



# BED TIME STORIES

Prophet Muhammad

صلى الله عليه وسلم

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## THE HOLY PROPHET (S.A.W.W.)

Our Holy Prophet Muhammad al-Mustafa (s.a.w.w.) was born on the 17<sup>th</sup> Rabi ul Awwal in the year 570 A.D. in the blessed city of Makka. His father, Abdullah, died before his birth, and his mother died when he was six, leaving him in the care of his grandfather, Abdul Muttalib. This young child, born an orphan, was Allah's last messenger sent on earth as a blessing for us. Thus, among many (countless) names used for him is *rahmatul lil alamin*. (mercy unto the worlds). His main purpose was to guide the people to the right path.

At the time of the birth of the Holy Prophet, Makka was a great centre of pilgrimage. People came there from all parts of Arabia to pay respect to the house of Allah. You know it by the name of Holy Kabah where Muslims from all over the world go to perform Hajj which is one of the branches (*furu*) of religion. The Holy prophet's grandfather, the chief of the Quraysh tribe, looked after the house of Allah, just as his

family had done in the past. He was well known and well liked for his noble character. He believed in one Allah and never worshipped idols.

In those days it was a custom to send young children to live in the countryside. Women would come to the town twice a year to take babies from well to-do families on payment of money or goods, to be brought up in the healthy atmosphere of countryside.

The Holy Prophet was nursed and brought up by an Arab country woman, named Halima Sadia. From the very beginning, Halima understood that this was not an ordinary child as he showed signs of very quick growth and understanding. Besides that, her dry well became filled with water and crops began to grow on her land. She loved him dearly. Our Holy Prophet always treated Halima with great respect and affection.

Before the spread of the message of Islam, the people of Arabia were very ignorant and

uncivilized. They were divided into tribes and the head of each tribe thought he was a ruler of the people. This led to stealing of property and killing. Daughters were buried as soon as they were born by their father and the women were very badly treated. It was in a society like this that our Holy Prophet was bom.

After the death of his grandfather, the Holy Prophet was brought up by his uncle, Abu Talib, who kept the young boy closer to himself than his own sons. He kept him safe from danger and took him along on his business trips when the Holy Prophet became a young man. He was so honest in his dealings that the people began to call him *al-sadiq* (the truthful) and *al-amin* (the trusted).

In these days there lived in Makka, a very rich and noble lady, named Khadija binti Khuwalid. She was known by the name of *Tahira* (the pure) as she possessed an excellent character. She was so impressed by Holy Prophet's honesty and truthfulness that she asked for his

help in carrying on her large business. At the age of twenty five, the Holy Prophet married Khadija in a very simple ceremony, the *nikkah* (marriage) was performed by his uncle, Abu Talib.

From a young age, the Holy Prophet would often go to lonely places outside the city where he would spend his time in prayer and deep thought. When he was 38 years old, from time to time, he would remain for several days in a cave in mount Hira, praying and meditating. One day, at the age of forty, he was busy in his prayer in the cave when he saw before him angel Jibrail who requested him to repeat after him verses, which you now read in the Holy Quran, when you recite surah (chapter) Alaq. He then returned home and told his wife, Khadija, that he had just recited a message brought down from Allah, by angel Jibrail.

This was the beginning of the call to prophethood, and from that day, angel Jibrail came to him regularly and revealed verses

to him. The Holy Prophet's wife Khadija and cousin, Ali (a.s.), son of Abu Talib, were the first to accept Islam.

Three years later, Allah ordered the Holy Prophet to invite his relatives to a feast, called the *dawat zul ashira*, i.e. the feast of the kinsmen. On this occasion, he requested the members of the Quraysh tribe to enter the folds of Islam. They were very angry at this public declaration, and refused to accept Allah as the one and only God. Ali (a.s.) was the only person who promised to follow and assist the Holy Prophet in his mission. The Holy Prophet then hugged Ali (a.s.) and announced before all present that he was his brother, helper and successor, and all Muslims must obey him.

From this day, the Quraysh became enemies of the Holy Prophet and started to harass him. They would spread thorn in the lanes through which he would pass, and make children throw stones at him. Sometimes, they would wait for him to pass by, and throw rubbish at him. An

old woman who hated the Holy Prophet used to throw rubbish on him when he would pass her house. One day the rubbish was not thrown. Two more days passed without the throwing of rubbish. From the people near by he found out that she is sick and in bed, so he went to her house to inquire about her. When she saw the Holy Prophet she was very frightened and thought that he must have come to take the revenge of her misbehaviour. The Holy Prophet being the *rahmatul lil alamin* (mercy unto the worlds) did not go with that intention. He told her: "I have come to inquire about your health. If I could help you in any way." She was so ashamed that she had no words. She said: "I am very sorry for what I have done and please forgive me. Please make me a Muslim." The Holy Prophet made her recite the *kalimah*. She died as a Muslim. (This is an example for us that instead of taking revenge from the enemy one should try and make friends with them, showing love and concern.) They tried to bribe him with riches, to stop him continuing with his mission, but he remained steadfast.

