.), being himself one of the bravest in his time, has said about Muḥammad (S.A.W.A.):

“Whenever things got hard on us at the battlefield, we would seek refuge in the Apostle of Allah, and none of us was closer

to the enemy than he was.”¹ However, he would always avoid useless and childish battles.

Arabia was the center of idolatry at that time. People or tribesmen used to carve idols out of woods, stones, or dates and worship them. The milieu in which Muḥammad (S.A.W.A.) lived was afflicted with promiscuity, obscenities, wine drinking, and war waging; in such an environment, however, Muḥammad (S.A.W.A.) was never indulged in any of such sins and impurities, and remained aloof from idols and idolatry. One day Abū Ṭālib said to ‘Abbās, Muḥammad (S.A.W.A.)'s youngest uncle:

“I have never heard Muḥammad (S.A.W.A.) tell a lie and I've never seen him play with other children in the lanes and

1 *Furūgh-i Abadiyyat*, vol. 3, p. 214.

alleys.”

It is amazing that amid so much indecency and the presence of corrupt women and men who were even proud of their indecent acts, and the prostitutes who used to put up flags on the roof of their houses, Muḥammad (S.A.W.A.) lived so decently and innocently that nobody – not even his enemies – could find the smallest fault with him. How can one read about his life history (*sīra*) and demeanor from childhood through youth and old age, without humbling himself before his greatness and purity of soul and body?

**A Remembrance of the Brave Youth Pledge
(known as *ḥalf al-fuḍūl*):**

In the past, a covenant called *ḥalf al-fuḍūl* was established among some tribes based on defending the rights of the oppressed and the poor, and its founders

were the ones whose names were either “Faḍl” or one of its derivatives. The Pledge which was later made by a group of Quraysh followed the same goal.

One of the features of this pledge was to defend Mecca and its inhabitants against foreign enemies. However, if someone other than Meccans and their confederates were living in that city and were treated with cruelty, nobody would come to their help. It is related that one day a man from Banī Asad tribe came to Mecca to sell his merchandise. A man from Ben Sahm tribe, called ‘Āṣī b. Wā‘il, bought the goods without paying off the money. The defrauded man sought assistance from the Quraysh, but nobody helped him. He was forced to climb up the Abū Qubays Mountain near Ka‘ba for help. His plea for justice affected a number of Qurayshī youth, who, perforce got together in the house of

‘Abd Allāh, son of Jad‘ān to do something for the poor man. In this house, where Muḥammad (S.A.W.A.) was also present, they took a pledge to allow no injustice on others. As for the man, they took back the money for his goods and returned it to him. Thenceforth, the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.A.) used to speak highly of this pledge. He said, “In ‘Abd Allāh Jad‘ān's house I witnessed a pledge which if I am called to even now (that I am appointed to Prophethood), I will accept it. That is, I am still faithful to my covenant.”¹

Muḥammad (S.A.W.A.) joined this covenant at the age of 20, but before that, as well as after that, he supported the poor, the helpless, orphans, and the women who had lost their husbands in wars, and did whatever he could for the deprived. His

1 *Furūgh-i Abadiyyat*, vol. 3, p. 152.

motive for joining this covenant was nothing but willingness to aid the poor and remove injustice from the oppressed.

Muḥammad (S.A.W.A.)'s Marriage

As Muḥammad (S.A.W.A.)'s honesty spread around, a wealthy woman from the people of Mecca called Khadija, daughter of Khuwaylid, who had married twice before and possessed plenty of wealth with matchless chastity and piety dispatched Muḥammad (S.A.W.A.) on a business trip to Syria offering him a share of its benefits. Muḥammad (S.A.W.A.) accepted that contract.

Khadija sent her retainer, Maysara, along with Muḥammad (S.A.W.A.). When they returned from that lucrative trip, Maysara reported the trip in detail to Khadija, telling her anecdotes about Muḥammad (S.A.W.A.)'s honesty and truthfulness.

What he related to Khadija about him included this: “When we arrived in Buṣrī, Amīn sat in the shade of a tree to rest. At this time, a monk in his prayer house noticed Amīn. He came forward, asked me his name, and then said, 'The man who is sitting under the tree is the same prophet the tidings about whom I have read in Torah and Gospel'.”

Khadija became enchanted with Muḥammad (S.A.W.A.)'s honesty and truthfulness. Some time later, she offered to get married to Muḥammad (S.A.W.A.). He accepted the proposal. At this time she was 40 and he was 25.

Khadija left all her wealth at Muḥammad (S.A.W.A.)'s disposal and gave her slaves up to him, who immediately freed them. It was his first step taken in a struggle against slavery. Muḥammad (S.A.W.A.) practically wanted to show that it is possible to live a

simple life free from fleeting carnal desires and lust, and without any slaves and maids as well.

Khadija's house was a safe haven for the poor and the helpless before marriage, and remained exactly the same after marriage, since she would always be generous to the needy.

During the years of drought and famine, Ḥalīma, Muḥammad (S.A.W.A.)'s foster mother used to come to her foster son, who spread his mantle for her to sit on, would listen to her talk, and when she wanted to leave, he helped her in whatever way he could.

Once received the authority over Khadija's wealth, Muḥammad al-Amīn (S.A.W.A.), instead of being entrapped in transient temptations, was engaged in charity matters and helping the poor. Most of his free time, he would go to the

outskirts of Mecca and would spend hours in mountains and inside the cave of Ḥirā', contemplating on God's creation and wonders of the world and whispering lovingly to the Lord of the world. Several years passed in this way. His beloved and faithful wife knew that whenever Muḥammad (S.A.W.A.) was not at home, he was in the cave of Ḥirā'. This cave is located in a mountain north of Mecca where now longing pilgrims eagerly visit to enjoy the eye-refreshing effect of its soil.

This secluded place, being away from the tumult and idolatry and corruption of the city, was a witness to amorous whispers of Muḥammad (S.A.W.A.) especially in Ramadan, during which he would spend the whole month there. The cave and the black rocks have witnessed the descent of "Revelation" and the radiation of Divine Lights in the pure heart of the "Quraysh

Beloved”. This is the same “illuminating mountain” (*jabal al-nūr*) that is still diffusing light.

The Beginning of the Prophetic Mission (*Bi'tha*)

Muḥammad al-Amīn (S.A.W.A.) was engaged in worship and supplication to the Lord of the worlds in Ḥirā' before the night of Rajab 27, having true and dreams just like real world. His great soul was gradually getting ready to receive the Revelation. At that magnificent night, Gabriel, the angel of Revelation, was appointed to read some of the Qur'ān to Muḥammad (S.A.W.A.) and to honor him with Prophethood.

