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MOHAMMAD- THE PROPHET OF ISLAM

No divine message existed in its pure form anywhere in the world at the time of the advent of last message of Islam. It was, therefore, need of the hour that a saviour of humanity come to its rescue and guide the bewildered world. The society of Makkah was infested with all kinds of human problems, no peace anywhere, no human rights, no rule of law, only 17 persons were literate, no sense of justice except tribal rituals and hegemonies. Fairer sex was subjected to inferior treatment as wife, sister and daughter.

So when humanity was gripping in darkness Muhammad Ibn Abdullah was born in Makkah in 571 A.C. He was appointed as the last Prophet by God in 610 A.C. Through the very second revelation of Surah Al-Muddathir, God ordained him "*Arise and warn and glorify your Lord*". That's how his mission was determined as to establish authority of God on this earth.

One of the most distinct reasons for the selection of Arabs to receive the everlasting leader of mankind, seems to be the special place held by their language, Arabic. Without prejudice, Arabic is the richest and most comprehensive media of expression till date. The revelation from the

Almighty for the whole of humanity and too for all times to come, could have been in the most variant language. Arabic was fittingly the natural divine selection for the language of the Holy Quran, the eternal constitution for all walks of human life. Thus it became the destiny of the Arabs to champion the cause of Islam, peace and human uplift thenceforth under the teachings of the Holy Quran and the guidance of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) In every sense the Holy Prophet presented himself as human being and as a humble servant of the Almighty. He has neither claimed any sort of Divinity in his life. His own personal life was a perfect model for mankind and has possessed an exemplary character.

Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) generated a sense of brotherhood among the feuding members of various groups. He declared: saving the life of an innocent human being is commensurate to saving the life of entire humanity and who kills an innocent man is considered to have killed the whole mankind. He said all human beings are descendants of one father and one mother. They are equal and are brothers. There is no inequality among them,

regarding their birth. None of them is low or high, small or big. The best of them is one who is the best in respect of his deeds. The most fearing from his God and the most obedient to Him. The Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) taught his companions to develop the Characteristics of love, peace, benevolence, mercy, justice, forgiveness, sincerity, generosity, hospitality, courage, modesty, simplicity. He projected to consider women as equal partner of men, in most aspects.

Those who responded to his call of Dawah, Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) educated them, trimmed their character and transformed them into trustworthy characters on the basis of belief in One God and His Prophet (S.A.W.), accountability in Hereafter, the concept of Amanah, belief in Jannat, and Jahannam and belief in Angels. He taught people to visualize nature and realize themselves as God's great designs and as the manifestation of His glory and encouraged them to learn from it instead of worshipping the idols. Thus, he opened a new era of rational thinking and scientific exploration strictly based on *Tawheed* (Monotheism). He taught his followers to treat the slaves, the weak and the downtrodden with the utmost gentleness and love and made it an integral part of God's worship. He taught to keep the environment clean and unpolluted. He treated animals with kindness and took good care of them. He exhorted Muslims to give such treatment to animals which would enable a Muslim to enter into Paradise. The Holy Prophet taught the

people to guard their tongue and hands and avoid harming others with them. He ordered to cultivate good and gentle behavior and achieve gentleness.

Human society in the 21st century has no ideology to seek redress from its accumulated turmoil. It has become unbalanced and is fast reaching to the other end of pendulum. To come out of it, Commands of God and teachings of Prophet Muhammad could serve the humanity an accomplished way and keep its growth in.

The basic principle of the Islamic order of life is obedient to God and obedient to the Prophet (S.A.W.). However, no Prophet is entitled to obedience in his own right. Obedience to Prophet is the only practical way of obeying God since he is the authoritative means by which He communicates His injunctions and ordinances to men. Hence, we can obey God only if we obey the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.). Independent obedience to God is not acceptable, and to turn one's back on the Prophet (S.A.W.) amounts rebellion against God. The following Tradition explains this: "*Whoever obeyed me, indeed obeyed God; and whoever disobeyed me, indeed disobeyed God*". (Saheeh Bukhari)

So a Muslim is obliged to follow the Quranic call: "*O you who believe! Obey God and obey the Messenger*" (4:59)



THE PROPHET AS A WARNER

“Say: O men! I am (sent) to you only to give a clear warning. Those who believe and work Righteousness, for them is forgiveness and a sustenance Most generous. But those who strive against Our Signs, to frustrate them—they will be companions of the Fire. Never did We send a messenger or a prophet before you, but, when he framed a desire, Satan threw some (vanity) into his desire: but Allah will cancel anything (vain) that Satan throws in, and Allah will confirm (and establish) His Signs: For Allah is full of knowledge and wisdom”. (Surah Al-Hajj, 22:49-52)

It is the Messenger's duty to convey the warning in the clearest terms to the wicked. It is no part of his duty to coerce them or judge them, or bring on the Punishment for them. That only rests with Allah. He alone decides who is to be granted respite and till when, and who is to be punished and in what manner. But the warning itself is full of Mercy, for it gives the highest hope to the repentant sinner who turns and comes to Allah.

The word *maghfirah* signifies overlooking one's fault, weaknesses and being indulgent. The other expression used here, *rizq karim* signifies the

sustenance which is both intrinsically good and which is provided in an honourable manner.

The “Sustenance” must be construed in the widest sense, spiritual as well as intellectual and physical. The reward of righteousness is far more generous than any merit there may be in the creature following the Will of His Creator.

It will not be in their power to frustrate Allah's plan; and they will do is to go further and further down in their spiritual state, deeper and deeper in the Hell.

Prophets and messengers are but human. Their actions are righteous and their motives pure. Satan obstructs the fulfillment of the wishes of all Prophet and Messengers, but Allah fulfills them despite Satan's efforts.

Judging things from a human point of view, the suggestion may come to their mind (from Satan) that it would be good to have power or wealth or influence for furthering Allah's cause, or that it may be good to conciliate some faction which may be irreconcilable. In fact, in Allah's Plan, it may be the opposite. Allah, in His Mercy and

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ENCOURAGING RECITATION OF SOME PARTICULAR CHAPTERS AND VERSES

1) Abu Sa'eed Rafai' bin Al-Mualla relates: The Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) (once) said to me. Before you go out of the mosque, may I tell you which is the greatest (most important) Surah of the Holy Quran? And thereafter he grasped my hand when we were just going out of the mosque I submitted: "O Messenger of Allah, you had just promised to tell me as to which is the greatest Surah of the Holy Quran". He said "It is the Surah *Al-Fateha* seven verses which are so frequently used in prayers, and the Glorious Quran which has been revealed upon me". (*Saheeh Bukhari*)

2) Abu Sa'eed Khudri (R.A.A.) states that about the recitation of Surah Al-Ikhlās (Chapter, 112). The Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) said: By Allah in whose possession is my life, undoubtedly this Surah is equal to one third of the Holy Quran.

