

Muhammad (S) The Messenger of Allah: A Glimpse on Holy Prophet's Life

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Born in Makka on 17th Rabiul Awwal about 53 years before Hijra. The year of his birth was called "Amul Feel" due to the invasion of the Ka'aba by Abraha the viceroy of the Abyssinian King. Since the forces of Abraha arrived on elephants which is "Feel" in Arabic, the Arabs called this the year of the elephant. According to the Christian Calendar it was 571 AD.

The Roman Empire was in decline, the Capital was transferred from Rome to Constantinople and the whole of Europe was divided into little kingdoms fighting among each other. On the Eastern side The Sassanid Empire of the Persians was also in decline.

This was the world scene when a boy was born to the most renowned family of the Quraish, the Banu Hashim. His father was Abdullah son of Abdul Muttalib and his mother was Amena daughter of Wahb. As a baby he was sent to the nearby Bedouin Tribe where a lady called Halima nursed him.

Muhammad (S) was born an orphan as his father Abdullah died a few months before his birth. His grandfather Abdul Muttalib looked after the boy. Abdul Muttalib died when Muhammad (S) was only 8 years old and then his uncle Abu Talib the father of 'Ali, took over the upbringing of his nephew. His first journey outside Arabia was to the northern parts of Syria with the trading caravan of his uncle Abu Talib.

During one such journey an old Christian monk called Bohaira met the trading caravan and saw young Muhammad (S) who was about 14 years old at that time. The old monk told Abu Talib to look after the boy well, "for very soon his enemies will try to hurt him".

The monk also told Abu Talib that he saw unusual signs in the boy who will grow up into someone very important. Muhammad (S) remained with his uncle's family until the age of 25. It was due to his honesty and straight forward manner that he was successful in trading and became known to many traders in Makka .

The Marriage of Muhammad (S)

One of the leading trading families in those days was the family of Khadija a widow who was looking for an honest young man to look after her business affairs. Muhammad (S) took Khadija's caravan party to Syria and various other places and was a great success. Khadija was impressed and asked him for marriage.

Although being much older than Muhammad (S), (she was 40 years old), the marriage was agreed upon by both families and Muhammad's uncle Abu Talib read the Khutba of marriage and performed the marriage ceremony according to the Abrahamic traditions. The words of the

Khutba as described in Sirat-e-Rasullallah by Ibne Hisham were:

"Praises are for Allah who was the God of Ibrahim who worshipped one God and a Muslim. I am the descendent of Ibrahim and have remained on the same religion of One God. May Allah keep this purity among the descendants of Ibrahim forever". After this Khutba Abu Talib

completed the marriage ceremony between Muhammad (S) and Khadija. Muhammad (S) moved to her house and the partnership from trading to partnership in life began in earnest. A baby daughter was born to Khadija within a few years after the marriage.

She was named Fatima (sa).

Khadija had two daughters from her earlier marriage which ended in widowhood. So the three daughters, two from Khadija's earlier marriages and one from Muhammad (S) grew up together in the same house. History mentions another boy growing up in Muhammad's house. He was

'Ali (as) , Abu Talib's son.

'Ali (as) was born in the year 30 Amulfeel when Muhammad was 30 years old. Fatima's birth was recorded some five years later. So the difference of ages between Fatima and 'Ali was about 5 years. 'Ali was treated by Muhammad (S) like a son and Muhammad (S) took him everywhere he went.

Ibne Hisham in his Sirat mentions that Muhammad (S) began to meditate more and more. He would leave the town of Makka to the nearby hill called Jabal el Noor. There was a cave at the top of the hill and Muhammad (S) would climb the mountain and sit in the cave to meditate.

Sometimes he would stay there for days. Many times 'Ali accompanied him. One such story tells us that on one occasion Muhammad (S) did not return for 3 or 4 days and Abu Talib was concerned. His son 'Ali was also with him. They had taken some food with them. So the searching party from Makka went to the mountain looking for the two.

When they reached the top and entered the cave they found Muhammad (S) and 'Ali (as) meditating together, safe and sound. Abu Talib asked Muhammad what he did there. Muhammad told his uncle that he and 'Ali were engaged in meditating about the creator of the universe, the God of Ibrahim and Ismael

This meditation continued until one day a voice was heard inside the cave. It said, "Read". Muhammad (S) replied what shall I read. The voice said, "Read in the name of thy Lord". He was Angel Gabriel who told Muhammad (S) that he was ordained by Allah to be the Messenger of Allah and to preach this "Deen" to the people.