Muḥammad (S.A.W.A.) was forty at this time, when, in silence and solitude and totally absorbed in the Beloved Creator of the world, was demanded by Gabriel to recite these verses:

﴿Read! In the name of your Lord, who created; created man from a clinging mass. Read, and your Lord is the Most Generous, Who taught by the pen, taught man what he did not know.﴾¹

Being unlettered, Muḥammad (S.A.W.A.) said, “I am not able to read.” The angel enforced him to read the Tablet. But to this he gave a similar response. The third time, he felt he could read the Tablet in Gabriel’s hand. These verses commenced his arduous and toilsome mission. Gabriel had carried out his task as Muḥammad (S.A.W.A.) descended Mount Ḥirā’ and went to Khadija’s house. There, he related his story to his kind wife.

Khadija found out that Muḥammad (S.A.W.A.)’s great mission had started. She comforted and encouraged him.

1 Al-Qur’an, 96: 1-5.

“Undoubtedly the compassionate God would not allow evil on you because you are kind to your family and relatives, you help the poor, and assist the oppressed”, she added.

Then Muḥammad (S.A.W.A.) said, “Cover me!” Khadija covered him. He fell asleep for a while.

Khadija went to her cousin, Waraqat b. Nawfal, who was one of the learned Arabs, and told him the incident. The man said: What has befallen Muḥammad (S.A.W.A.) is the beginning of his Prophethood and the great honor of the Message.

Khadija returned home, confident and assured.

The First Muslims

The Prophet (S.A.W.A.) started the call to Islam from his own home. First, his wife, Khadija, and his cousin, ‘Alī acknowledged

their faith in Muḥammad (S.A.W.A.). The first calls were totally secret.

Muḥammad (S.A.W.A.) and several of his companions said their prayers in remote and secluded places out of people's sight. One day Sa'd b. Abī Waqqāṣ was saying prayers together with some other Muslims in a valley outside Mecca. A group of idolaters saw them venerating their Creator. They began to ridicule and persecute them. The Muslims, however, set to defend themselves.

After three years, during which the Muslims were engaged in worshipping and calling people to Islam along with their Holy Prophet, a Divine command descended, ﴿So proclaim what you have been commanded, and turn away from the polytheists.﴾¹

1 Al-Qur'an, 15: 94.

Thus, the Prophet (S.A.W.A.) was urged to reveal his call. For this purpose he was ordered to begin with his nearest kinsfolk and close relatives through this Divine command, ﴿Warn the nearest of your kinsfolk.﴾¹ When this command was given, the Prophet (S.A.W.A.) ordered ‘Alī, who was around 15, to prepare a meal and invite the household of ‘Abd al-Muṭṭalib so that the Prophet (S.A.W.A.) would announce his call to them. In this meeting about forty people, including Ḥamza, Abū Ṭālib, and Abū Lahab, participated. Abū Lahab, whose heart was filled with hatred and jealousy, however, upset the gathering with his absurd and sarcastic remarks. The Prophet (S.A.W.A.) deemed it advisable to repeat the call the next day. When the people had their meals, the Holy Prophet began his

1 Al-Qur’ān, 26: 214.

words with the name of God, adoring Him and professing His Oneness, "...Verily no guide of a community tells lies to his kin. I swear by God Who is Unique and there is no god but Him that I am His Messenger to you and to the people of the world. My kinsmen! You die just as you go to sleep and as you wake up you are restored to life on the Day of Judgment and will see the outcome of your acts and deeds. The everlasting paradise of God and eternal Hell are prepared respectively for the righteous and the wrongdoers. Nobody has ever brought better for their kin than what I have brought to you. I have brought to you the good of this world and the next. I am appointed by God to call you to Him. Anyone of you who supports me will be my brother, trustee (*waṣī*) and successor".

When the Prophet's words ended, silence prevailed over the whole session. Everybody

was deep in thought. Finally, ‘Alī (A.S.), then a fifteen-year-old youth, stood up and said, “O Prophet of God! I am ready to support you.” The Messenger of Allah beckoned him to sit down. He repeated his words three times, and each time ‘Alī (A.S.) would stand up. Then, the Prophet (S.A.W.A.) addressed his kinsmen and said,

“This young man (‘Alī) is my brother, *wasī*, and successor among you.

Listen to his words and follow him.”

When the meeting was over, Abū Lahab and some others told Abū Ṭālib, ‘Alī’s father: “You see! Muḥammad ordered you to follow your own son. He chose him your superior!”

It was evident from the very beginning of the prophet (S.A.W.A.)’s call that these high-ranking Divine positions, i.e. Prophethood and Imamate (*waṣāya* and *wilāya*) were not separate; it was also

evident that 'Alī's spiritual power and his faith and knowledge of Prophethood were so high that he, unhesitatingly and regardless of all the problems, declared his support for the Prophet (S.A.W.A.) in a session attended by Arab chieftains.

General Call to Islam

Three years had passed the Prophetic Mission when, after calling his kinsmen to Islam, the Prophet (S.A.W.A.) declared his Prophethood to the public. One day he climbed up the mountain of Ṣafā and called out loudly; *Yā Ṣabāḥā!* (An expression used for warning and summoning.) Some tribesmen hastened towards the Prophet (S.A.W.A.). Then, the Prophet (S.A.W.A.) addressed the people as follows, "O people! If I tell you that your enemies are lying in ambush behind this mountain aiming to assault on your lives and property, will you

believe me?” They all replied, “We haven't heard a lie from you so far.” “O people! Save yourselves from the Hell Fire,” he continued. I alarm you of God's painful punishment. Like a sentinel seeing the enemy in the distance and warning his folks of the danger, I too warn you of the hazards of the Judgment Day torments.” People became more aware of the Prophet's (S.A.W.A.) great mission. Here again, however, Abū Lahab responded light-mindedly to the critical issue of Prophetic Mission.

Early Muslims

As soon as the Prophetic Mission was publicly announced, many people's stance towards Muḥammad (S.A.W.A.) changed. Those who had pretended to like him began to persecute and harass him.

Those who were pioneers in accepting his

call to Islam were the ones who knew him well, and believed in righteousness of his deeds and words. Apart from Khadija, 'Alī, and Zayd (Hāratha's son) – who was a liberated slave by the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.A.) – others who were pioneers in faith like Ja'far (Abū Ṭālib's son), Abū Dhar Gaffārī, 'Amr b. 'Abasa, Khālīd b. Sa'īd, Abū Bakr, etc., would spare no time in making the youth of Mecca aware and encouraging them to become Muslims. Balāl, Yāsir and his wife (Sumayya), Khabāb, Arqam, Ṭalḥa, Zubayr, Othmān, Sa'd, etc., were among the early Muslims. Altogether, the number of Muḥammad (S.A.W.A.)'s followers within the first three years amounted to twenty people.