According to another version (once) the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) enquired from his companions if one of them was unable to read one-third of the Holy Quran in one night? The companions thought it difficult to do so and submitted. "O Messenger of Allah! Who has got the capacity to do so". He (S.A.W.) said Surah Al-Ikhlās (Chapter 112) is equal to one third of the Holy Quran. (*Saheeh Bukhari*)

3) Uqbah Bin Aamir (R.A.A.) says that the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) once said: "Do you not know that last night some verses were revealed (to me) the like of which has not been seen before. These are Surah Al-Falaq and Surah An-Nas (chapters 113 and 114) (*Saheeh Muslim*)

4) Abu Masood Badri (R.A.A.) relates that the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) said: "If a person recites the last two verses of Surah Al-Baqarah (Chapter 2) in night, they will suffice him (for his welfare). Imam Nawawi further elucidates that these verses will save him from all vices or for the prayers at night (*Saheeh Bukhari & Saheeh Muslim*)

5) Abu Hurairah (R.A.A.) relates that the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) cautioned us. Do not allow your houses to become graves. The Satan flees away from a house in which Surah Al-Baqarah (Chapter 2) is read. (*Saheeh Muslim*)

6) Abu Hurairah relates that the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) said: there is a surah in Holy Quran. It contains thirty verses. These verses continue to intercede for a person till Allah forgives him, this is Surah Al-Mulk (Chapter 67) (*Abu Daud and Tirmizi*)

TAWBAH OF FORNICATOR/ ADULTERER

By Allama ‘Abdul ‘Aziz Bin Abdullah Bin Baz
Translated by: Dr. Abul Hayat Ashraf

Question: Forced by temptations of *Shaitan* (Satan), I committed Zina whereas I know it very well that Zina is an extremely abominable crime. Now, I want to perform Tawbah (Repentance) before Allah, the Most High, Shall Allah, the Most High, accept my Tawbah? Be it known that I used to say that I will perform Tawbah after committing the Zina. Is some scope still remains there for my Tawbah?

Answer: The door of Tawbah will remain open till the sun rises from the West. Allah, the Most High, accepts Tawbah of any person who performs a true Tawbah from Shirk (polytheism) or any other evil less grave than this.

Following conditions should necessarily be met for a true and loyal Tawbah (Repentance:)

1. Complete avoidance of disobedience of Allah;
2. Regret and repentance of previous disobediences of Allah;
3. True determination of never repeating the same disobediences along with the fear, honour and hope of forgiveness and remission of Allah, the Most High;

As Allah, the Most High, has said: (*“O you who believe! Turn to Allah with sincere repentance”*)

Another place Allah, the Most High, said: (*“And all of you beg Allah to forgive you all, O believers, that you may be successful”*) (Surah An-Noor; 31)

Another place Allah, the Most High said: "Say: O My slaves, who have transgressed against themselves; Despair not of the Mercy of Allah: Verily, Allah forgives all sins. Truly, He is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful)" (Surah Az-Zumar:53)

Islamic Scholars converge as this agreement that this gracious verse was revealed in favour of those people who seek Allah’s pardon and return toward the path of His pleasures.

Besides above three conditions, there is also a fourth condition to be met for a true Tawbah: If Tawbah is related to Huqoql Ibad (Rights of the subjects of Allah), the persons who is seeking Tawbah, he should pay, the dues of people; for instance, if has usurped someone’s wealth, he should return it or he should get the dues waived by the concerned person. Because the Apostle of Allah (S.A.W.) has said: Who has done a

wrong affecting his brother's honour or anything else, let him ask his forgiveness today, before he will have neither silver or gold coin. If he has good deeds, the like amount of his wrong doing will be taken from him; and if he has got no good deeds, they will be taken on him".

If is incumbent upon every Muslim that he helps aloof of Shirk (polytheism), means of polytheism and all other vices, because it may happen that he gets caught in them without regaining the good luck of performing Tawbah. This makes it apparent that it, is necessary to avoid all Haram (forbidden) things Now, he should continue to beseech Allah for his well-being. Neither a person should be lazy in dealing with Shaitan (Satan), nor he should commit misdeeds intending to perform Tawbah after the commitment Indeed, such an expectation is a great fraud of Shatan as well as a mean of involving in perpetuation of misdeeds. It may happen that such a person gets caught in punishments and loose every chance of performing Tawbah. At that time, there shall be nothing at hand except distress and remorse whereas even this remorse shall be useless. Allah, the Most High, has said:

(*"And fear none but Me"*) and another place Allah, the Most High, has said: (*"And Allah warns you againt Himself (His punishment)"*) (Surah A'le Imran: 28)

Again another place Allah, the Most High has said: (*"O mankind! Verily, the Promise of Allah is true. So let not this present life deceive you, and let not the chief deceiver (Satan) deceive you about Allah. Surely, Shaitan is an enemy to you, so take (treat) him as an enemy. He*

only invites his Hizb (followers) that they may become the dwellers of the blazing Fire)") (Surah Fatir; 5-6). There are other verses too presenting the same meaning.



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inspiration, will cancel any false or vain suggestions of this kind, and confirm and strengthen His own Commands and make known His will in His signs or revelations.

In short, inspite of Satan's obstructions, Allah sees to it that a prophet's wish for other than the successful accomplishment of his missions? Allah subsequently confirmed the truth of His promise made to the Prophet when his mission was indeed fully accomplished. Allah Knows full well the tricks to which Satan resorted and what their impact was Allah's wisdom counters all satan's evil designs, and frustrates them.

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TWELVE PROOFS THAT MOHAMMAD IS A TRUE PROPHET OF GOD

By. Shaykh ‘Abdul Rahman Abdul Khaliq

My brothers and sisters everywhere! With this essay, I am not singling out the adherents of Islam to which I ascribe but rather I am writing this essay to every man and woman throughout the whole world.

I ask Allah that He facilitates that this essay reaches every ear, falls under the sight of every eye, and is understood by every heart.

Muhammad the son of ‘Abdullah is God’s Prophet and the final Messenger sent by God to the inhabitants of Earth.

My brothers and sisters everywhere! You should know that the Messenger, Muhammad the son of ‘Abdullah (S.A.W.) is God’s Messenger in reality and truth. The evidences that show his veracity are abundant. None but an infidel, who out of arrogance alone, could deny these signs.

AMONG THESE PROOFS

1. Muhammad (S.A.W.) was raised illiterate, unable to read or write, and remained like that till his death. Among all his people, he was known as being truthful and trustworthy. Before receiving revelation, he had no prior knowledge of Religion or any previously sent Message. He remained like that for his first forty years. Revelation then came to Muhammad (S.A.W.) with the Holy Quran that we now have

between our hands. The Holy Quran mentioned most of the accounts found in the previous scriptures, telling us about these events in the greatest detail as if he witnessed them. These accounts came precisely as they were found in the Torah sent down to Moses and in the Gospel sent down to Jesus. Neither the Jews or Christians were able to belie him regarding anything that he said.

2. Muhammad (S.A.W.) also foretold of everything that would occur to him and his community after him, pertaining to victory, the removal of the tyrannical kingdoms of Chosroes (the royal title for Zoroastrian kings of Persia) and Caesar, and the establishment of the religion of Islam throughout the earth. These events occurred exactly as Muhammad foretold, as if he was reading the future from an open book.

3. Muhammad (S.A.W.) also brought an Arabic Quran that is the peak of eloquence and clarity. The Holy Quran challenged those eloquent and fluent Arabs of his time, who initially belied him, to bring forth a single chapter like the Holy Quran. The eloquent Arabs of his day were unable to contest this Holy Quran.

4. The life history of this Noble Prophet (S.A.W.) was a perfect example of being upright, merciful, compassionate, truthful, brave, generous, distant from all evil character, and

ascetic in all worldly matters, while striving solely for the reward of the Hereafter. Moreover, in all his actions and dealing, he was ever mindful and fearful of Allah.

5. Allah instilled great love for Muhammad (S.A.W.) in the hearts of all who believed in and met him.

This love reached such a degree that any of his companions would willingly sacrifice his (or her) self, mother or father for him.