As more and more people embraced Islam, the Quraysh began to torture the believers by beating them, and making them lie on the hot sand in the open sun for hours at a time. They suffered the extreme pain bravely and patiently, but did not give up their belief in one Allah.

Soon after Muhammad (s.a.w.w.) declared his prophethood people became his enemies especially Abu Sufyan. They made a solemn agreement not to have any sort of contact with Muhammad (s.a.w.w.) and his family. They would not buy from nor sell to them anything, nor marry any of them. The contract was written, signed and sealed, and was kept safely in Kabah.

They were socially boycotted by the Quraysh. Then Abu Talib took Muhammad (s.a.w.w.) and his family and the Hashimites to his quarter in the nearby mountains which was known as Shib Abu Talib. It was watched day and night by the Quraysh to enforce the ban strictly. So in absence of food supplies they mostly starved.



In the months of Rajab and Zilhaj (the days of truce) they bought food supplies from foreign traders at high price. When the food supplies were finished they had to eat grass and leaves.

As the Quraysh constantly watched the Hashmites they could not come out of the Shib Abi Talib. Abu Talib feared night attacks so he often changed Muhammad's place of sleeping. For 3 years they had to stay there and suffered untold hardships.

During these years he did not neglect his mission. He preached monotheism to the Hashmites and in the time between the days of truce he mingled with the pilgrims and deliver the divine message to them.

At the close of the third year of boycott, Muhammad (s.a.w.w.) told his uncle, Abu Talib, that Allah had shown His disapproval of the covenant against him, and had sent worms to eat out every word of the document placed in the Kabah, excepting His own name

written thereon. Abu Talib, believing his nephew as the receiver of revelations from Allah unhesitatingly went to the Quraysh and told them what Muhammad (s.a.w.w.) had told him; and added that if what he was telling them was found true on examination of the covenant, they would be bound to withdraw their boycott and stop their hostile activities against Muhammad (s.a.w.w.) and his followers, and if proved false, he, on his part, would deliver Muhammad (s.a.w.w.) to them.

To these proposals of Abu Talib, however, they all agreed most willingly, and at once went to inspect the document. But to their surprise they found it worm-eaten, only the name of Allah was still there and no more. Abu Talib was overjoyed at this miracle worked by Allah in favour of Muhammad (s.a.w.w.) while the Quraysh looked confused and bewildered. They said that it was a magic, but at the persistence of Abu Talib and his party, they, after all, declared the document null and void. The ban being removed, all the Hashmites went to their

houses, and Muhammad (s.a.w.w.) was once more free.

After returning from Shib Abu Talib, his uncle Abu Talib and his beloved wife Khadija passed away as they both had become very weak. The Holy Prophet termed the year of their death as *am ul hizn* (the year of sorrow.)

The followers of the Holy Prophet who believed in his message grew more day by day, and the Quraysh began making plans to kill the Holy Prophet. The night they planned to kill him, Allah commanded the Holy Prophet to leave Makka for Madina, leaving Ali (a.s.) sleeping in his bed. Ali (a.s.) slept peacefully, covered with the sheet of the Holy Prophet, and all night the Quraysh thought that it was the Holy Prophet lying there.

Muhammad (s.a.w.w.) reciting the verses of surah Ya Sin, came out from his house to go to Madina. The enemies who surrounded his house to kill him in the darkness of night did

not notice his departure as if they became blind. After leaving the house the Holy Prophet met Abu Bakr, so he had to take Abu Bakr with him. In the dead of night after about two hours they found a low narrow cave. They both took shelter in it. During the night a spider wove a thick web over the narrow opening of the cave, a bushy plant grew up near it, and a pigeon made its nest in front of the cave and laid eggs in it.

When those who came in pursuit saw all these they turned back without looking into it.

The people of Madina welcomed him with open arms and accepted his holy mission. As every person wanted the Holy Prophet to stay in his house, it was decided by the Holy Prophet himself that he would stay where his camel would stop by Allah's command. In this manner, it was a man named Abu Ayyub Ansari who got the special honour of being the host of the Holy Prophet. An Islamic society was set up and all the people began to live like brothers. The natives of Madina gave

full support and help to the Makkans who had left their homeland and all their belongings. A mosque was built in an open space, everybody helped, even the Holy Prophet laboured for it, and for the first time the Muslims were able to offer their prayers freely, without fear. At this time, there were many rich and powerful Jews living in Madina, as well as many Muslims who were believers in name only, whereas in their hearts they were the enemies of Islam. For this reason, the Holy Prophet issued a declaration of rights so that the Muslims may be safe, and everyone could live together in peace and harmony.