Persecution by the Opponents

Little by little the differences deepened. Those who had converted to Islam tried to

summon idolaters to the One God. On the other hand, idolaters who saw their interests and their dominance over a bunch of people who were more ignorant than themselves as jeopardized attempted to persecute Muslims, forcing them to give up their new religion. Muslims, and above all the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.A.) himself, were harassed by the idolaters. Once, as the Prophet (S.A.W.A.) was saying prayers in Ka'ba holding down his head, Abū Jahl – a stubborn enemy of Islam – emptied the content of a sacrificed camel's tripe over the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.A.)'s neck. Since the Prophet (S.A.W.A.) used to leave his house very early for morning prayers, some people put thorny bushes on his way to scratch his feet in the dark. Sometimes, the infidels would throw dust and stones at him. One day, a number of Quraysh nobles assaulted the Prophet (S.A.W.A.) and one of them

called 'Aqabat b. Abī Mu'īṭ threw a piece of cloth around the neck of the Prophet (S.A.W.A.) and tied it so tight that the Prophet (S.A.W.A.) was about to pass away. Such persecutions took place time and again.

As Islam became more and more widespread among people, the idolaters intensified their harassment and plotting. Muslim youth were persecuted by their infidel fathers and brothers. The truth-seeking youth who had abandoned their fathers' false and superstitious beliefs and had converted to Islam were thrown into jails, and even their own parents refused to give them food. These faithful Muslims, however, went on worshipping God even though their lips were parched due to hunger and thirst, and their eyes were sunken and tearful. The infidels clothed the slaves in coats of mail and threw them on

the hot sand in the scorching sunshine to burn their skin. They burned some of them with a hot iron bar, and tied a rope on some other's legs and pulled them on the burning pebbles.

Balāl was an Abyssinian slave, whose master would in the burning heat of the midday sun throw him on the ground and put large boulders on his chest. Balāl, however, would tolerate those persecutions. Repeatedly saying the One, the One, and remembering the One God.

Yāsir, 'Ammār's father, was tied with rope to two strong camels moving in opposite directions till his body was torn apart. Sumayya, 'Ammār's mother, too was very painfully martyred. But, in spite of all the tortures, the pure-minded Muslims lovingly risked their lives almost to death, and didn't give up their faith in the One God.

Idolater's Confrontation with Muḥammad (S.A.W.A.)

Failing to achieve their goals through persecutions, the infidels started by way of threatening and allurement, since Muḥammad (S.A.W.A.) became more and more popular with all the tribes and people of the land, and found more and more followers.

The infidels first decided to have a meeting with Abū Ṭālib, Muḥammad (S.A.W.A.)'s uncle, and his only supporter. At the meeting, they addressed him and said, “Abū Ṭālib! You are superior to us by nobility and age. Your nephew insults our gods and speaks ill about us and our fathers’ religion and regards our beliefs as mean and worthless. Tell him to stop doing such things, not insulting our idols. Otherwise, leave him to us and withdraw your

protection from him”.

When the Quraysh infidels felt that Islam was penetrating into tribes and among people, and the verses of the Qur’ān were winning people's hearts and influencing them, they were more and more alarmed. Hence, to prevent that danger, they visited Abū Ṭālib, the head of the Quraysh and the chief of Banū Hāshim now and again, and each time Abū Ṭālib talked to them gently and considerately, and promised to report their message to his nephew. Nevertheless, the Great Prophet of Islam replied to his uncle:

“Dear uncle, I swear by God if they placed the sun in my right hand and the moon in my left hand to make me give up the religion of God and its propagation, I would not accept. I should either achieve my goal, i.e., the spread of Islam, or sacrifice myself for it.”

Abū Ṭālib said to his nephew, “By God, I will not withdraw my support from you. Go on and carry out your mission.”

Finally, the haughty Meccans in their illusions came up with allurements sending a message that they were ready to provide Muḥammad (S.A.W.A.) with whatever he wished, like wealth, kingship, and beautiful women, provided that he abandoned his new religion and gave up affronting their idols.

The Prophet (S.A.W.A.), however, ignored their proposals which originated from thoughts worthy of themselves, and asked them to believe in Allah to attain mastery over Arabs and non-Arabs.

Being narrow-minded, they failed to accept worshipping the One God instead of 360 idols.

Thenceforth as mentioned before, Abū Jahl and others began to maltreat and

persecute the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.A.) and other Muslims, using whatever they had at their disposal to ridicule and harass the Prophet (S.A.W.A.) and the believers in Islam.

Prophet (S.A.W.A.)'s Perseverance

In spite of all the persecutions inflicted on him, the Prophet (S.A.W.A.) stood against them as firm as a mountain. He talked of God, the Islamic rules and ordinances, and the Qur'ān whenever and wherever he saw a few people gathering together, trying to soften their hearts and incline them towards Islam by reciting Divine verses to them. He would say, "Allah is the One God and the Master of this world and the Hereafter. He alone should be worshipped and feared. All powers belong to God. We will all be restored to life again and will be rewarded for our good

deeds and punished for our evil acts. O people! Beware of sins, lies, calumny, and abusive language.”

The Quraysh were so impressed by the Qur’ānic verses that they had to ask for Walīd's assistance to make a judgment in this regard. Walīd, who was their judge in problems of life and their helper in difficulties, after hearing the Qur’ānic verses, told them, “I heard a word from Muḥammad today that is not the same kind as man's or jinn's words. It has special sweetness and beauty. It resembles a tree whose branches are laden with fruits and the roots with blessing. It is an outstanding word which no other word is superior to it”.¹

When the infidels learned about the sweetness and attractiveness of God's words

1 *Dalā'il al-Nubuwwa*, vol. 1, p. 287.

and felt humiliated before it, they found it inevitable to stigmatize the Divine words as “Sorcery”, and in order to evade believing in Muḥammad (S.A.W.A.)'s Prophethood, they started to make excuses. For example, they demanded from the Prophet (S.A.W.A.) to make God and the angels available! They wanted him to display a golden palace with a garden full of streams! And so on. Muḥammad (S.A.W.A.) replied, “I am but a messenger, and cannot perform miracles without permission from Allah.