Till today, those who believe in Muhammad honour and love him. Anyone of those who believe in him would ransom his own family and wealth to see him, even if but once.

6. All of history has not preserved the biography of any person in the manner it has preserved the life of Muhammad, (S.A.W.) who is the most influential human in history.

7. Nor has there ever been a man on earth whom is still followed in all his doings by those who believe in him.

Those who believe in Muhammad, sleep in the manner he slept; purify themselves (though ablution and ritual washing) in the manner he purified himself; and adhere to his practice in the way they eat, drink and clothe themselves.

Indeed in all aspects of their lives, the believers in Muhammad adhere to the teachings. With some, this has reached the degree that they desire to fallow and adhere to the Prophets way in his personal matters regarding which Allah has not sought of them to adhere to in worship. For example, some will only eat those specific foods or only wear those specific garments that the Messenger liked.

Let alone all that, all those who believe in Muhammad repeat those praises of God, special

prayers, and invocations that he would say during each of his actions during day and night, like: what he would say when he greeted people, upon entering and leaving the house; entering and leaving mosque, entering and leaving the bathroom, going to sleep and awaking from sleep, observing the new crescent, observing the new fruit on trees, eating, drinking, dressing, riding, travelling and returning from travel, etc.

Let alone all that, all those who believe in Muhammad (S.A.W.) fully perform-even to the minute detail-every act of worship-like prayer, fasting, Charity and pilgrimage-as this Noble Messenger taught and as he himself performed. All of this allows those who believe in him, to live their lives in all aspects with this Noble Messenger as their example, as if he was standing before them, for them to follow in all their doings.

8. There has never been nor will there ever be a man anywhere upon this earth who has received such love, respect, honour, and obedience in all matters small and large alike as has this Noble Prophet (S.A.W.)

9. Since his day, in every region of the earth and during every period, this Noble Prophet (S.A.W.) has been followed by individuals from all races, colours and peoples. Many of those who followed him were previously Christians, Jews, pagans, idolaters or without any religion. Among those who chose to follow him, were those who were known for their sound judgement, wisdom, reflection, and foresight. They chose to follow this Noble Prophet after they witnessed the signs of his truthfulness and the evidences of his miracles. They did not choose to follow Muhammad (S.A.W.) out of compulsion or coercion or because they had adopted the ways of their fathers and mothers.

Indeed many of the followers of this Prophet (S.A.W.) chose to follow him during the time when Islam was weak, when there were few Muslims, and when there was severe persecution of his followers on earth. Most people who have followed this Prophet (S.A.W.) have done so not to acquire same material benefits. Indeed many of his followers have suffered the greatest forms of harm and persecution, this did not turn them back from his religion.

My brethren! All of this clearly indicates to anyone possessing any sense, that this Prophet was truly and really God's Messenger and that he was not just a man who claimed prophethood or spoke about God without knowledge.

10. With all this, Muhammad (S.A.W.) came with a great religion in its creedal and legal make-up.

Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) described God with qualities of complete perfection, and at the same time in a manner that is free of ascribing to Him any imperfection. Neither the philosophers or the wise could ever describe God like such. Indeed it is impossible to imagine that any human mind can conceive of an existing being that possesses such complete ability, knowledge, and greatness; Who has subdued the creation, who has encompassed everything in the universe, small and large, and Who possesses such perfect mercy.

Nor is it in the ability of any human being to place a perfect law based upon justice, equality, mercy and objectivity for all human activity on earth like the laws that Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) brought for all spheres of human activity like buying and selling, marriage and divorce, renting, testimony, custody, and all other

contracts that are necessary to uphold life and civilization on earth.

11) It is impossible that any person conceive wisdom, morals, good manners, nobleness of characters as what this honourable Prophet (S.A.W.) brought.

In a full and complete manner, Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) spread a teaching regarding character and manners towards one's parents, relatives, friends, family, humanity, animals, plants and inanimate objects. It is impossible for the human mind alone to grasp all of that teaching or come with a similar teaching.

All of that unequivocally indicates that this Messenger did not bring of this religion from his own accord, but that it was rather a teaching and inspiration that he received from the One Who created the earth and the high heavens above and created this universe in its miraculous architecture and perfection.

11. The legal and creedal make-up of the religion that the Messenger, Muhammad (S.A.W.) brought resembles the engineering of the heavens and the earth. All of that indicates that He Who created the heavens and the earth is the One Who sent down this great law and upright religion.

The degree of inimitability of the Divine Law that was sent down upon Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) is to the same degree of inimitability of the Divine creation of the heavens and earth. For just as humanity cannot create this universe, in the same manner humanity cannot bring forth a law like God's law that He sent down upon His servant and Messenger Muhammad (S.A.W.)

MUHAMMAD -THE MOST SUCCESSFUL REFORMIST

By Mohamamd Yacoob

In the seventh century, Jews, Catholics and Orthodox Christians were not living up to the minimum expected from the followers of their respective religions, yet they were the dominant religions in West Asta and Europia. The Jews and Christians had deviated from the straight path shown to them by Prophet Musa and Prophet Isa (peace be upon them). These earlier Prophats were set down to their own communities.

On the other hand, in the seventh century, Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) was sent down to the entire humanity. Had Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) been sent to the Jews and Christians, they have localized his activities and mission and would have declared that he is their own Prophet, not to be touched or shared by others. Since he was sent down for the whole humanity, Allah sent him among the Arabs during the age of ignorance, a time when the Jews and Christians had deviated from the straight path, and the pagans and the idol worshippers were living in ignorance.

Islam is not a new religion. Prophet Muhammad did not claim to be the founder of a new religion.

His mission was to remind people about the truth of the earlier religions and restore them to the pristine purity Allah has intended in the first place. At the same time let us take a note of the fact that Allah is the Arabic word for God.

The non-Muslims make a mistake when they say that Muslims worship Allah and not God. The Arab Christians living in the US have translation of the Bible in Arabic and they also use the word Allah for God in their Arabic translations. Allah is the God of all Prophets Adam, Noah, Yakub (Jacub), Yusuf (Joseph), Ismail (Ishmaed), Ishaq (Isacc), Dawood (David), Musa, Isa and Muhammad. Allah sent prophets to all nations. In the Holy Quran Allah says: *“There has never been a nation to whom Allah has not sent a Prophet” (Surah Younus, 10:47)*

The Aryan and other nations believed in Oneness of God and later while in contact with other nations started in believing in multiple Gods.

Hindus also believed in One God, but the Hindus of India have pushed the concept of Oneness of God in the background, and belief in hundreds of Gods has become the normal practice; very

few Hindus declare that they believe in One God. In the 16th century many Christian churches did not like the dictatorial powers and proclamations by Roman Catholic Church and made plans to break away from Rome. They protested against the decree that was passed in 1529 by Rome that prohibited all further reforms. The reformers understanding of the biblical message forced them, in 1530, to make the principal statement of Lutheran Christian faith and practice called “The Ausburg Confession”, which became a model for other Protestant confessions. The major Christian protestant denominations include the Lutheran, Reformed-calvinist, Presbyterians, Anglican (Episcopalian), Quakers, Baptists, Pentecostal and others.