This was the first revelation that came over Muhammad (S) when he was told to begin his preaching of the Qur'an to Makkans. Muhammad (S) came home and told Khadija about this who immediately accepted him as the Messenger of God. She also said that her uncle Warqa had told her that Muhammad (S) had the signs of a great Messenger. When the news of this first revelation of Verse from the Qur'an had reached Warqa through Khadija he told her, "Didn't I tell you that this husband of yours was the Messenger of God".

'Ali (as) was living with Muhammad (S) and had also accompanied him to the Mountain of Hira, and had also experienced the revelation with Muhammad (S). He had no doubts who Muhammad (S) was and was the first to acknowledge him as the Messenger of Allah. Khadija among the women, their daughter Fatima (sa) and the two daughters from Khadija's earlier marriage. All acknowledged Muhammad (S) as the Messenger of Allah. Muhammad (S) used to enter the Ka'aba and pray there with Khadija and 'Ali (S).

The story was mentioned by Ibne Hisham in his Sirat as follows: 'One day these three were praying while Abbas Ibne Abdul Muttalib, Muhammad's uncle was sitting on the nearby hill and watching. A trader from Yemen was sitting with Abbas. He asked Abbas who these three people were praying in a strange man.

The woman was Muhammad's wife Khadija and the boy was Abu Talib's son 'Ali. "they follow some strange 'deen' which we are not familiar with yet," was Abbas's reply. Muhammad (S) said that "Lailaha Illallah" means that there is no god, only Allah that Muhammad (S) is His messenger, and that all men are born equal. He taught against idolatry, and against social injustices of the time. In the beginning this preaching of One God went on secretly.

Zaid and Abubakr were the other two who accepted Islam. The slave community of Makka began to accept this because they liked the tone of equality of all human beings. But once they accepted the faith they became steadfast never to go back to their adulatory even after suffering torture by their masters.

Muhammad (S) preached Islam secretly for 3 years but only a few people were converted to Islam. At the end of the 3rd year Allah told Muhammad to "invite your own family and clan and announce to them that you are preaching Islam." Muhammad (S) asked 'Ali to prepare some food. Some bread, meat and milk was brought in.

Over 40 heads of the Tribes of Quraish were invited. They came, ate food then before Muhammad (S) was able to say anything they all dispersed. So the next day Muhammad (S) Invited them again and immediately after food Muhammad (S) announced, "I am the

Messenger of Allah and my message is of peace and surrender to One God, anyone who helps me in this work will be my Deputy and will be my successor after me.”

‘Ali who was only 13 years old stood up and told Muhammad (S) he will help him in his work. Muhammad (S) asked ‘Ali to sit down and repeated the same announcement three times and all three times ‘Ali stood alone. In the end Muhammad (S) announced that ‘Ali will be his deputy and successor after him. One head of the tribesmen laughed at this and one even told Abu Talib, father of ‘Ali that “now you should obey your son.”

Now that this religion came out in the open the Quraish of Makka became openly hostile. In the beginning they thought that the whole thing was a joke, but gradually when it became serious, they were angry and became openly hostile. For the people of Makka and towns like Taif, this was a very strange religion.

They disliked it so much that first they persecuted the Muslims, then organized a boycott of Muhammad and his whole family of Banu Hashim. They banished him from Makka and the whole family lived in the Hills and mountains around Makka. The place became known as Sho’be Abu Talib, As Abu Talib as Head of the Clan of Banu Hashim protected the family while they were in exile. For three years the family suffered hunger and great poverty.

The Leaders of Quraish had written down on a piece of goat skin that Banu Hashim shall never return to the city until Muhammad (S) denounces his single god religion. At the end of three years Muhammad told his uncle Abu Talib to go to Makka and tell the Makkans that the piece of skin on which the agreement was written was no more.

As it was sealed and was kept inside the Kaaba and no one was allowed to enter the place, they were surprised. The leaders said that if Muhammad (S) was right and the agreement was no more, then they will lift the siege of Banu Hashim and let them return to the city. The Kaaba was opened, the sealed box was opened and the piece of parchment on which the agreement was written was found to be consumed by insects.

When they saw this they agreed to lift the siege and allowed the family of Banu Hashim to return to the City. Little had they realized that the news of this miraculous knowledge of Muhammad (S) about the disappearance of the parchment, had a great effect on the people of Makka and they began to accept Islam. After this event many more Makkans were accepting Islam readily, especially the poor class of Makka who accepted Islam in earnest.