Emigration to Abyssinia

In the fifth year of the Prophetic Mission, a group of Prophet (S.A.W.A.)'s companions numbering 80 people who were formerly persecuted and harassed by the infidels left for Abyssinia with the agreement of the Prophet (S.A.W.A.). Abyssinia was a safe and peaceful land, and

Najāshī, the king of that country, was a benevolent Christian. The Muslims wished to worship God there while leading their business. But even there they were persecuted by Meccans. The latter asked Najāshī to return the Muslims to Mecca, and in order to win his favor, they sent him some gifts. But the king of Abyssinia Said, “From among all lands, they have chosen mine. I must investigate to know what they say and what their complaint is about. “Then he ordered to summon the Muslims. Upon their arrival, he asked them to explain the reason for their emigration and to introduce their new religion. Ja'far b. Abī Ṭālib, on behalf of the emigrants, stood up and said:

“We were ignorant people, worshipping idols, feeding on carcass, doing hideous acts, and violating our neighbors' rights. The powerful would trample the weak, until

God selected from among us a Prophet whom we knew as righteous and honest. He urged us to abandon worshipping the wooden and stone idols; to be righteous, honest, kin-loving, well-behaved, and pious; to avoid evil acts and stop devouring orphan's wealth; to give up adultery; to say prayers; to fast; and to give alms. Thus, we believed in him and became his followers, accepting such a religion, we were much oppressed and ill-treated by our tribesmen to give up the faith, return to idolatry, and restart evil doings. When the injustice and the distress inflicted on us became unbearable, we took refuge in your country and chose you from among the kings. We hope, with your support, we are protected from oppression.”

“Recite some of the divine verses that your prophet read to you.” Najāshī said.

Ja'far read the beginning verses of *Sūrat*

al-Maryam. Najāshī and his retinue were deeply impressed and began to weep. Najāshi, a Christian himself, said, “I swear by God, those words have originated from the same source as the words of Jesus (A.S.)” Then, Najāshī told the infidels of Mecca, “I will never surrender them to you.” The infidels were intensely outraged by being defeated, and returned to Mecca.

Economic Sanction

In order to constrain Muḥammad (S.A.W.A.) and other Muslims, the infidels of Quraysh signed an agreement to break relations with him and his followers; to have no marriage and trade bonds with them; and to join hands with enemies of Islam in all events. They hung the agreement parchment inside the Ka‘ba and swore to observe its content. Abū Ṭālib, Prophet (S.A.W.A.)'s supporter, asked children of

Hāshim and Muṭṭalib to keep away from idolaters and settle in a valley named Shi‘b of Abū Ṭālib. The Muslims started there, under straw parasols, a new life and built watchtowers to prevent the enemy's surprise attacks. This depressed and adverse sanction took three years. Only in holy months (Rajab, Dhu’l Qa‘da, Dhu’l Hajja) would the Prophet (S.A.W.A.) and the Muslims leave the “Shi‘b” in order to propagate the religion and shop for a little provisions, but the infidels, especially Abū Lahab, would buy out the goods or ordered the prices to be raised so that the Muslims fail to purchase anything. Hunger and hardship reached their highest degree. The Muslims, however, didn't give up their resistance. One day the Prophet was informed through Revelation that the agreement parchment had been eaten up by termites and just the term “*Bismik Allāhumma*” (In your name,

O Allah!) was left intact. Abū Ṭālib declared this event to the gathering of infidels. Verifying the incident and finding out the Prophet (S.A.W.A.)'s truthfulness, they lifted the sanction. Muslims gave a sigh of relief ... but alas! In a few months Khadīja, the Prophet (S.A.W.A.)'s faithful wife and Abū Ṭālib, his supporter passed away, and it was a great loss to the Prophet (S.A.W.A.). Once again the infidels began their persecutions.

Spread of Islam in Yathrib (Medina)

At the time of Ḥajj pilgrimage a group consisting of six people from Medina met the Prophet (S.A.W.A.) and learned about the pure doctrines of Islam. People of Medina, on account of wars and conflicts between the two tribes of Aws and Khazraj and the pressure inflicted upon them by the Jews, were supposedly awaiting this holy

doctrine to impart to them its redemptive message. These six Muslims returned to Medina and talked a lot in favor of Islam and the Prophet (S.A.W.A.) and prepared people to welcome Islam.

On a similar occasion the next year, twelve people got acquainted with the Prophet (S.A.W.A.) himself and the holy doctrines of Islam. The Prophet (S.A.W.A.) dispatched one of his companions with them to instruct the Qur'ān and the Islamic ordinances. Similarly, the year after, those twelve people swore allegiance to the Prophet (S.A.W.A.) at a place called 'Aqaba and pledged to support Muḥammad (S.A.W.A.) just like their own kinsmen. Following this allegiance, 73 other men and women swore allegiance to the Prophet (S.A.W.A.) and promised to protect him against the enemies of Islam even at the cost of their own lives. Thereupon, the way was

paved for the emigration to Yathrib, which later on was named Medina.

***Mi'rāj* (Ascension) – Journey to Ṭā'if**

Before emigration to Medina which took place in Rabī' al-Awwal, 13 Years after the advent of *Bi'tha*, two events came about in the Prophet (S.A.W.A.)'s life, which will be pointed out briefly as follows:

The *Mi'rāj* of the Prophet (S.A.W.A.) took place in the 10th year of *Bi'tha*, which was a Journey commanded by Almighty God in the company of the Revelation Angel (Gabriel) resting on a swift flying mount named Burāq. The Prophet (S.A.W.A.) started this splendid Journey from the house of Umm Hānī, 'Alī (A.S.)'s sister headed towards Jerusalem and visited Bethlehem, which is the birth place of the Prophet Jesus (A.S.), as well as the residence of Prophets (A.S.). Then he began his

heavenly journey, visiting celestial creatures and Paradise and Hell, as a result of which he became aware of the mysteries of existence and the vastness of the created universe and signs of Almighty God's infinite Power. He finally reached *Sidrat al-Muntahā* (Cedar-Tree in Paradise) and found it totally covered with grandeur, magnificence, and majesty. Then, he returned to Mecca through the same way, and dismounted Burāq at Umm Hānī's house before daybreak. Shī'as believe this journey has been made physically rather than only spiritually as believed by some other sects. In the Holy Qur'ān, this magnificent journey is referred to as follows:

﴿Immaculate is He who carried His servant on a journey by night from the Sacred Mosque to the Farthest Mosque whose surroundings We have blessed, that We might show him some of Our signs.

Indeed He is the All-hearing, the All-seeing. ﴿ (Al-Qur'ān, 17: 1).

It was in the same year and at the same night of the *Mi'rāj* that God enjoined the Prophet that his *umma* say prayers and worship the Lord of the two worlds five times a day; for saying prayers is the spiritual ascension for the faithful.