The Quraysh of Makka were very jealous of the fact that the Holy Prophet managed to escape, and was now leading a free life in Madina. They were determined to take the life of the Holy Prophet and started armed attacks against him and his followers.

Many battles were fought between the non-believers and the believers, most of

which ended in victory and helped in strengthening the cause of Islam. The first battle of Badr took place in the second year after *hijrat*. When a very large fighting force of the enemy marched towards Madina, the Muslim army which consisted of only 313 men took up position near the well of Badr. Although the Muslims were very few in number they fought bravely. The Holy Prophet told them that they would surely win, as he had received a revelation from Allah just then; and very soon all the chiefs of the Quraysh had been killed and the enemy had run away from the battlefield.

However, the Quraysh were not willing to accept defeat and very soon began preparing another attack. The next year, they advanced towards Madina with an army three times larger than before. They set up camp in a valley of mount Uhad. A fierce battle was fought in which the Muslims gained victory, but when the enemy began to run away from the field, the Muslims began to collect the things they had left behind. They were soon joined by a group of

soldiers who had been posted on a pass by the Holy Prophet himself, with strict orders not to leave it. One section of the enemy's force took advantage of the situation and began fighting again. At this time someone shouted out that the Holy Prophet had been killed. On hearing this false news all the Muslim soldiers, except Ali (a.s.) and a few others, fled the field because they thought it was of no use fighting if the Holy Prophet was dead. It was during this battle that the Holy Prophet gave Ali (a.s.) the famous sword named Zulfiqar which had been brought down by angel Jibrail. With this sword, Imam Ali (a.s.) fought against the unbelievers alone while all the Muslim soldiers had run away. The Holy Prophet's uncle, Hamza (a.s.) was killed in this battle. A woman named Hinda, the wife of Abu Sufyan, cut the liver of Hamza (a.s.) and chewed it, which shows how much she hated the Muslims and the Holy Prophet in particular.

In the fifth year after *hijrat*, the Makkans made another attempt to destroy the power of the

Muslims. They joined forces with the Jews and with an army of ten thousand marched towards Madina. At the suggestion of Salman al-Farsi, a noble companion of Holy Prophet, a huge ditch was dug at the site that was open to attack. The Holy Prophet himself helped in the digging which took six days. When the enemy reached there they could not move forward and attack because of the ditch. Thus, the battle is known as the battle of ditch (*khandaq*). The enemy sent its most famous and experienced warrior, Amr bin Abdwad, who threw an open challenge. Only Ali (a.s.) was prepared to accept his challenge. Ali (a.s.) cut his body into half with one stroke of his sword. Seeing this, the enemy was in despair and nature helped by bringing a severe storm and rain, which blew away the enemy tents and they left the field in a state of fear and confusion. Once again, with Allah's help, the Muslim were saved from defeat.

The Muslims were still not allowed to live in peace. The Jews made plans to attack Madina. When the Holy Prophet learnt this, he came



out of Madina with a large army and was able to capture all the Jewish forts, except for one called Khaybar because it was very strong. The Holy Prophet had sent two of his companions one by one to conquer the fort but both returned without success. Then the Holy Prophet announced that the next day, he would send someone who was a great warrior and never ran away from the field. All the people were very anxious to know who would be given the great honour. The next day, the Holy Prophet gave the flag to Ali (a.s.) who was able to uproot the strong gate of the fort with his left hand which needed forty men to open. The Muslims were very surprised and happy that so difficult a task had been accomplished (carried out) by Ali (a.s.).

As you can see, in almost all the battles fought between the Muslims and the unbelievers, the flag of Islam was held by Ali (a.s.) and the battles were won due to his bravery and fearless fighting. Ali (a.s.) was always beside the Holy Prophet, ready to serve the cause of Islam.

The marriage of Ali (a.s.) and Fatimah (s.a.) the only daughter of the Holy Prophet, was arranged by the will of Allah.

One day, the Holy Prophet had a dream that he had entered the sacred mosque at Makka. Therefore, he decided to go to Makka to perform umra with a very large number of his companions. When the unbelievers came to know of it, they refused to allow them entry into Makka. The Holy Prophet stopped at a place outside Makka and sent a messenger to inform the Quraysh that they had not come to fight, that they were unarmed and wished to enter Makka only to perform umra. When the messenger did not return, another was sent. When three messengers had been sent but none returned, the Holy Prophet collected all his followers near the oasis of Rizwan and took an oath from them that they would lay down their lives in the name of Allah. This oath is known as *baytal rizwan*. When the enemies of Islam heard this, they were very disturbed and decided to enter into a peace treaty with the

Muslims, called the treaty of Hudaibiyah. After this, many unbelievers accepted Islam.