But with this conversion, the feudal lords of Makka had increased their hostility towards new converts, punishing them and torturing them so much so that in the end Muhammad (S) told them to migrate to another land.

Habasha (Abyssinia) was the nearest country across the seas where they could hope to be

safe. So the first migration began and about 83 new Muslims under the leadership of 'Ali's elder brother Jaafer Ibne Abi Talib, migrated to Habasha. Until that time Jaafer was the main writer of the revelation (Wahii) with 2 other companions named Abdullah Ibne Masood and Obai Ibne Ka'aba. Mas'ab Ibne Omair was also an early convert to Islam and a writer of the Revelation. He was sent to Yathrib to teach Qur'an to the people early there who had shown a great interest in this new creed. 'Ali Ibne Talib, after his elder brother Jaafer's departure to Habasha became the head among the writers of the Revelation. 'Ali continued with the writing of the Revelation up to the last Verse of the Holy Qur'an.

This was revealed after the Khutba of the Holy Prophet at Ghadeer Khum on 18th of Zilhijja 10th Hijri. This Verse is in 5:3 which says that "This day I have perfected your Deen for you, and I have completed my blessings on you, and I have approved Islam for your Deen." Seventy days after the event, the Holy Prophet passed away.

Islam was spreading rapidly, Muhammad's uncle Hamza entered the fold of Islam which gave great strength to the new creed. It was at this time that Omar Ibne Khattab also came to accept Islam.

After Muhammad's (S) return from the Shu'be Abi Talib to the normal city life of Makka, Islam had start to spread rapidly under the protection of Muhammad's uncle Abu Talib. But Allah had other plans. Abu Talib and Khadija both died within one year which was a sad blow to the family.

The Hostility of the Quraish had taken a dangerous trend especially after the death of Abu Talib. Abu Lahab and Abu Sofyan who were the leaders of the hostile group against Islam made plans to end Muhammad's life.

They thought of a scheme where if one person from each tribe of Quraish surrounded Muhammad's house, entered the house in the morning and killed him then the blame would be on all tribes and Banu Hashim would not be able to take revenge. Allah told the Prophet of this scheme and instructed him to leave the city of Makka and migrate to Yathrib.

Muhammad asked 'Ali to sleep in his bed to deceive the enemy. 'Ali asked " will this save your life," Muhammad (S) said yes, it will save my life. 'Ali replied "then I have no hesitation in sleeping in your bed disguised as you."

While 'Ali slept in Muhammad's bed, Muhammad (S) himself left the house undetected by the enemy who had surrounded his house with open swords. Abubakr was with the Prophet, when they left Makka from the southern exit and hid in a cave a few miles away. While they were inside the cave a spider weaved a web on the entrance to the cave to give an impression that

no one had entered the cave.

Meanwhile in Makka the enemy with open swords entered Muhammad's house in order to kill him, but found 'Ali sleeping soundly. They asked 'Ali, where was Muhammad to which 'Ali replied, "have you entrusted him to me?"

The enemy left disappointed, but realized that Muhammad (S) must have gone to Yathrib. They tried to follow the tracks with the help of professional trackers and reached the cave of Thaur where these two were sitting inside. But the spider's web deceived them and they all came back disappointed.

Muhammad (S) reached Yathrib, the town some 400 kilometers north of Makka and the converts there named the city as 'the city of the Prophet' (Madinatun Nabi). Ever since then the town has been known as Madina. The date of this migration was 26th July 623 AD and under the new Islamic Calendar, the first year of the Hijra.

'Ali stayed in Makka to give back to the owners all the valuables which the people of Makka had deposited with Muhammad for safe keeping. After three days when this important task was completed 'Ali (as) set out for Madina and arrived there a week later. Muhammad (S) waited for him at the outskirts of the town and entered the town with the whole family.

The People of Madina helped Muhammad (S) settle in this new place. Their help was appreciated so much so that they were called Ansars, the Helpers, while those who came from Makka were called Muhajiroon, the migrants. On orders from Allah, Muhammad (S) brought Muhajirs and Ansars together by making each Ansar a brother to a Muhajir.

This way they shared each other's property like brothers. Muhammad (S) took 'Ali (as) as his brother in faith, although 'Ali was his cousin in relation to blood. (Sirat Ibne Hisham).