The other event is the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.A.)'s Journey to Ṭā'if. In the eleventh year of his Prophetic Mission, due to the suffocating milieu of Mecca and persecution inflicted by idolaters and the hostility of the Meccans, he decided to move to another place. So, by himself, he set out for Ṭā'if to contact with Thaqīf heads of tribes and introduce Islam to them. But those hard-hearted people didn't listen to the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.A.) and even started to harass his Holiness. The Holy Messenger (S.A.W.A.) stayed in Nakhla,

somewhere between Ṭā'if and Mecca, and since he was fearful of the idolaters' vengeance and hostility, he considered finding someone to ask for quarter – according to the custom of that time – to secure his return to Mecca. Thus, he sent someone to Mecca to ask for quarter from Mut'im b. 'Aday. Mut'im took responsibility of protecting Prophet (S.A.W.A.)'s life, and treated him with favor. Later on, the Holy Prophet frequently remembered Mut'im's favor and kindness to him.

Emigration to Medina

With the Prophet (S.A.W.A.)'s permission, all Muslims went to Medina, except the Prophet (S.A.W.A.) himself, 'Alī (A.S.), and several others who were either ill or in the prisons of the infidels.

When the idolaters found out about the Prophet (S.A.W.A.)'s decision to emigrate,

they made an arrangement, following meetings and negotiations, to assign forty people from among the tribes in order that on the eve of emigration they invade the Prophet (S.A.W.A.)'s house and murder him, so that, in this way, all tribes share a hand in his blood, and consequently, his blood would be trampled on.

The Angel of Revelation, however, informed the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.A.) of their ominous plot.

The night, when the Qurayshī murderers intended to carry out their devilish plan, ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib (A.S.) slept in the Prophet (S.A.W.A.)'s bed and the Prophet (S.A.W.A.) secretly left the house. First, he entered in the Thawr Cave (south of Mecca), and from there, he emigrated, accompanied by Abū Bakr, to Yathrib or Madīnat al-Nabī, which was later known as Medina.

Arrival in Medina

On Monday 12th of Rabī‘ al-Awwal, the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.A.) and his companions reached Qubā, at a place about 12 kilometers to Medina. The Prophet (S.A.W.A.) remained there till the end of the week (Thursday) for ‘Alī (A.S.) to arrive. The Qubā Mosque at this place is a reminder of those days.

After the emigration of Muḥammad (S.A.W.A.), ‘Alī was appointed to return people's deposits to them, and accompany to Medina the Hashemite women including Fāṭima (A.S.), the Prophet (S.A.W.A.)'s daughter, Fāṭima daughter of Assad, and the Muslims who had not managed to emigrate till that day. ‘Alī and the company began the trip, a hard and hazardous one.

With injured and swollen feet, ‘Alī (A.S.) joined the Prophet (S.A.W.A.) after three

days, and was favorably and kindly welcomed by him.

The people of Medina, after three years of waiting anxiously, welcomed their Prophet exuberantly and with cries of exaltation.

The Importance of Emigration

The arrival of the Prophet (S.A.W.A.) and the Muslims in Medina marked a new era in their life. It was actually like stepping out of a contaminated and suffocating environment, retreating into a fresh and healthy atmosphere. It is on this account that emigration in the way of God and for spreading His religion is considered equal to *jihād* (holy war) and is equally splendid.

Emigration means abandoning all your existing interests, leaving behind your old habits and customs, and move towards a new life. Moving from ignorance towards

light and knowledge is also considered emigration. Moving from impurity towards purity is emigration as well. The emigration of the Prophet (S.A.W.A.) and that of the Muslims from Mecca (an atmosphere of suppression, contamination and hatred) to Medina (a city of purity, assistance, and brotherhood) and towards laying the foundations for an Islamic social life, was the first great step taken towards victory and spread of Islam as well as its being universalized. It was due to the importance of emigration that later on, in time of the second Caliph this year was suggested by 'Alī (A.S.) as the beginning of the Islamic calendar (Hijra).

The First Step

When the Prophet (S.A.W.A.) noticed such warm reception and exultation from the people of Medina, the first thing he did

was to propose the construction of a mosque for the Muslims. The mosque was not solely for saying prayers. Rather, all legal and social affairs of Muslims were taken care of there.

The mosque was to be the center for the Islamic education and assemblies. Muslims all together and the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.A.) together with the Muslims eagerly and enthusiastically were busy constructing the mosque. The Holy Prophet (S.A.W.A.) would personally carry stones on his shoulders and work like a simple laborer. That same mosque is still standing magnificently, only second to Masjid al-Ḥarām, which is the first in the world. The Prophet (S.A.W.A.) made peace between the two tribes of Aws and Khazraj which were in battle for years. He established bonds of brotherhood between the Emigrants and the people of Medina, i.e.,

the Helpers (*Anṣār*) who hosted the Emigrants (*Muhājirūn*) in their houses. The Prophet (S.A.W.A.) stabilized the Islamic unity, ideological bonds, and brotherhood for tribal relations. By using a charter, he actually devised the constitution of the Islamic community in Medina, and declared the Muslim people equal in rights and limits. He granted quarters to Jewish tribes who were living both inside and outside Medina.

To sum up, the Prophet (S.A.W.A.) created a unified, brotherly, high-minded, and self-sacrificing community out of a revengeful and misled people who were ignorant of laws and social systems. From the second year, gradually, defensive military measures were taken against attacks by enemies of Islam.

The Prophet (S.A.W.A.)'s Battles

The old revengeful enemies of Islam, namely the infidels of Mecca, planned – in any possible way – to defeat the newly established Islamic community; thus, they waged several wars. Accordingly, the Prophet (S.A.W.A.) ordered the Muslims to prepare for defense. So, since the development of Islam in Medina, several battles took place which will be briefly pointed out. It should also be mentioned that the wars in which the Prophet (S.A.W.A.) attended in person were called *ghazwa* (battle), and the other ones taking place in his time were called *sariyya* (expedition).

Battle of Badr

The battle of Badr occurred in 2/623. In this unbalanced battle the number of enemy's army reached 950, being fully

equipped; the number of Muslims, however, was only 313. The Muslims fought with the power of faith and full fidelity, defeating the enemy in a short time. The enemy retreated, leaving behind 70 killed and captives as well as lots of spoils. Abū Jahl, the bitter enemy of Islam, was also killed in this battle. This victory was the opening chapter to the later victories.

Change of the *Qibla*

In the same year, it was commanded by the Almighty Allah that the Muslims should change the direction of their prayer from Jerusalem towards Ka'ba. The reason for this was that the Jews regarded the lacking of an independent *qibla* as a deficiency for Islam, which was known as a perfect religion, and thus they didn't believe in its universality. The Two-*Qibla* Mosque (*Masjid Dhū Qiblatayn*) is reminiscent of

that significant event.