In earlier decades of the 20th century, Sir Hassan Saharwardy, Adviasor to the Secretary of state of India and the former vice-challor of University of Calcutta shocked the entire Christian world when he delivered lectures about Islam in England and told the Englishmen that Prophet Muhammad is the first protestant and first reformist. The Christians could not believe their ears when they heard the speech of Sir Hassan Suharwardy about Islam. They discovered that almost a thousand years ago Prophet Muhammad had pin pointed the errors in the Bible and showed how Jews and Christians had deviated from the message given to them by Prophet Moses and Prophet Jesus. They suddenly became cognizant of the fact that Prophet Muhammad was the first protestant and most successful reformist.

Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) a humble person entrusted with the mission of propagating the forgotten Message of Islam, made it sure that the laws of Allah were implemented in the lives of the people who had embraced Islam. Allah sent him down among the Arabs in the Arabian Peninsula, where there were pockets of Christian and Jewish communities. Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) was the most successful reformist of all times. He not only showed the ways to Jews and Christians as to how to return to the straight path, but also produced a model to be emulated by the rest of humanity, by making reforms in the Arabian society in social, cultural, economic and spiritual areas.

Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) followed the laws of God given in the Holy Quran, advised the Muslims to believe in One God and lift themselves up morally, culturally and spiritually. He enforced the injunctions and other believers throughout the Muslim world about these injunctions. He inculcated a sense of value in them, teaching right from the wrong, giving glad tidings for good deeds and warning about punishment for committing sins, and continuing to remind them about improving their lives in this world in order to gain a better life in the Hereafter. The books of Ahadith are full of reminders and directions for the entire humanity including those who came out of the shadow of ignorance and accepted Islam.

In 632 C.E. Prophet Muhammad performed the Hajj, known as the “Farewell Hajj”. He delivered his historic address to the congregation and

reminded each and every Muslim about their duties and responsibilities. He declared by reminding the Muslims that the women have rights over men just as men have rights over them. He spoke to them about the equality of men and women because he knew that until recently the whole of Arabia was practicing paganism. Women were treated as chattels. Men were freely engaged in the trade of buying and selling women. The Arabs considered the birth of a daughter a matter of shame and disgrace. Many of them practised infanticide, and would struggle or bury alive girls on birth. Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) not only gave the women the dignity they deserved by raising their status, but also informed them that they have a right to own property. In Islam women can own property, and can engage in and conduct their own business. This is reformation of the highest order.

During the age of ignorance and before the advent of Islam the Arabs were addicted to drinking, gambling, lewdness, promiscuity. They were heavily involved in interest-based transaction and indulged in other unfair trade practices. Rivalries, bitter jealousies and blood feuds were common among them and continued for generations. Superstition, barbarism, Killing, plundering, and might is right attitude destroyed their social consciousness, and made them morally bankrupt. Each tribe and clan considered itself to be superior to others. At the "Farewell Hajj" the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) declared what he had been preaching all along

that an Arab is not superior to a non-Arab unless he is more pious than the other person is. Taqwa (piety) and not the race of the human being that determines who the great person is, Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) reminded his companions that there is no racism in Islam and advised them to take this message to the Four Corners of the world. The elimination of race consciousness is one of the greatest moral achievements of Islam. Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) destroyed the walls of separation between the clans and tribes. He made the indigenous people of Madina and the immigrants, i.e. the Muhajir of Makkah brothers. He established brotherhood among them. He established the Muslim Ummah. Today, Islam is the fastest growing religion in the world because of the elimination of race consciousness, and for preaching equality. Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) continued to remind his companions about equality.

Transformation of the pre-Islamic Arabs, from the *Jahilliya* to the light of Islam, was due to the cardinal inspiration of Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) life. He brought reformatory and revolutionary changes in the lives of these Arabs, which were in line with the moral commandments and the laws of the Holy Quran. The primitive life of the Arabs included moral bankruptcy and social evils. One of the greatest evils was alcohol. Indulgence in excessive drinking became one of the past times of the upper class Arabs and slowly became a socially accepted norm among all Arabs. Islam is the only religion that has taken the unique stand in the prohibition of drinking

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PROPHET MUHAMMAD: A MODEL OF POLITICAL LEADERSHIP

By. Dr. Mohammad Mumtaz Ali

The issue of power and politics is now-a-days as important as the spirit of the body for the life. No nation, no community and no individual can afford to over look it. From local to international affairs all are integral to power and politics. The power of knowledge, morals, economy, science and technology all are indispensable to the political power. Peace, prosperity, harmony and peaceful co-existence of civilizations are the result of power and politics. Power and politics are the factors which determine the future of a nation.

The present day world witnesses a kind of crises which is pervasive and complex. No nation and no community and no individual is enjoying a sense of security. Everyone feels threatened by others. In this environment of uncertainty and fear, the political model of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) becomes a ray of hope. This model requires our serious attention if we are serious for our better future. This model rejects the argument that in politics there is no ethics and morality and that everything is right in war, love and politics. There is no permanent friend and enemy in politics.

All these slogans seems to be false assumptions in the light of the biography of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.).

It is therefore imperative for everybody who is interested in the safe and peaceful future of mankind to study dispassionately the political dimension of the biography of the Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.)

At the very outset one should know that division of life as political, moral, economic and religious is artificial. If analyse deeply, we will realize that the life of man cannot be divided. It will remain one single unit. Therefore unity in life was one of the fundamental principles of the life of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.). His life demonstrates a life of unity. Unity of thought, unity of action and unity of mankind are some of the principles upon which his political life is built up. He was the Messenger of God towards mankind for those who accepted him and also for those who did not. He is a Messenger of God for all generations who come after him. He is therefore the model for everybody. His political leadership is therefore an integral part of his universal model.

As it is contended above that unity of thought was one of the fundamental principles of his life, the political life therefore is an integral part of his life as the Messenger of God. As the Messenger of God he did not make any kind of discrimination between people. Everyone was

dearer to him, irrespective of race, colour, sex or any social position. Therefore he wanted everyone to be the member of his Caliphate. Whosoever became member of his Caliphate, it was his responsibility to protect and develop him. To achieve this noble and higher goal he introduced for the first time in human history the concept of constitution. In this way he became the first politic-leader who ruled the people under the guide-lines of the constitution and became the founder of the idea of the Rule of Law for the betterment of everybody without any discrimination based on religion or past enmity.

The Treaty of Madinah developed by the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) between himself and other communities is a witness to this fact. Through this Treaty of Madinah he not only provided the written constitution but also the functions of the Caliphate and the responsibility of the head of the government. The rights of the people of the caliphate were guaranteed. It seems here pertinent to explain that The Caliphate which was established by him was genuine and real welfare Caliphate in which all were equal. Furthermore, the treaties, agreements and pacts which were developed by him were not only to safeguard the interests of the followers of him- the Muslims- but in the interests of establishing an atmosphere of universal peace and tranquility, in which every body was given complete freedom of thought, expression and taking independent decision. The development of the people of Makkah and Madinah who were considered at that time as the barbaric and uncivilized people, reached to the zenith of the Islamic civilization, the biggest civilization of the world is an empirical evidence to the fact that the idea of fundamental or basic rights was not

only introduced but fully implemented. The Holy Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) in this way introduced through his political model the following important political concepts which were practiced during his life time in the state of Madinah.