Muhammad's daughter Fatima was about 19 years old and there were many suitors, but whenever somebody asked Muhammad (S) for Fatima's hand in marriage he kept quiet. One day 'Ali (as) came to the mosque and asked for Fatima's hand in marriage.

Muhammad replied "Yes, this has been ordained by Allah." He asked, "What property do you have," to which 'Ali replied, "not much." He had a sword, a horse and a protective shield. Muhammad said "sell the shield, because you will need the horse and the sword for the protection of Islam."

'Ali sold his shield for 200 Dirhams, brought the money to Muhammad (S) who added another 200 Dirhams over it and asked his companions to buy household goods to set up home for the newlyweds. He then read the Khutba and finalized the marriage of 'Ali (as) and Fatima.

This was in the First year of the Hijra. This was a simple Islamic marriage which should be copied by all Muslims instead of spending lavish amounts of money and huge dowries to

cripple the parents economically forever.

As Islam was the religion of peace and surrender to the Will of God, aggression had been forbidden. In spite of various attacks on the newly converted Muslim community in Madina, Muhammad (S) had forbidden all retaliation. News came from Makka that all those who left Makka had lost their property. The Makkans had taken all they had left behind. Muhammad's uncle Hamza asked Muhammad (S) to fight with the Kuffars of Makka but he did not agree. In the end when news came that the Makkans were marching towards Madina to fight Muhammad (S) and his newly converted Muslim community, the Verses came down on Muhammad (S) to stand up and defend your "Deen", but do not exceed the limits. In other words you can only defend, aggression was totally forbidden. (2: 173-174)

The Battle of Badr

In the 2nd year of Hijra, 624 AD, 'The Battle of Badr' took place. The Makkans marched towards Madina with 1000 soldiers. Muhammad (S) with his army of 313 men came out of Madina. Badr is situated some 10 miles south of Madina and 240 miles north of Makka. The Makkans travelled all the way to Madina to defeat Islam. The Muslims had no choice but to defend Islam.

Hamza, 'Ali Obaida came out of the Muslim side in single combat with the chiefs of Makka who were all slain. The battle ensued and at the end of the day the Makkans were defeated with 70 dead, while very few Muslims were killed.

Those Makkans who were taken captive were told that if they could teach Muslims to read and write, they would live freely in the city and be provided with food and shelter. This was a clear direction that gaining knowledge was the first priority in Islam.

The Battle of Ohud

In the 3rd year of Hijra, 'The Battle of Ohud' took place. The Makkans did not like their defeat in Badr and began their preparations in earnest. They came with 3000 men to fight Islam.

Muhammad (S) heard the news and came out of Madina with 700 men. Muhammad (S) arranged his small army in such a way that the mountain was behind them. Some 30 archers from the army were strategically placed in an opening in the mountain to protect the Muslims from any attack from behind.

Initially the Makkans were no match for the valor of the Muslim soldiers and they began to run away. Newly converted Muslim soldiers prematurely thought they had won the war, so they began to take possession of the booty of war.

When the 30 archers saw this, they left their strategic mountain pass to join the others. Khalid Ibne Walid saw this opening and cleverly attacked from behind on the person of the Prophet himself. It was 'Ali (as) and a few other true companions of the Prophet that saved the day and saved the life of the Prophet. The Prophet was himself injured by a stone. Khalid Ibne Walid shouted 'Muhammad is killed', upon which hearing this, many companions began to run away in panic. The wounded Prophet was left in the battlefield with only 'Ali, Hamza, Abu Dajjana and Zakwan to defend him. These brave warriors fought fiercely and during this encounter Hamza was killed by a spear wound inflicted by the Slave of Abu Sofian's wife Hind. Zakwan and Abu Dajjana lay wounded and 'Ali was left alone to defend the Holy Prophet. 'Ali had received 16 wounds during this battle. He picked up the Holy Prophet while he was surrounded by the enemy and with Khalid shouting to finish the Prophet off for good. 'Ali fought against them, killing two of them, which led the others to run away. 'Ali (as) boldly lifted the Holy Prophet and carried him to the mountain and safety. 'Ali kept shouting " the Holy Prophet is alive" so that the Muslims who ran away might come back. Those Muslims who had not run far returned and saw the wounded Prophet and his daughter Fatima (sa) attending to his wounds. They took heart and began to fight the enemy under the command of 'Ali (as) and drove them away. The victory was gained. The Prophet returned to Madina and declared three days of mourning for his uncle Hamza. The Holy Prophet said afterwards that 'Ali's bravery was applauded by Angel Gabriel who said that there is no braver youth than 'Ali and no better sword than Zulfiqar.(Details of this battle can be read in the History of Tabari, Waqidi and Abul Fida).