Battle of Uḥud

A year after the battle of Badr, enemies of Islam, with equipment three times as much as that of the battle of Badr, set out for Medina with the intention of taking revenge on the Muslims. The Prophet (S.A.W) consulted with his companions upon which it was decided to array the troops along the mountainside of Uḥud. At the outset, the Muslims – weak in number but strong in faith – won the battle. But, since the guards of the valley behind the battlefield left their trenches covetously to get their share of the spoils, the Islamic troops were defeated, and a number of them including Ḥamza, the Prophet (S.A.W.A.)'s brave uncle, were killed. However, as a result of self-sacrifices by ‘Alī (A.S.), who had received many injuries, and other brave combatants, as well

as the new technique that the Prophet (S.A.W.A.) applied in this battle, once again the Muslims gathered together and chased the despicable enemy, and finally achieved victory.

Battle of Kandaq (or Aḥzāb [= Confederates])

A group of Jews, including Banī Naḍīr tribe, were living in Medina. At the beginning, the Prophet (S.A.W.A.) entered into a friendship and cooperation alliance with them, but they were always, through hypocrisy and deception, attempting to strike Islam. In spite of all his kindness and mercy, the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.A.) wouldn't overlook hypocrisy and conspiracy, and would punish the hypocrites and the plotters.

When the Banī Naḍīr tribe found their plots brought to naught, they united with the infidels of Mecca and some other tribes

and, in the fifth year of Hijra, a huge army consisting of ten thousand swordsmen commanded by Abū Sufyān was formed to invade Medina aiming at uprooting the Islam. It was a time of trial and self-sacrifice. On the advice of Salmān and agreement of the Prophet (S.A.W.A.) a ditch was dug around Medina. When the enemy reached Medina, it faced a wide ditch. The Jews of Banī Qurayza, like other Jews, began to practice their hypocrisy and treachery. Severe and critical moments were impending.

With his appealing war plans, the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.A.) dispersed the battle front of the enemy. ‘Amr b. ‘Abduwad, the peerless commander of Mecca, was killed by ‘Alī (A.S.) in a person to person fight; the Prophet (S.A.W.A.) described ‘Alī (A.S.)’s strike that killed ‘Amr as more valuable than the worship done by jinn and

mankind. After 'Amr was killed, the enemy was struck with terror. Pessimism among the invaders and Jews, shortage of provision, severe night hurricanes, and fatigue, all in all led to the victory of the Islamic army, and made the infidel troops flee back to Mecca.

The 6th Year of Hijra – Ḥudaybiya Peace

In a dream, the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.A.) saw that the Muslims were engaged in performing their Ḥajj Pilgrimage in Masjid al-Ḥarām. He made the Muslims prepare for an 'Umra pilgrimage in Dhu'l Qa'da. Everybody got prepared for the pilgrimage and the caravan departed. Since this trip was being made in a Holy month and the Muslims had nothing with them but a single sword which every traveler carried with him, and on the other hand, since the Quraysh was informed of the Muslims'

intention to set out for the pilgrimage and prevented their entering Mecca, the Prophet (S.A.W.A.) made a treaty with Meccans which was renowned as “Ḥudaybiya Treaty”. According to this peace treaty, the Prophet (S.A.W.A.) and the Muslims dispensed with the ‘Umra. They were supposed to perform ‘Umra the following year. This treaty demonstrated the peaceful spirit of Muslims to all. Accordingly, a ten year truce was agreed upon by the two sides that were also free to visit each other's territories. This peace was indeed a victory for Islam. Thus the Prophet (S.A.W.A.) got relieved of the internal menace and found an opportunity to call the rulers of other countries to Islam.

The Holy Prophet (S.A.W.A.)'s Letters to the Kings

We know from the Holy verses of the

Qur'ān that Islam is a universal religion and the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.A.) is the last messenger divinely sent to people¹. According to this mission, the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.A.) sent letters to the eminent heads of states, such as Khusrow Parvīz, the king of Iran; Heracles, Roman Emperor; Muqūqas, the king of Egypt, and so on, calling them to Islam. His letters, still extant, were clear, decisive, and brief. These letters were delivered by faithful, devoted, and experienced couriers. The Prophet (S.A.W.A.) has, through these letters called them to Islam, word of Truth, brotherhood, and equality and warned them in case of heedlessness, of God's chastisement. It was these messages that paved the way for universal development of Islam.

1 Al-Qur'ān, 34; 18.

Battle of Khaibar

Khaibar, or better to say the oasis of Khaibar, consisted of seven citadels in a fertile land 200 kilometers north of Medina, and was a major shelter for the Jews. The Jews became more and more treacherous and bothersome to the Muslims. The Prophet (S.A.W.A.) decided to teach these hypocrites their place and repel their evil. To this end, he ordered the Muslims to go to Khaibar to conquer it. After great endeavor and resistance, their trenches were conquered one after another. Following the conquest of Khaibar citadels, the Jews who lived in the village 'Fadak', 140 km to Medina surrendered without any fight and resistance, and accepted the leadership of the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.A.). According to the Islamic rules, places which surrender without war belong to the Prophet. The holy messenger granted this village to his

daughter Fāṭimat al-Zahrā (A.S.). The story of its usurpation later on is recorded in the history up to the time of ‘Umar b. ‘Abd al-‘Azīz, which we will talk about in the biography of Fāṭimat al-Zahrā (A.S.).

Conquest of Mecca

In 8/629, something happened that proved the perfidy of Quraysh. Hence, the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.A.) decided to take over Mecca and cleanse it of the impurity of the idols and idolaters. Thus, in a quite unprecedented way, and without anybody knowing the time of command for departure and the course of movement and destination, the Prophet (S.A.W.A.) ordered ten thousand Muslim troops to move toward Mecca on the tenth of Ramadan.

The city of Mecca surrendered without any resistance. The Prophet (S.A.W.A.) accompanied by Muslims entered his

hometown. Idols were smashed into pieces and a great victory was achieved for Islam.

In this conquest, the Prophet (S.A.W.A.) who had full authority and was able to revenge his old stubborn enemies, granted them amnesty and mercy and showed the whole world that the goal of Islam was to tear away the chains of captivity and slavery from man's hands and feet and to call them toward Allah, and toward goodness, purity, and righteousness. From this year on, non-Muslims embraced Islam by groups and got familiar with its reviving and humanizing decrees.