1. The charter of liberty and freedom of thought;
2. The selection of the leader on the basis of consensus of the people;
3. Freedom of religion to the non-believers;
4. The basic fundamental rights;
5. The rule of law;
6. The idea of a welfare state;

One important aspect of the Treaty of Madinah is the concept of common law, the law for all the citizens. It was clearly mentioned that all the followers of all other religions are free to practice their own religions. In their own matters, they would refer to their own sources. Where their own religious sources are silent, the common law of the country will be executed. At this stage one should know that the state which was established by the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) was not a nation state but the caliphate, an ideological state. The caliphate denotes the meaning of the caliph (vicegerent) of God on earth. The Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) as the head of the state as his followers as the citizens were in the position of caliphs (vice-gerents) of God on earth which implies that all of them are bound to follow that code of conduct (the guidance and the Shariah) which is given by God for the welfare of the people. In this Caliphate people were not free

to decide anything for their betterment except in those areas where the Shariah is silent. There were several areas where people are supposed to legislate laws which are needed in time and space context. Why people are bound to follow the Guidance and the Shariah of God.

This is made clear in the Holy Quran the final revelation of God towards mankind. Man along with his progeny is not capable to design a system of life which is suitable for him and his society. This reality of life was understood by the followers of the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.). As a result of this understanding they were able to develop the biggest Civilisation of the world. And when they forgot this fundamental teachings of God, they retired from the leadership of the mankind and degenerated to the level of backward community of the world. The Caliphate based on the Guidance and the Shariah of God demonstrated the most suitable political system of the world in which law and order was maintained and crime and crises were reduced. People lived in a secured, peaceful and prosperous environment Leaders were selected on the basis of the choice of the people. Freedom of thought and action was granted for the conversion by force or sword was condemned and discouraged. Within few decades they developed the universal civilization of the world. When they forgot all these teachings, they started facing innumerable problems. Although for the last few decades they had adopted several secular Western models of development, they could not recover.

As the political leader of the people of Madinah Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) attempted at the reconciliation between the tribes. It was in fact

a convention for defusing all the rival attempts of the Arab tribes to constitute one community in distinction from the rest of the people. In this he had attempted to dissolve the narrow tribal loyalties within a new superstructure, by shifting their focus of attention to a new ideology and community. Thus the establishment of the Caliphate was a testimony to this fact that now people can work for more higher goals than the narrow tribal goals of this world. The caliphate, its leadership and the system guaranteed that it is an ideological state. Anybody who believes in that ideology, which stands for the welfare of the people here and in the Here-after, and is committed can become the member of the Caliphate and enjoy any post and position. The Caliphate established by the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) was open to all. It guaranteed freedom of thought and worship. Protection of life and that of the property was recognized and crimes and corruption in all forms were legally banned. It also guaranteed peace and freedom to the people who had been woefully groaning under the heel of tyranny and oppression let loose by depotism and autocracy any anarchy of that age. In this way the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) won the most eminent position in the reason of civics and politics of human history.

To avoid the ethical, social and political chaos, a universal moral law was developed which was applicable to all in the Caliphate. All were bound to submit their decisions and actions to the criterion of that moral law which is the ultimate goal of every higher value system. In that Caliphate there was no room to the rule of expediency because the ideas as to what is expedient naturally differ in every group, nation and community. Obviously, what appears to be

expedient from a purely practical point of view to one group or nation need be expedient to another group or nation. Thus, unless people submit their endeavours to the guidance of moral law-moral consideration, their respective interests must clash at some point or other, and the more they struggle against one another, the wider their interests diverge and the more antagonistic become their ideas as to what is right and what is wrong in the dealings of the people.

Briefly, in that Caliphate the moral law was a source of stable norms by which one had to judge between good and evil and between right and wrong. All political and social problems were considered in the light of moral principles. In all affairs moral guidance became supreme in comparison to expediency in the Caliphate. No nation or community can know happiness unless and until it is truly united from within; and no nation or community can be truly united from within unless it achieves a large degree of unanimity as to what is right and what is wrong in the affairs of the people. This unanimity was achieved during the caliphate based on moral law given by God which guaranteed the real happiness and peace in the life of the people.

The material welfare of the people was also one of the serious responsibilities of the Caliphate. The Caliphate must assume active responsibility for the welfare of the people, in other words, it falls within the responsibility of the Caliphate to provide its people with such economic facilities as are necessary for the maintenance of human happiness and dignity. Nothing could illustrate this principle better than the following statement of the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) himself.

Behold! Everyone of you is a shepherd, and everyone is responsible for his flock. Thus, the Imam, (i.e. the government) that has been placed over the people is a shepherd, and responsible for his flock; and every man is shepherd over his family, and is responsible for his flock; and the woman is a shepherdess over her husband's household and his children, and is responsible for them; and the servant is a shepherd over his masters property, and is responsible over it. Behold! Everyone of you is a shepherd, and everyone is responsible for the flock.

In this tradition the government's responsibility towards people is mentioned. Morally and legally a government is bound to ensure the economic well being of the people whose affairs it administers, and to see to it that no person's standard of living falls below an equitable level. The Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) forcefully contended that human life cannot be expressed in terms of physical existence alone. The ultimate values of life are spiritual and nature but these values are not divorced from the physical factors of human existence. He developed a society that was righteous not only in its moral outlook, but in its deeds as well, a society that provided not only for the spiritual needs of its people, but for their bodily needs as well. It is therefore claimed that the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) developed such a caliphate which arranged the affairs of the people in such a way that every individual, believer or non-believer, man or woman, shall enjoy that minimum of material well-being without which there can be no human dignity, no real freedom and no spiritual progress. There was no soul-grinding poverty side by side with affluence. All the resources of the Caliphate were harnessed to the task of providing adequate means of

livelihood for all its people without any discrimination or negligence. It was planned in such a way that all the opportunities were open to all equally, and that nobody should enjoy a high standard of living at the expense of others. There was no place for uneven development. There can be no happiness and strength in a society that permits some of its members to suffer absolute poverty while others have more than their needs. If the available resources are so unevenly distributed that certain groups within it live in affluence while the majority of the people are forced to use up all their energies in search of their daily bread, poverty becomes the most dangerous enemy of spiritual progress and it paves the way for both corruption and crimes.

It was therefore the basic responsibility of the government to see whether equality prevails within the society, and that everybody man, woman and child shall have enough to eat and wear, shall be succoured in case of illness, and have a decent home to live in. The Caliphate through constitutional safeguards made it clear that everybody should have a right to productive and remunerative work, free health services, adequate nourishment, clothing and shelter. In the cases of disability resulting from illness, widowhood, unemployment due to circumstances beyond individual control, old age or under-age were also looked after by the Caliphate. By this way the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) provided social insurance scheme to be financed by means of a comprehensive taxation of wealth.

The Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) made it clear that the government through various institutions like Zakah, Sadaqah, Awqaf and other institutions

would collect the fund particularly from the rich and distribute it among the poor. Needless to say, a real welfare caliphate came into existence under the leadership of the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.).

Freedom of expression and opinion was guaranteed by the Caliphate to all. But the right to expressive one's opinion freely may be meaningless and on occasion even injurious to the best interest of the society if those opinions are not based on sound knowledge. Consequently, it is the people's right and the government's duty to have a system of education which would make knowledge freely accessible to every man and woman in the state.

The Holy Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) stressed again and again the need of knowledge. He turned that barbaric society into a knowledge-based society. He provided free education and made it compulsory for everybody, man and woman, believer and unbeliever.