The Battle of Khandaq

The Battle of Khandaq: 4th year of Hijra, 626 AD: At the end of the battle of Ohud when Abu Sofian was unable to hurt the Holy Prophet, he returned to Makka after promising that he will come back next year and will take revenge for the defeats of Badr and Ohud. This time it was not only the non believers of Makka who were with him. He had also taken the help of the Jews of Madina to defeat Islam forever. The Jewish tribes of Madina promised to help in two ways, one to send soldiers to fight in the battlefield and two to create fear among the women and children who were left in the town unprotected. The Prophet's companion Salman Farsi suggested that the Muslims must dig a moat on the unprotected side of the town. The Muslims took this advice and the moat was ready within 3

days in which the Prophet himself took part. When the enemy forces arrived at the scene they were unable to enter the city due to the newly dug moat and they stayed on the outer side. But one of their most famous soldier's named Amr Ibne Abde Wud jumped the moat with his horse and challenged the Muslims to fight with him. When The Prophet asked his bravest to go and fight Amr none of them was eager to come out. Omar Ibne Khattab even suggested that this man was so brave that he fought one thousand men alone and defeated them. 'Ali was eager as ever to fight this man and he came out with the blessings of the Holy Prophet who said, 'Today the whole faith has come out to fight the whole infidelity. "'Ali was able to kill the enemy soon and when the Prophet saw 'Ali victorious he uttered the words "Verily one blow of 'Ali's sword on the day of Khandaq is superior to the worship of all beings until the Day of Judgement."

Amr was killed, but the battle was not over. Armies of non-believers were on the other side of the ditch while the Muslims were inside the city almost besieged without any provisions. After a while with the prayers of the Holy Prophet a storm blew up that frightened the army of the non-believers and they ran away never to come back again.

Treaty of Hodaibiya

After the battles of Badr, Ohud and Khandaq the infidels of Makka avoided any further military ventures. The Prophet decided to perform Umra in the 6th year of Hijra (628 AD). As the Muslims approached Makka, the infidels of Makka did not like this and stopped the Muslims entering Makka. Seeing them bent on aggression, the apostle of God agreed to a treaty with the Makkans.

It was wisely drafted by Imam 'Ali (as) , the terms outwardly looked humiliating to Muslims that if a Muslim was taken captive by the infidels he will not be returned but if an infidel comes to the hands of the Muslims he will be released immediately.

When the Holy Prophet signed the treaty, Umar Ibne Khattab disliked it so much that he uttered the words," I have never doubted about the Prophethood of Muhammad (S) this much as I did today." He questioned the Prophet about this humiliating agreement to which the Prophet replied, "I am the Messenger of Allah and all my acts are on the orders from Allah."

But it is evident that this deviation from the path of the Prophet was later to become an acceptable norm rather than an off the cuff event. Later you will see how this misconceived habit of contradicting the infallible Prophet of Islam created divisions within the religion itself. Those who followed 'Ali as the follower of the Sunna of the Prophet became the partisan of 'Ali, others followed Omar ibn Khattab. (see Saheeh Bukhari, Kitab-alKholafa)

The Battle of Khyber

The Jews of Madina ever since their treachery during the battle of Khandaq, were always on the lookout for some mischief to hurt Islam. This mischief mongering increased so much so that they were banished from the city to live outside Madina. They had extensive lands and had

built strong fortresses where most of the Jewish community lived.

The fort of Khyber was a strong fort built of stone with an iron gate. It was the strong hold of the Jews who invaded Muslim lands and villages around the area. They killed Muslims and looted their property. Warnings were given to the Jews of Khyber to stop their mischievous

deeds but they did not bother even to acknowledge their misdeeds.

The Holy Prophet proceeded to stop this problem for the Muslims. Muslim forces encamped outside this fort. It was in the month of Muharram in the 7th year of Hijra. On the First day

Abubakr led the Muslim forces to fight the Jews.

The Jews came out of the fort. A furious battle was fought; Muslims could not break the Jews onslaught and retreated back to their camp. The Next day Omar Ibne Khattab took the flag and

tried to defeat the Jewish forces without success.