Upon the conquest of Mecca, battles of Ḥunayn, Ṭā'if and Tabūk took place. In the first two, the Muslims defeated the enemy; in the battle of Tabūk, however, although the Prophet did not encounter the enemy and did not wage any war, a series of spiritual gains were attained by the Muslims

in this extremely adverse battle. With such tortuous journey, the Prophet (S.A.W.A.) paved the way for the conquest of Shām (Syria) and Rome, and taught methods of battle against great powers to his faithful companions.

The Death of the Holy Prophet

(S.A.W.A.)'s Beloved Son

In the early years the Prophet of Islam suffered the loss of his three sons named Qāsim, Ṭāhir and Ṭayyib as well as his three daughters Zaynab, Ruqayya and Umm Kulthūm and was very impressed by their demise.

But once again the death of his beloved son, Ibrāhīm, an offspring of Māriya, intensely hurt the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.A.)'s sensitive heart. The Prophet (S.A.W.A.), while embracing Ibrāhīm who was as a newly blossomed flower

surrendering his soul to God, uttered the following eloquent statements:

“My dearest Ibrāhīm! There is nothing we can do for you. Nor will God's destiny change, your father's eyes are tearful and his heart is mournful for your passing away, but I will never say a word which would outrage God...”

Some companions were surprised by the Prophet (S.A.W.A.)'s weeping; the Prophet (S.A.W.A.), however, like every time in the past taught the Muslims a great lesson, i.e., the lesson of affection and kindness to one's children.

Love of one's children is among the most sublime and purest manifestations of human soul and an indication of its health and gentleness. The Holy Prophet (S.A.W.A.) would always say, “Honor your children and be kind to them.” However, the only child that survived and perpetuated the

luminary lineage of *Wilāyat* and Imamate was his daughter Fāṭimat al-Zahrā (A.S.), the wife of ‘Alī (A.S.), i.e., the Prophet (S.A.W.A.)'s executor of testament.

Farewell Pilgrimage – the Last Journey of the Prophet (S.A.W.A.) to Mecca

A few years had been left of the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.A.)'s blessed life. It was 10/631 when the Prophet (S.A.W.A.) announced to people to get prepared for performing the Ḥajj pilgrimage. Over one hundred thousand people were gathered. The Holy Prophet (S.A.W.A.) donned the garb of a pilgrim (*iḥrām*) by wearing two pieces of white cloth from the Mosque of Shajara near Medina and so did the Muslims.

Labbaik Allāhumma Labbaik, Lā Sharīka Laka Labbaik was the melodious chanting reverberating in the air. Thousands of

people were repeating this heavenly call of the Prophet (S.A.W.A.). It was a manifestation of the magnificence of the Islamic unity, equality, and brotherhood.

The Holy Prophet (S.A.W.A.) taught the sacred rites of the Ḥajj pilgrimage to the Muslims for the first and the last time. This great Journey represented fruitful outcome of long time efforts of the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.A.) who sincerely had dedicated his life and wealth to the actualization of the Islamic ideals and Divine decrees, and delivered Divine messages to the people of the world. On ‘Arafāt, after noontime and afternoon prayers, the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.A.) addressed thousands of pure-minded Muslims as follows:

“O people! Listen to me! Maybe I won't meet you again at this place. O people! Your blood and wealth are respected like this day and month, and any intrusion on

them is unlawful, until the day you stand before the Exalted Allah.”

Then he called people to equality and brotherhood, advised them to observe women's rights, admonished them not to exceed Divine bounds, bewared them of violating one another's rights, and exhorted them to piety.

In the Arena of Ghadīr Khumm

On the way back to Medina when the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.A.) and tens of thousands of Muslims reached a place called Ghadīr Khumm, the Revelation Angel, Gabriel, descended on the Prophet (S.A.W.A.) and inspired the Divine Message in him as follows:

“O Messenger! Proclaim whatever (Message) has been sent to you from your Lord. If you do not, you would not have fulfilled and proclaimed your Mission. Allah

will guard you against people's evil.”¹

The people wondered what the fulfiller of religion was, without which the true religion would not be complete. That was truly the Prophet (S.A.W.A.)'s last measure to determine the line of Executorship (*wiṣāya*) and Imamate. The Prophet was to – by God's command – clarify people's duty after his demise.

Under the scorching sun and on the hot sands of the desert, the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.A.) introduced ‘Alī (A.S.), through a long sermon, as his *walī* (guardian) and successor to the people, particularly by uttering this statement, “Whoever I am the master (*mawlā*) of, ‘Alī is also the master of”, which has been narrated by both Sunnī and Shī‘a scholars.

On that day, 18th of Dhu'l- Hajja, people

1 Al-Qur’ān 5; 11.

swore allegiance to ‘Alī (A.S.).

About two months later, that is, on the latter days of Safar 11 AH, the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.A.) closed his eyes to the world and was laid to rest next to the mosque constructed by himself.

This Holy Shrine is now a center of pilgrimage for over a billion Muslims from all over the world.

The Qur’ān and the Household of the Prophet (S.A.W.A.)

A *ḥadīth* has been related from the Prophet (S.A.W.A.) as follows, “I leave two great and precious things among you; as long as you hold on to them, you will never be led astray, the Book of Allah and my *‘Itrat* (Household).”

The Qur'ān;

The Qur'ān consists of verses which gradually descended on Prophet Muḥammad (S.A.W.A.) within 23 years. It includes 114 short and long *sūras* and about 6400 verses. All *sūras* of the Qur'ān begin in the name of Allah (*Bismi'Allāh al-Raḥmān al-Raḥīm*) except *Sūrat al-Tawbah* (Repentance).

The verses of the Qur'ān are arranged as ordered by the Prophet (S.A.W.A.) himself.

The *sūras* revealed in Mecca are called Makkī and the ones revealed in Medina are called Madanī. Each *sūra* has a name which is taken from within the *sūra* text such as: *al-Naḥl*, *al-Baqara*, *al-'Alaq*, etc. As soon as a *sūra*, a verse, or several verses were revealed to the Prophet (S.A.W.A.) some trusted people, called "Writers of Revelation", would write them down. The

most famous among these writers were ‘Alī b. Abī Ṭālib (A.S.), ‘Abdullāh b. Mas‘ūd, Zayd b. Thābit, Mu‘ādh b. Jabal, Ubayy b. Ka‘b, etc. The advantage of the Qur’ān over other scriptures is that in the Qur’ān not the slightest distortion or change has occurred.

The Qur’ān is a perpetual and durable miracle of the Prophet (S.A.W.A.). It is explicitly pointed out in some parts of the Qur’ān that if you are in doubt of the Qur’ān, then produce some *sūras*, or even a single *sūra* consisting of three verses like these; of course, the Qur’ān itself has pointed out that the imposters will never be able to do so.