One of the important functions of the Caliphate was to provide a political framework for the scattered people for unity and cooperation. The goal being the growth of a community of people who stand up for equity and justice, for right and against wrong. It aimed at the creation of such a community of people who work for the creation and maintenance of such social conditions as would enable the greatest possible number of human beings to live, morally as well as physically, in accordance with the Law of God that guarantees the peaceful, prosperous and happy life. Chauvinism or religious fanaticism in all its forms and disguises runs counter to the

fundamental principles of equality of all men and women which was the foundational principle of the Caliphate. The chauvinism or religious fanaticism was therefore emphatically ruled out by the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.). The unity of the people of the Caliphate was ideological in nature transcending all considerations of race and origin. The basis of the unity of people was nothing but to their consciousness of a common faith and a common moral outlook. Those who did not share the same faith and moral law were assured complete physical security as well as complete freedom of religion, of culture and social development. The treaty of Madinah accepted each and every group based on their religion and tribal identity. Every group outside the believing community was fully recognized and called by their own names. It was the responsibility of the Caliphate to grant them protection against external and internal enemies. The government was even responsible for the protection to the private lives of the people. It was declared that the lives, person, and possessions of the people are inviolable, and that none shall be deprived of his life, freedom, or property, except by due process of law.

There was no law in the name of the security of the Caliphate against which one can not go to the court. The protection which was granted to the people was not only limited to the tangible factors of their existence, such as their persons and possessions, but extended to their dignity and honour and the privacy of their homes as well.

Finally the foundation of the life of man in the Caliphate was on the basis of certain moral principles as contended earlier. These principles

constitute the manifesto of the Holy Prophet's mission. They provide a general framework for the intellectual, moral, cultural, economic and legal bases of the Caliphate and the Society. These are mentioned in the Holy Quran as follows:

1. Do not worship any but Him; (2) Be good to your parents, speak to them with honour, be humble and show mercy to them; (3) Give to near of him his due, and also to the needy and the wayfarers; (4) Do not squander your wealth wastefully; (5) Speak to kin and needy kindly (6) Do not be miser or extravagant; (7) Do not kill your children for fear of want. We will provide for them of want. We will provide for them and you (8) Do not approach fornication for it is monstrous act, and an evil way; (9) Do not kill any person whom God has forbidden to kill; (10) Do not even go near the property of the orphan; (11) Fulfil the covenant, for you will be called to account regarding the covenant; (12) Give full measure when you measure, and weigh with even scales; (13) Do not follow that of which you have no knowledge. Surely, the hearing, the sight, the heart each of them shall be called to account. (14) Do not strut about the land in arrogance.

These were the guiding principles for the people and society. It was the moral foundation of the society and the Caliphate that the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) could achieve the greater success in terms of the development of civilization. The political dimension of the Caliphate of the Prophets time was deeply rooted in spirituality and morality which is badly lacking in our contemporary age, therefore suffering from chaos and crises. Is it not the life of the Prophet a model for the political leadership of the time?

PROPHET MUHAMMAD: THE LAST RESORT OF THE POOR AND THE DOWNTRODDEN

By Prof. U. Muhammad Iqbal

All Prophets were interested in the welfare of humanity in general and of the poor and the downtrodden in particular. For example, Jesus identified himself with the poor and said, Blessed are the meek for they shall inherit the earth (Matt. Chap.5). He narrated the parable of Lazarus the beggar who was admitted to heaven and kept in the company of Prophet Abraham. This parable reassures the poor and forewarns the rich. Jesus went to the extent of saying, "It is easier for camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God." (Saint Mark, 10:25)

The Prophet's tilt towards the poor may be due to the fact that the poor find it difficult to breathe in the oppressive gloom and despondency of their lives and desperately need a ray of hope and a promise of bright prospects. The Holy Prophet's mission was to raise the status of the poor and downtrodden who promptly responded to God's Message and the Prophet's call.

The rich, the affluent, the opulent have made a success of their worldly lives. Having reached

the top of the ladder, they compliment themselves on their talents and skills, remain at the helm of affairs, mould public opinion, and set the social agenda. When they are in the drivers seat, they overfeed their ego and refuse to be led by others. When Samuel appointed Saul King, the rich objected saying, "*He is not even gifted with wealth in abundance.*" (Al-Quran, 2:247) When Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) went to Taif to spread the message of Islam, one of the three leaders of Thaqeef said, "Could not God get a more suitable person than you?" Wealth corrupts and huge wealth corrupts hugely. It is but natural that the Prophetic mission and the poor section of humanity are made for each other and they march hand in glove. Religion emancipates them from the stranglehold of emotional frustration and inculcates in them a positive outlook and breathes into them a new spirit of courage, determination, and dynamism to ameliorate their condition. The poor and the downtrodden pledge their loyalty to religion and persecution only strengthens their resolve to dedicate every ounce of their energy to promote the cause of religion. Hazrat Bilal,

Sumayya, Yasser, (may Allah be pleased with them) were illustrious examples of this symbiotic relationship between the poor people and the cause of Islam.

Like all Prophets preceding him, Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) made no bones about his preference and partiality for the unprivileged classes of humanity.

As a first step in this direction, he used the identify himself with them to the extent of showing empathy explicit: "O Allah! Let me blessed with the life of a Miskin, and with the death of a Miskin and let me be blessed with resurrection in the company of the poor." According to a Tradition of *Saheeh Bukhari* the Miskin is not the one who goes round asking people for a meal/date or two but the one who does not have enough money to make ends meet and whose condition is not known to many so that they may feel obliged to give something in charity and whose self-respect prevents him from begging.

As the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) lived up to the Holy Quranic precepts, the following verses indicate how he would have espoused the cause of the poor and the downtrodden.

(A) "*And give to the kinsman his due and to the Miskin and to the wayfarer.*" (17:26)

(B) "*Speak unto them a soft, kind word.*" (17:28)

(C) "*And come not near to the orphan's prop-*

erty except to improve it, until he attains the age of full strength." (6:152, 17:34)

(D) "*Therefore treat not the orphan with oppression and repulse not the beggar.*" (93:9-10)

(E) "*Have you seen him who denies the Recompense? That is he who repulses the orphan (harshly) and urges not the feeding of the poor.*" (107:1-3)

These precepts influenced the Prophet's outlook and he persuaded Hazrat Abu Bakr Siddique to continue his financial grant to that poor family one of whose members participated in the character assassination of Ayesha. The injustice to his own daughter Abu Bakr was persuaded to overlook.

When Hazrat Zaid came to him as a slave to run errands for him, the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) treated him with such unique affection that he refused to go back to his kith and kin in the company of his father and uncle. The Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) appreciated this attachment by adopting him as a son and when he came of age he arranged for his marriage with his cousin in spite of disparity of tribal origins between them.

He set personal example by marrying some widows and guaranteed that widows deserved a better deal in society.

When the poor died leaving debts unpaid, he repaid their loans on their behalf by withdraw-

ing sums from the state Exchequer. He established the institution of Zakat under God's orders and this institution extended help to those including the poor, the needy, the Zakat personnel, the neophytes, the emancipation of the slaves, the debtors, the way of God the way farers.

He advised Muaz bin Jabal to ensure the collection of Zakat from the rich people of Yemen for the benefit of the poor.

Prof. Khalid Alawi in his *Insane-Kamil* (Lahore, 1947, 77-78) says in a very effective manner. "The exalted Prophet (S.A.W.) conferred self respect upon the poor. He told Saa'd bin Abi Waqqas once that it was on account of the poor that one was given all help and provisions. He informed Usman bin Zaid that standing at the entrance of heaven he saw that it was mostly the poor and the downtrodden who had been admitted to heaven.