That night the Prophet announced," Tomorrow I will give the flag of Islam to a man who is brave and does not run away from the battlefield, he loves Allah and the Prophet of Allah and

Allah and His Prophet love him."

The Next day, after morning prayers the Prophet called for 'Ali (as) and gave the Flag in his hands. 'Ali (as) holding the flag in his hand went towards the fort. Noticing that only one man was coming towards the fort the Jews did not come out in the open field. Reaching the gates of the fort 'Ali fixed the pole on a hard stone slab. Noticing the fixing of the flag on a hard

stone, a Jew who was a learned scholar, asked from the top of the wall, " who are you? "

'Ali replied, "I am 'Ali son of Abu Talib." Hearing the name the learned scholar turned towards his people and told them, "I have read in the sacred both at a man of this name will defeat you."

In accordance with the convention of the Arabs, 'Ali announced his challenge and demanded the bravest of them to come out and fight him in single combat. Merhub, one of the brave and

skilled warriors came out and was killed by 'Ali (as) in one blow.

His brother Anter came out and he was also killed in a single blow of 'Ali's sword Zulfiqar.

Once these brothers were killed 'Ali went towards the iron gates and brought them down. Once

the gates were open Muslims entered the fort and soon the Jews were defeated.

This was a great victory for Muslims, for the Jews were a mischievous lot and had been giving a lot of trouble to Muslims of Madina and those living around. Most of the Jewish land came

into the Muslims hands. It was at this time that a Palm orchard called Fadak also came into the Muslim hands. The Prophet of Islam took this orchard for himself and later gave it to his daughter Fatimah. The battle of Khyber was a turning point in the defeat of the Jews of the Province of Hejaz and victory for Islam.

Fall of Makka

On the 10th of Ramadan 8th year of Hijra the Holy Prophet left Madina for Makka with a large number of his companions. On arrival at Makka the Prophet met no resistance. The people of Makka were so overawed that they did not come out, and most of them for fear of their lives hid themselves in their houses.

Prophet's uncle Abbas Ibne Abdul Muttalib took Abu Sofian to the Holy Prophet. The Holy Prophet asked him, "Has the time not come for you to verify the truth of accepting Allah and my Prophethood." Abu Sofian replied, "for that my heart still wavers."

Abbas hearing this reply said loudly, "woe to you, be quick in accepting Islam or you might be killed." Thereupon Abu Sofian verified that Muhammad was the Prophet of Allah and recited the Kalema. His son Moawiya also came in the fold of Islam at this time together with other children of Abu Sofian.

The Holy Prophet then declared that anyone who enters Abu Sofian's house would be safe. Holy Prophet then entered the Ka'aba and began to demolish all the 364 idols perched inside the Holy shrine. The biggest one was Hubul and to destroy that idol The Prophet asked 'Ali to climb over his shoulders and bring the idol down to the ground.

This way the Ka'aba was cleared of the idols and was purified in the same manner as Holy Prophet's ancestor Hazrat Ibrahim did in the beginning when he built the Shrine for the service of one God and none else.

After the bloodless victory of Makka, the battle of Hunain took place in which 'Ali (as) was the main champion who had defeated the non-believers and most of the tribes around Makka accepted Islam. The battle of Tabuk took place in the same year when Prophet went to the North of Madina. In this battle he did not take 'Ali (as) with him.

Instead he appointed 'Ali as the leader in Madina while the Prophet was away. Some mischievous persons told 'Ali (as) that he was left with women and children rather than fighting with the Prophet. When 'Ali (as) enquired this from the Prophet he replied, "would you not prefer the state of affair as it was between Moses and his brother Aaron, except that there will not be a Nabi after me."

What the Holy Prophet meant that by leaving 'Ali inside the city of Madina as his deputy, The Prophet was setting the example of Moses when he left Aaron in his place and left for Mount Sinai. This Hadith is called Hadith-e-Manzelat which clearly declares that 'Ali was to become Prophet's successor after him.(see Saheeh Bukhari Kitab el Ahlul Bayt, Also Soyuti Kitab al Khulafa)

The Treaty with the Christians of Najran

The 9th year of Hijra was of great importance because of the treaty with the Christians of Najran, This treaty is regarded of vital importance because it was the result neither of war nor of any discussion but ended in Mubahela between the Holy Prophet and the Christians of Najran.(This means cursing each other).

The Christians of Najran were unhappy because of the rapid spread of Islam in the land of Arabs. They wished to discuss this matter with the Prophet and arrived in Madina. Few learned scholars were selected by the Christians who had a continuous dialogue with the Prophet for three days.

