



Life of Muhammad^{sa}

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THE PROPHET (SA) GIVES HINTS OF HIS DEATH

On the way back, the Prophet (sa) again informed his Companions of his approaching death.

"O men I am but one like you. I may receive the Call any day and I may have to go. My Kind and Vigilant Master has informed me that a Prophet (sa) lives up to half the years of the Prophet (sa) before him. I think I shall soon receive the Call and I shall depart. O my Companions, I shall have to answer God, and you will have to answer also. What will you then say?"

Upon this the Companions said, "We will say that you delivered well the Message of Islam and devoted all your life to the service of the Faith. You had the most perfect passion for the good of man: We will say: Allah, give him the best of rewards."

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Then the Prophet (sa) asked, "Do you bear witness that God is One,...

...that Muhammad (sa) is His Servant and Prophet (sa), that Heaven and Hell are true,...

...that death is certain, that there is life after death, that the Judgement Day must come,...

...and that all the dead will one day be raised from their graves, restored to life and assembled?"

"Yes," said the Companions... Turning to God, the Prophet (sa) said, "Be Thou also a witness to this—that I have explained Islam to them."

THE PROPHET (SA) ENTERS MECCA

After this Pilgrimage, the Prophet (sa) was very busy teaching... trying to raise their moral standard... His own death became his frequent theme...

One day, rising for an address to the Faithful, he said, "Today I have had the revelation:

When the help of Allah comes, and victory, and thou seest men entering into the religion of Allah in troops.....extol thou the glory of thy Lord, with His praise, and seek forgiveness of Him. Verily He is Oft-Returning with compassion " (110: 2-4).

THE PROPHET (SA) ENTERS MECCA

That is to say, the time was coming when, with the help of God, multitudes were to join the Faith of Islam.

It was then to be the duty of the Prophet (sa)—and of his followers—to praise God and pray to Him to remove all obstacles in the way...

The Prophet (sa) made use of a parable on this occasion:

God said to a man, 'If it please you, you may return to Me, or you may work a little longer at reforming the world.'

The man said that he preferred to return to his Lord.

On hearing the parable Abu Bakr (ra) could contain himself no longer. He broke down.

THE PROPHET (SA) ENTERS MECCA

The other Companions, who had taken a surface view of what they had been listening to, were amazed when Abu Bakr (ra) burst into tears.

What could be the matter with Abu Bakr (ra) they asked.

The Prophet (sa) was relating the coming victories of Islam, yet he was weeping...

THE PROPHET (SA) ENTERS MECCA

But only the Prophet (sa) understood what was happening. Only Abu Bakr (ra), he thought had understood him.

The Prophet (sa) went on to say, "Abu Bakr (ra) is very dear to me.

If it were permissible to love anyone more than others, I would so have loved Abu Bakr (ra). But that degree of love is only for God.

O my people, all the doors which open to the mosque should be closed from today except the door of Abu Bakr (ra)."

THE PROPHET (SA) ENTERS MECCA

There was no doubt that this last instruction implied a prophecy that after the Prophet (sa) Abu Bakr (ra) would be the First Khalifa.

To lead the Faithful in prayers he would have to come to the mosque five times a day...

...for this, he would have to keep open the door of his house into the mosque.

THE PROPHET (SA) ENTERS MECCA

Years afterwards, when 'Umar (ra) was Khalifa, he asked some of those present the meaning of the verse,...


"When the help of God and victory come."

Evidently he remembered the circumstances in which the Prophet (sa) taught Muslims this and the verses which follow.

He must have remembered also that then only Abu Bakr (ra) understood the meaning of these verses.

'Umar (ra) was trying to test Muslims for their knowledge of these verses. They had failed to understand them at the time of their revelation: did they know the meaning now?

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Ibni 'Abbas (ra)... who was now seventeen or eighteen, volunteered to answer.

He said, "Leader of the Faithful, these verses contained a prophecy about the death of the Holy Prophet (sa)..."

When a Prophet's (sa) work is done, he wishes no longer to live in the world. The verses spoke of the imminent victory of Islam. This victory had a sad side..."

'Umar (ra) complimented Ibn 'Abbas (ra) and said that when the verses were revealed only Abu Bakr (ra) understood their meaning.