The treaty was broken when some unbelievers attacked a tribe of Muslims, and caused them great harm. Now that the peace treaty was no longer in effect, the Holy Prophet marched towards Makka with a very large number of Muslims. Before entering Makka, he announced that whoever took shelter in the holy Kabah or remained inside his own home, would be forgiven. The Holy Prophet entered Makka without any opposition and went straight to the holy Kabah where all the unbelievers had gathered. He announced that all were forgiven and freed. Then he went round the Kabah seven times and entered the house of Allah.

He broke all the idols with the help of Ali (a.s.) and most of the unbelievers became Muslims and the message of Islam was carried to far off places.

One very important event called the *mubahila*

made the people aware of the high status of the Ahlul Bayt. A group of Christians came from a town near Madina to find out about Islam. They held many discussions but the Christians refused to change their views. At last, Allah commanded that both parties should bring their sons, women and 'selves' and meet in an open field to call for Allah's curse on those who did not speak the truth. On the day fixed for the meeting, the Holy Prophet took with him only Ali (a.s.), Fatimah (s.a.) and their two sons, Hasan (a.s.) and Husayn (a.s.). When the Christians saw the small group of noble personalities, they did not have the courage to speak out against them, and instead entered into a peaceful settlement with the Muslims.

In the 10<sup>th</sup> year of *hijra*, the Holy Prophet performed hajj for the last time. Thousand of people went with him to have the honour of doing the pilgrimage with him. When he was returning to Madina, he stopped at a place called Ghadir Khum. He gathered all the people and gave a long speech, in which he informed

the people that he would soon depart from this world, leaving two things among them the Holy Quran and the Holy Ahlul Bayt. He told the Muslims that if they remained closely attached to both, they would not move away from the right path. It was on this occasion that he announced publicly that Ali (a.s.) was his successor (*khalifa*) after him. At the end of the sermon, angel Jibrail came down from the heaven with the last verse of the holy Quran, which stated that the religion was now perfect and complete. The friends of the Holy Prophet wept as they realized that their beloved Prophet would not be with them for long.

After his return to Madina, the Holy Prophet fell ill and gradually became very weak. As long as he could walk he went to the *masjid nabawwi* to lead the prayers himself. When he was on his deathbed, he wished to remind the people once again that they must make Ali (a.s.) their caliph. When he asked for paper, pen and ink to write something down, the companions began to argue amongst themselves, as some of them

were eager to fulfil (carry out) the last wish of the Holy Prophet while most of the others said that the holy Quran was enough for them. This upset the Holy Prophet so much that he ordered everyone to leave. It is very clear that they behaved in this manner because they did not want to accept Ali (a.s.) as their caliph. The Holy Prophet breathed his last in the house of Sayyida Fatimah Zahra (s.a.). All the members of the Ahlul Bayt were present around him and were looking after him. During his last moments, he reminded the people that they must keep up prayer especially *tahajjud* prayer, treat well those under them and lead pious lives.

Traditions say: “There was a knock at the door. When Sayyida Fatimah Zahra (s.a.) heard the knock on the door she went to see who was there. It was Izrail, the angel of death. She said: “You cannot come in as my father is sleeping.” After three knocks the Holy Prophet awoke and said: ‘O Fatima, it is Izrail, the angel of death, who is seeking permission to come to me. It is the supreme dignity granted by Allah to you

and your house that Izrail seeks permission to enter, otherwise he enters every house without permission. Please allow him to come in and perform his duty of taking my soul to the high above as ordered by Allah.”

The Holy Prophet left this world on Safar 28, 11 *hijrah*.

When the companions came to know that the Holy Prophet was no more in this world, some of them gathered at a public place called *saqifa bani sa-ida* outside the main city of Madina to appoint a successor to the Holy Prophet. They were so busy arguing and plotting that they forgot that it was their duty to be present at his funeral. The burial ceremony of the Holy Prophet was performed by Ali (a.s.) with a few close relatives and friends. All the Muslims of Madina were allowed to enter the apartment to pay their respect to the Holy Prophet and offer prayers. It is a shame that some of the companions of the Holy Prophet did not take part in the funeral rites of the last Prophet of Allah. The funeral prayer was led by Ali (a.s.).

The Holy Prophet's life, his trials and victories will remain for all mankind as a symbol of humbleness, devotion and loyal service to Allah. He was a great leader and law giver.



## **THE HOLY QURAN SAYS**

Verily, verily Allah intends but to keep off from you (every kind of) uncleanness, O you Ahlul Bayt (the people of the house), and purify you (with) a thorough purification.

## **THE HOLY PROPHET SAID**

My Ahlul Bayt are like the ark of Nuh. Whoever comes on it is saved, whoever stays back is drowned.

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