It started on Saturday, when Sunday arrived and they asked to leave to go outside the city to pray the Prophet told them to stay and pray inside the Mosque of the Prophet which they did to their surprise.

Prophet of Islam was setting the example that there is freedom of worship in Islam for all who believe in God. After their Sunday service their discussion continued. They were unable to arrive on any mutual understanding. The sticking point was the claim by the Christians of the divinity of Jesus Christ as the son of God.

The Holy Prophet told them, " The birth of Jesus Christ is similar to the birth of Adam. Allah created Adam without father and mother while Jesus was born without a father and from his mother only. None of the two was the son of God.

This is the truth, for you accept the creation of Adam without parents yet do not claim him to be of divine essence. Why then do you deviate from this truth." When they did not agree on this point revelation from Allah came on the Prophet.

(3:61) The Verse reads like this

"If you are not prepared to accept the truth after the fact that you have failed in your arguments, Say, Come now, let us call our sons and your sons, our women and your women, our Selves and Your Selves, then let us humbly pray and so lay God's curse upon the ones who lie."

The next morning the Holy Prophet emerged from his house with his closest family. He held

the hand of Imam Hasan (as) walking beside him, held Imam Husayn (as) in his arms, followed by his daughter Fatimah (S). She was followed by 'Ali (as). He came and stood with this family in front of the Christian Bishops who also came forward to perform the Mubahela. The chief of the Christians was Bishop Abul Harris. When he saw this small family of the Prophet he turned towards his fellow Christians and told them, "Do not indulge in Mubahela with this family, for I am observing such pious faces that if they would order the mountain to come to them the mountain shall move towards them. It is therefore prudent to make treaty with them rather than confrontation of this spiritual imminence. They asked the Prophet for peace and it was accepted. The Holy Prophet extended the hand of friendship towards them, a treaty was signed and both parties left on friendly terms.

The last pilgrimage

On the 25th Zeeqaad of the 10th year of Hijra the Holy Prophet left Madina for a pilgrimage to the Holy Ka'aba at Makka. This was to be the last pilgrimage of the Holy Prophet. A very large number of people were with him who performed this last pilgrimage with the Prophet. At the mount of Arafat the Prophet gave his last sermon and came out of Makka towards Madina. Half way through their route the caravan arrived at a place called Ghadeer-e-Khum. It was 18th of Zilhijja 10th year of Hijra. The Prophet stopped there and made a general announcement to stop all those pilgrims with him. When all companions were assembled at the place the Prophet announced, "Know all my followers that I am about to leave this mundane world. I am leaving behind two valuable things for your future guidance. One is the Book of Allah and the other is my Ahlul Bayt, that is my family. If you follow these two you will never be misled." After this the Holy Prophet took 'Ali by his hand, raised him up so that all can see him. The Prophet said, " Do you accept that my Self is above your Selves. When all the companions replied in unison, "Yes, Prophet of God, we accept, "then he announced that whoever accepted him as his master, then 'Ali is to be their master. "O' God, be witness that I have passed your message as thou have ordered. Those who have love for 'Ali will have love for me and those who will love me will love Allah."

After this Khutba the Prophet arrived back in Madina at the end of the month of Zilhijja.

The Death of the Holy Prophet

In the month of Safar 11 Hijra, the Holy Prophet fell ill. Most of this time with the agreement of

his wives the Prophet stayed at the house of Ayesha from where he would come out to the mosque and lead the prayers. One day he was very ill so he asked Ayesha to call 'Ali for prayers. She called her father Abubakr instead and asked him to lead the prayers. While Abubakr was leading the prayers The Prophet woke up. When he realized who was leading the prayers, he came out of the house with the help of his uncle Abbas and his Moazzin Bilal, stood in front of Abubakr and led the prayers. From there the Prophet returned to the House of his daughter Hazrat Fatimah where he stayed until the last day of his life.

Pen and Paper

It is narrated in Saheeh Bukhari and Muslim that Ibne Abbas narrated: When the Holy Prophet was seriously ill, and all of us were around him, he opened his eyes and said, bring me pen and paper so that I may write something which shall always guide you and shall keep you on the Right Path and shall save you from being astray. Hearing these words from the lips of the Holy Prophet, Omar said, "Ur- Rajulo la -Yahjur" meaning this man was talking which makes no sense."Hasbona Kitab Allah" The Book of God is sufficient for us.

