



Life of Muhammad^{sa}

BY

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MAHMUD AHMAD^{ra}

A GREAT PROPHECY FULFILLED


The time of the battle drew near. The Prophet^{sa} came out of the little hut in which he had been praying, and announced:

"The hosts will certainly be routed and will show their backs."

These were the words revealed to the Prophet^{sa} some time before in Mecca.

Evidently they related to this battle.

A GREAT PROPHECY FULFILLED



When Meccan cruelty had reached its extreme limit, and Muslims were migrating to places where they could have peace, the Prophet^{sa} had the following verses revealed to him by God:

And surely to the people of Pharaoh also came Warners. They rejected all Our Signs. So We seized them as the seizing of One Who is Mighty and Omnipotent. Are your disbelievers better than those? Or have you an exemption in the Scriptures? The hosts will certainly be routed and will show their backs. Nay, the Hour is their appointed time; and the Hour will be most calamitous and most bitter. Surely the offenders will be in bewilderment and flaming fire. On the day when they will be dragged into the Fire on their faces and it will be said to them, "Taste ye the touch of burning" (54:42-49)

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These verses are part of Surah Al-Qamar and this Surah, according to all reports, was revealed in Mecca

The prophetic value of the Meccan verses is beyond dispute.

The fate they* were going to meet is clearly foretold.

And the Hour had really come.

The battle began

* Meccan enemies

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Three hundred and thirteen Muslims, most of them inexperienced and unused to warfare, and nearly all of them unequipped, stood before a number three times as large, and all of them seasoned soldiers.

In a few hours, ..the Meccan army fled in miserable haste, leaving behind their dead as well as some prisoners.

Victory came, but it brought mixed feelings to the Prophet^{sa}.

He rejoiced over the fulfilment of divine promises., promises which had also been recorded in some of the earliest religious writings.

But at the same time he grieved over the plight of the Meccans.

A GREAT PROPHECY FULFILLED

...the sight of the prisoners before him, bound and handcuffed, brought tears to the eyes of the Prophet^{sa} and his faithful friend Abu Bakr^{ra}

‘Umar^{ra}, ... saw this but could not understand. Why should the Prophet^{sa} and Abu Bakr^{ra} weep over a victory?

‘Umar^{ra} asked the Prophet^{sa}, "Prophet^{sa} of God, tell me why you weep when God has given you such a grand victory. If we must weep, I will weep with you, or put on a weeping face at least."

Prophet^{sa} pointed to the miserable plight of the Meccan prisoners. This was what disobedience of God led to

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Returning to Medina the Prophet^{sa} rested for the night on the way.

The devoted followers who watched him could see that he turned from side to side and could not sleep.

They soon guessed that it was because he heard the groans of his uncle, 'Abbas^{ra}, who lay nearby, bound tight as a prisoner of war.

They loosened the cord on 'Abbas^{ra}. 'Abbas^{ra} stopped groaning.

The Prophet^{sa}, no longer disturbed by his groans, went to sleep. A little later he woke up and wondered why he no longer heard 'Abbas^{ra} groan.

He half thought 'Abbas^{ra} had gone into a swoon.

A GREAT PROPHECY FULFILLED

But the Companions guarding `Abbas^{ra} told him they had loosened the cord on `Abbas^{ra} to let him (the Prophet^{sa}) sleep undisturbed.

"No, no," said the Prophet^{sa},
"there must be no injustice.

If `Abbas^{ra} is related to me, other prisoners are related to others. Loosen the cords on all of them or tie the cord tight on `Abbas^{ra} also."

The Companions heard this admonition and decided to loosen the cords on all the prisoners, and themselves bear the responsibility for their safe custody.

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Of the prisoners,

those who were literate were promised freedom if they each undertook to make ten Meccan boys literate—this being their ransom for liberty.

Those who could afford to pay ransom, were set free after they had paid it.

By setting the prisoners free in this way, the Prophet^{sa} put an end to the cruel practice of converting prisoners of war into slaves.