The slaves were subjected to despicable treatment in that society. He extended to them special affection. He used to say, "These are your brothers; feed them with what you feed yourselves on; clothe them with the finery you prefer for yourself." He set free all those slaves who were given into his ownership. He described the emancipation of slaves as the most blessed act. The terms of address he preferred for the slaves were "Son" and "Brother."

The last advice he tendered in his terminal ill-

ness was, "Fear Allah while dealing with the slaves."

Among those who readily responded to his preaching a large number consisted of the poor and the slaves. Likewise he took special care of the orphans and the widows who were exploited in the Arab society, Misappropriation of the orphan's property was common. Orphan girls were ill-treated and widows had no sympathiser. In Makkah, the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) had no enforcing power and so he confined himself to highlighting moral duties. He used to remonstrate against the atrocities perpetrated by the wicked Quraish, when he assumed reins of power in Madinah, he defined principles for the welfare of the orphans and arranged for the protection of their property and their wealth. He observed that the worst Muslim home is that wherein an orphan is ill-treated. By his personal example he transformed that social structure into an abode of affection for the orphans. After Makkah was conquered, he ordered Hazrat Bilal, a negro, to pronounce the Azan at the Holy Kaa'bah. The widows were scorned. They had no share in the property of their deceased husbands. To lead a dignified existence they had to strive very hard. The Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) came to their help and gave them the right of inheritance and formed rules for their re-marriage to enable them to uphold their dignity. Service rendered to an indigent widow was described as an eminently virtuous

deed. He said, "One who is proactive in the service of the widow and the poor is like the one who is engaged in the service of God."

The narrator of this Hadith had an impression that the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) also said that such a person could be likened to a Muslim who never grows weary of a devotional act or who never breaks his fast. A Bukhari tradition likens the pro-orphans and pro-widow social worker to a crusader in the way of God and makes him equal to one who fasts during the day and prays during the night.

His abiding interest in the welfare of the orphans and the poor was a fact, acknowledged by friends and foes alike. One cannot encompass the greatness of a citizen whose societal concerns have reached such maximal limits. The Holy Prophet participation in *Hilful-Fudul* is a living example of social service, people friendliness and human welfare. One of the tenets of the treaty was that the oppressed would be helped and oppressors would be restrained from the act of repression.

When Abu Bakr assumed office as the first Caliph, he declared that he would defend the weak against the strong. Caliph 'Umar used to say that he would be responsible before God, if a sheep died of starvations on the bank of the Tigris. Such observation were the result of the training they had under the supervision of the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.).

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alcohol. Alcohol consumption has caused more damage to the families and misery to mankind than all vices combined.

Concerning use of alcohol and drinking, the Holy Quranic verses came down in three stages over a period of three years. During the first stage the Quranic verse mentioned about harm that was going to be much greater than the advantage of alcohol.

Later, the Quranic commandment stated that Muslims should abstain from performing prayers in the state of drunkenness. And the last injunction revealed to Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) was the commandment that ordered total prohibition. When the verse concerning total prohibition was received, the Holy Prophet recited it and immediately prepared for the enforcement of the commandment. He walked to a predesignated part of Madina and ordered people to bring their alcohol containers. He personally destroyed the skins and leather containers. Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) continued to make reform in all phases of human life, in the Arabian Peninsula and beyond, to Convert Arabs into practical, honest human beings, and good human Muslims. He made social and moral changes in order to create a unique culture based on *Taqwa* and piety, and to establish a civilization that would pass along its heritage to the coming generations.

The reforms discussed above and other reforms made by the Holy Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) changed the course of human history on this planet forever. Prophet Muhammad is the greatest reformist of all times.

SEAL OF PROPHETHOOD

By Mansoor Ahmad

“Prophet Ibrahim (peace be upon him), while constructing the Ka‘abah prayed to Allah. "Our Lord, raise a Prophet among them (Arabs) to recite to them Thine verses, to teach them the Book and the purpose undertaking it and to purify them. Indeed thou art Magnificent and Wise.” (Al-Qura’n, 2:2)

Allah granted this prayer and a Prophet was born in his lineage in Quraish on Monday, the 12th Rabiul Awwal, August 29, 570 A.C. and on whom He bestowed the title *Rahmatullil Aalameen* (Blessing for all mankind). The Holy Prophet is no mythical figure as is the case with religious heroes of several other religions, but Muhammad (S.A.W.) lived in the lime-light of history. There is nothing obscure about him. His whole life and teachings were witnessed by history which bears full records of it.

Though he had no formal education as a child, he was well behaved and loved and respected by all who came in contact with him. The remarkable character of the Holy Prophet to be was that he was utmost trustworthy and was known as Al-Ameen (the Trusted). The Ara-

bian society those days was full of all sorts of evil. Their immorality, obscene rites and superstitions, their ignorance, their lawlessness and cruelty, their sudden outbursts of fratricidal wars and inter tribal dissensions, were wringing the heart of this chaste and sensitive youth. Often he would retire to the loneliness of a cave on Mount Hira for meditation, remained their many a time for whole nights plunged in profoundest of thoughts. Here, when he was 40 the mantle of prophethood was blessed upon him when a voice called to him “Declare (or read) in the name of the Lord”. The flow of Divine message which continued for the next 23 years, had began and a Prophet had arisen to proclaim the Oneness of god and the unity of mankind, demolish the edifice of superstition ignorance and disbelief, set a noble conception of life and lead mankind of the height of faith and celestial bliss.

The message that the Holy Prophet was charged to deliver was for its most part antagonistic to the prevalent beliefs and customs of the Arabs. The Quraish had retaliated violently. A life and death struggle for Islam ensued. At one time of the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) and the small group

of his followers had to migrate to Madinah where he lived for a long time and propagated the Message amidst stiff opposition there too. But ultimately truth and goodness triumphed gradually and the Message of Islam spread not only in Arabia but outside as well, during the Holy Prophet's life-time itself. By the 10th Hijri, the influence of Islam reached Yemen, Bahrain, Yamama, Oman, Iraq and Syria.

The fundamental doctrines of Islam may be enumerated as follows: (I) Dignity of man: Man, according to Islam, is the best of God's entire creation. Everything else in the cosmos has been created for Man. (II) Sinless at birth: Man at birth is sinless. He has the choice of doing good or bad on growing up and replace the consequences of his doings. He is not born with the burden of any sin of any previous life. (III) Unity of Mankind. All men are equal. There is not to be any distinction on the basis of colour, caste, race, sex or creed. (IV) Prophethood: Prophet's were sent in all ages and nations for the purpose of guiding erring humanity and to convey to it His Message. (V) Direct approach to God. God is directly approachable by every man without any intermediary of a priest. (VI) Oneness of God. There is only one God Who is the Creator of all beings and is running and managing the whole universe. (VII) Life hereafter: Man is accountable for his deeds in his life. After his death, he will be one day raised and judged for his deeds during his life and rewarded or punished as deserved.

RELIGIOUS PRACTICES OF ISLAM:

For leading a virtuous life, a certain mental outlook is necessary, and to foster and develop that outlook some devotional and religious practices have been imposed by Islam, namely: (1) Daily prayers at stated hours (2) Observance of fast for one month every year (3) Zakat or regular payment of a portion of one's earnings for the upkeep of the poor, and (4) Haj or pilgrimage to Ka'abah.

According to the Prophet (S.A.W.), the spiritual edifice of Islam, rests besides belief, on five pillars: (I) *Taqwa* or piety (II) *Ikhlas* or doing a good deed for the sake of God (III) *Tawakkul* or Trust in God (IV) *Sabr* or steadfastness, patience and fortitude, and (V) *Shukr* or sense of thankfulness of gratitude to God.