The Qur’ān is a miracle not only in wording and eloquence, but also in meaning and in containing consistent decrees and ordinances and eternal laws. The more human knowledge develops and the more

the world's secrets are unveiled, the mystery of the eternity of Islam and the Qur'ān will be further clarified. The Qur'ān has so far been translated into over one hundred world languages and several times into Persian, English, and French. In the Qur'ān attention is, above all, drawn to worshipping of the One God; Divine attributes of Beauty and Majesty; greatness of the creation order; going through quarters of the world and nature; studying the states and lives of the past; devotional, social, and legal ordinances laws; the Resurrection; great Divine Prophets' biographies; and taking lessons from the past folks and generations.

In order to be able to comprehend the deep inner and outer aspects of the Qur'ān, we should, first of all, get familiar with the eloquent and rhetorical language of the Qur'ān, which is a benevolent, everlasting,

and truthful guide.

ʿItrat or Ahl-al Bayt (A.S.)

It includes ‘Alī (A.S.), his children, and Fāṭimat al-Zahrā (A.S.), most dear and devoted daughter of the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.A.), who was called by the latter as *Umm Abīhā*, i.e., the mother of her father. ‘Alī (A.S.) was several times introduced by the Prophet as his executor of will, successor, and an Imam, as was Aaron to Moses. The children who were born to ‘Alī (A.S.) and Fāṭima (A.S.), of whom the last one was the promised Mahdī (A.S.), are all Infallible and far from impurity and sins. Other children from this noble tree are many and have always been sources of benevolence, blessedness, and virtue everywhere and at all times.

The Holy Messenger's Wives

The Holy Prophet (S.A.W.A.) married nine wives throughout his life. It was, of course, due to the circumstances of the society then as well as the situation of the Prophet (S.A.W.A.) himself. Before the advent of Islam, polygamy was widely common among various tribes. Later on, Islam allowed having up to four wives, provided that justice is maintained among them.

We know that the Prophet (S.A.W.A.) did not get married until the age of 25, at which he married Khadīja who was 15 years his senior and lived with her along for about 25 years. When she died, he married another widow called Sūda. Afterwards he got married to ‘Ā’isha. Other wives that he married, were all after ‘Ā’isha; and except Sūda, all were widows and not very young. The Prophet (S.A.W.A.) would grant them

their rights, do them justice, keep their due turns, and treat them all very kindly.

The women that the Prophet (S.A.W.A.) married were either among the unattended widows whose husbands had been martyred in war, or of the war captives who were quite respectfully living in the Prophet (S.A.W.A.)'s house. His Marriages, particularly in the last ten years of his life, were in general socially-oriented and were for producing affection among the hearts and creating kinship with the tribes to maintain relation with those whose conversion to Islam would have reinforced Islam and Muslims. Contrary to what has been said by some enemies of Islam or foreign orientalists, the Prophet (S.A.W.A.) had by no means intended to seek sexual pleasure – particularly since the Prophet

(S.A.W.A.), as mentioned in the Qur'ān¹, would spend during daytime two thirds of the night worshipping and reading the Qur'ān, and was busy engaged in social affairs and wars, and furthermore these marriages had not occurred at a young age.

The Prophet (S.A.W.A.)'s Behavior and Temperament

God says about His Holy Messenger, Muḥammad b. 'Abdullāh (S.A.W.A.), ﴿And indeed you possess a great character﴾ (68:4). What can a man with a little knowledge say about a Messenger who is all piety, mercy and a source of benevolence and magnanimity? What I say here is a single drop out of an ocean.

The Prophet (S.A.W.A.)'s temperament, behavior, and conduct are indeed a model

¹ Al-Qur'ān, 73: 25.

for all Muslims and a paradigm for all human beings and are in fact manifestations of Islam. The Prophet (S.A.W.A.) regarded all Muslims as brothers and treated them extremely kindly and lovingly. He would be dressed so simply and would sit on the ground so humbly among the companions that if a stranger arrived, he could not realize which one of them was the Prophet (S.A.W.A.). Although always wearing simple clothes, he considered cleanliness of garment and body as very important. His performing ablution (*wuḍū*) was always accompanied by brushing teeth. He would not exclude using perfume. He was always polite to the old and the young. He would always surpass others in saying *salām*. There was always a sweet smile on his face; however, he would avoid laughing loudly. He would frequently visit the sick and attend the Muslims' funerals. He was

hospitable. He would specially favor the orphans and the distressed, and affectionately caress the heads of the orphans. He avoided sleeping on a soft bed, saying, "In the world, I am like a rider who is resting for a while in the shade of a tree and then leaving." Although he was kind and gentle toward the subordinates, he was strongly harsh to the enemies and hypocrites. He was never frightened in the wars and was closer in battle field to the enemy than all other soldiers. He pardoned stubborn enemies such as the Quraysh infidels in the conquest of Mecca, who, in turn, were attracted by the Prophet (S.A.W.A.)'s character and converted to Islam in scores. He would avoid worldly riches. He distributed public property among people as quickly as possible, and although he was a commander and the messenger of God, he would never take a

bigger share for himself. His holiness was truly an example and a paradigm for all people.

Some Sayings of His Holiness Prophet

Muhammad (S.A.W.A.):

1. “The best things given to a person are a thanking tongue, a tolerant and patient body, and a God remembering heart.”

2. “It is true that you cannot attend to people by your wealth and satisfy them. Then try to attend to them with your good temper and speak kindly to them”.

3. “The worst people are those who do not accept an excuse and do not forgive a slip.”

4. “Imparting knowledge to the unfit is like hanging jewelry and pearls round the neck of a swine.”

5. “The best and the most valuable things

that a person acquires are forbearance and knowledge.”

6. “Hope is a source of mercy for my followers; if there were no light of hope in the hearts, no mother would feed her baby, and no gardener would plant a young tree.”

7. “The one who goes shopping and buys gifts for his family is like the one who wants to help the needy; and when he wants to distribute the gifts among the family members he should first hand one to his daughter and then to his son.”

8. “Shall I not inform you of the things that if you do, the Satan will get as far away from you as the distance between west and east?” Prophet (S.A.W.A.) asked. Those who were present replied, “Yes by all means.” The Prophet (S.A.W.A.) said, “Fasting makes the Satan black-faced, giving alms breaks his back, and friendship only for God's sake and perseverance in good

deeds eradicates his root. Asking for Divine pardon and repentance cuts off Satan's artery. For everything, there's a *zakāt*, and the *zakāt* of the body is fasting.”