This gave rise to a dispute among the companions. Some were of the opinion that as the Holy Prophet was to be obeyed at all times and under all circumstances a pen and paper should be provided to him, while some of them were on the side of Omar.

The hot discussion on that point between the companions gave rise to noise and the Holy Prophet angrily told them to go away from his presence and leave him alone."

Whenever Ibne Abbas, who was the most profound scholar and commentator of the Holy Qur'an and the most reliable narrator of the traditions, remembered the event of the day, he used to weep and would say, "Alas, what an unfortunate day it was when the Holy Prophet demanded that a pen and paper be provided to him and there arose a dispute among his companions and they made such a noise that the Holy Prophet told them to get away from him and leave him alone."

The Holy Prophet asked 'Ali to come close to him. 'Ali (as) came and observing the ailing condition of the Holy Prophet raised his head and placed it on his own chest. The Prophet passed away while his head was resting on the chest of 'Ali (as) .

The news of the death of the Holy Prophet spread quickly among the companions. All of them came out of their house weeping and crying loudly. Umar was very upset. He took his sword out and said, nobody should say that the Prophet was dead. Then he took Abubakr away from the place to a house outside Madina called Saaqeefa Bani Sa'ada.

Many companions went with them. While 'Ali (as) and most of the Bani Hashim stayed in the house of the Holy Prophet while 'Ali (as) prepared for his burial. The Historian Ibnul Wardi mentions in his book that the funeral bath to the Holy Prophet was given by 'Ali (as) , assisted by his uncle Abbas and many other relatives. The Holy Prophet laid to rest on the night of Wednesday. He was 63 years of age. He was buried in the house of his daughter Fatimah which was annexed to the Mosque of the Prophet.

A glimpse of the Holy Prophet (S)

The best known description of the Holy Prophet appears in 'Universal History' by Tabari(d.Baghdad 310AH 923 AD) and is attributed to Imam 'Ali (as) Prophet's cousin and also his son-in-law.

Asked for details of the Prophet's external appearance, 'Ali said, " He was of medium height, neither very tall nor very short. His complexion was pinkish white, his eyes were black, and his hair was thick, glossy and beautiful. A full beard framed his face. Hairs of his head were long, falling to his shoulders. They were black.

His walk was so energetic that you would have said that he tore himself from the rock with each step, and yet at the same time he moved so lightly that with each stride he seemed not to touch the ground. But he did not walk proudly, as princes do. There was so much gentleness in his face that once in his presence, it was impossible to leave him.

If you were hungry, you were satisfied by looking at him and thought no more of food. Any man suffering from an affliction forgot his troubles when in his presence, charmed by the gentleness of his features and his discourse. All, who saw him, agreed that they never met, neither before nor after, a man whose discourse was so delightful.

His nose was straight; there was a gap between his teeth. Sometimes he would let the hair of his head fall naturally, at other times he wore it knotted into two or four bunches. At sixty three years, no more than fifteen hairs on his whole body had yet become white with age."

Some selected sayings (Traditions) of the Holy Prophet

1. "Seek knowledge even if it were in China." It was knowledge of good from evil, which made man worthy of getting the great job of the vice-regency of God on earth. Knowledge has given man superiority over more powerful creatures. It is self evident that nations, which had more knowledge, acquired greater power. The above tradition stresses the need of acquiring knowledge even if one has to travel long distances.

2. "Masses follow the religion of their rulers." A deep study of history surely reveals the truth of

this proverbial saying. Christianity was going through a very hard time until Constantine the great made it a state religion of the Roman Empire. After acquiring this status Christianity spread throughout the Empire like bush fire. More or less the same thing happened in the East when Islam became the religion of the ruling class. Even now in this age of so called individual freedom and a democratic life style, in most countries force is used to subdue and subjugate the people who dare to defy the policy of the ruling classes.

This clearly means that a just and guided ruler is essential for the up lifts of the people as a whole, hence the need of the presence of an Imam to guide them.

3, " Refrain from slanderous situations. People say that such and such a person associates with thieves, he must be a thief himself. A wise man keeps himself away from such situations."

4. " Actions are determined by their intentions." Saying prayers while your mind is somewhere else is worthless."

5. "To associate with a learned man for an hour is better than the company of a worshipper for seventy years."

6. " Someone asked the Holy Prophet during the battle of Badr, "What is Deen". The Prophet ".replied, Belief in One God and service of the people