Says Athar Husain in his book *Prophet Muhammad and his Mission*. Whether it acknowledges or not humanity owes a great deal of gratitude to the Holy Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) and the Holy Quran for stimulating man's inductive thoughts and reasoning and cleaning the concept of God of polytheistic and idolatrous taints with which men had smeared it – A God, Creator and Sustainer of the world, the Most compassionate and Merciful, All – Powerful, Omnipresent, Omniscient, besides whom there is no other God.

Having accomplished the mission, the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.), thinking that his end was approaching, made a final pilgrimage to

Makkah, but before completing the Haj rites, he delivered his last sermon to his followers from the mount of Arafat. People! Listen to my words for I know not whether another year will be vouch safed to me after this year to find myself amongst you at this place.”

He concluded thus: “O Lord! I have delivered my message and accomplished my work. O Lord! I beseech You, bear You witness unto it.”

At noon on Monday (12 Rabiul Awwal, !! A.H.-8th June 632 A.C.) whilst praying earnestly in whisper, the Holy Prophet died in Madinah.

More than 14 centuries have passed since the Holy Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) accomplished his mission, his followers consisting of over 1000 millions are spread over every nook and corner of the globe. Will another Prophet come after him as was the case with Ibrahim, Moses, and Christ? The Holy Quran decides to matter:

“Muhammad is not the father of any man among you, but he is the Messenger of Allah and the seal of the Prophet, and Allah is aware of all things.” (Al-Quran, 33:40)

The first part of the verse is concerning Hazrat Zaid, the then adopted son of the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.), with which we are not concerned for the moment. The second part which has been interpreted in Arabic and Urdu as “Muhammad was *Khatemun-Nabieen* (the last of the Prophets) which is corroborated in many other verses of the Holy Quran, does not leave any doubt about Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) having

sealed or put an end to the chain of Prophets.

HOW QURA’N CONFIRMS THE ABOVE VERSE:

When Allah made (His) Covenant with the Prophets, (He said): Behold that which I have given you of the scripture and knowledge. And afterwards there will come unto you a Messenger confirming that which you possess. You shall believe in him and you shall help him. He said: Do you agree, and will you take up my burden (which I lay upon you) in this matter? They answered: We agree. He said: then bear you witness and I will be a witness with you. (Al-Quran, 3:81)

Interpreting this, an Islamic scholar says: “It must be understood here that prior to Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.), it had been usual for Allah to take the undertaking and it was on this basis that every Prophet informed his people about another Prophet coming after him; but neither in the Holy Quran nor in Hadith it can be found that such undertaking (or covenant) was taken from Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.), or he had to inform his people about an incoming Prophet (after him) and that he wanted them to follow the coming Prophet.

Some such verses in the Holy Quran referred to by the stated scholar in which such undertaking or covenant could have been taken by Allah (if He wanted that) are verses No. 28 of Saba, 107 and 108 of Al-Anbia, etc. but there is no such thing as the forecast of a coming Prophet of any undertaking demanded of the Prophet.

In Hadith also no such forecast of any incoming Prophet can be traced.

CONSENSUS OF PROPHET'S COMPANIONS:

During Imam Abu Hanifa's time (80-150 (A.H.)), a man claimed Prophethood and wanted that he be given a chance to prove it. Abu Hanifa said: "Whoever will ask for adducing evidence of Prophethood from this man, will become Kafir because the Holy Prophet (S.A.W.) had said: "*La-Nabi Ba'adyee* (there will be no Prophet after me).

Muslim 'Ulama have enumerated 20 other instances in which prophethood claim of any body was refuted and disclaimed by the consensus of Muslim Ulama.

RATIONAL ARGUMENT:

(I) What could be the need of another Prophet coming:

If in a particular nation, there has not been a Prophet already sent or the message brought by a Prophet in another nation could not reach the former. Or

(II) If the teachings of a passing-away Prophet has been forgotten, or adulterated to an extent that it be not possible to follow the original teaching. Or

(III) If the teachings of the original Prophet remain incomplete. Or

(IV) If another Prophet was needed to assist the existing prophet. As regard (I) the Holy Quran says that Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.)

was sent for *Hidayah* (guidance) of the whole world and the civilizational history of the world is witness to the fact that at the time (of the Prophet) and immediately after it, it was certainly possible that the message reached the whole world. Regarding (II), the message brought by the Holy Prophet as also his seerah (records of his dealings and character) remains uncorrupted and unalloyed till date. The Holy Quran undoubtedly is intact after all these 14 centuries without even a letter altered (and was destined to remain so) (III). The Holy Quran also says that the *Wahee* has been completed, no Prophet need to come for *Takmeel-e-Deen* (completing it). The Messenger of Islam in itself is so complete that even one of the staunchest critics, Goethe asks "If this be Islam, do we not live in Islam?" "Yes, answers Carlyle, "all of us that have any moral life, we all live so". (IV) If an assistant Prophet was needed, he could have come during the time of the Prophet (S.A.W.).

Now, if the Ummah be seen as not following the teachings of the last Prophets, all that may be needed is a reformer and not a Prophet. If another Prophet were to come now, there will be confusion and strife in the people as to which Prophet to follow: It will go against the Prophet's last sermon from the Mount of Arafat.

"..O you people! listen to my words and understand the same. Know that all Muslims are brother unto one another. You are one brotherhood. Nothing which belongs to another is lawful unto his brother, unless freely given out of good will. Guard yourselves from committing injustice."



GOD MADE EVERY LIVING THING FROM WATER

“Do not the Unbelievers see that the Heavens and the earth were joined together (as one Unit of Creation), before We clove them asunder? We made from water every living thing. Will they not then believe? (Surah Al-Anbiya, 21:30)

The evolution of the ordered worlds as we see them is hinted at. As man’s intellectual gaze over the physical world expands, he sees more and more how Unity is the dominating note in Allah’s wonderful Universe. Taking the solar system alone, we know that the maximum intensity of sun-spots corresponds with the maximum intensity of magnetic storms on this earth. The universal law of gravitation seems to bind all mass together. Physical facts point to the throwing of planets from vast quantities of diffused nebular matter, of which the central condensed core is a sun.

The two words used here are *rataq* and *fataq*. *Rataq* meaning to be together, to be conjoined, to be homogenous and adjacent; *fataq* meaning to separate or to split apart. The verse seems to suggest that this universe was initially one huge mass which was later separated into different parts so that the earth and other heavenly bodies were given shape as separate entities.

About 72 percent, of the surface of our Globe is still covered with water, and it has been estimated that if the inequalities on the surface were all leveled, the whole surface would be under water, as the mean elevation of land sphere-level would be 7000-10,000 feet below the surface of the ocean. This shows the predominance of water on our Globe. That all life began in the water is also a conclusion to which our latest knowledge in biological science points. Apart from the fact that protoplasm, the original basis of living matter, is liquid or semi-liquid and in a state of constant flux and instability, there is the fact that land animals, like the higher vertebrates, including man, show, in their embryological history, organs like those of fishes, indicating the watery origin of their original habitat. The constitution of protoplasm is about 80-85 percent of water.

It seems that God not only made water a means of life, but also its very basis from which He caused all life to originate in and from. The same point is made elsewhere in the Holy Quran: *“And God has created every living being from water” (Surah Al-Nur, 24:45)*

