

In the Name of God the Beneficent the Merciful



The Life of
The Prophet Muhammad

by

His Excellency
Mr. Mohammed Kabir Ludin
The Afghan Ambassador

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INTRODUCTION BY DR. ABDEL KADER

Mohammad, the messenger of Unity and Peace

Some four hundred million Moslems of all races and colour, spread over the world, celebrate during the lunar month of Rabi—Awal, the Birthday anniversary of Mohammed. To these he was the Prophet of God and the Messenger of Unity and Peace to all peoples of the earth.

His birthday is reputed to be the 12th day of Rabi-Awal, corresponding this year to the 3rd September. This was 1389 years ago, for he was born in 570 A.D. Muslims commemorate the event with reverence and gratitude; with prayers and deep thinking; with joy and rejoicing. One hears on this occasion the voices of the faithful raised in praising the works of their Prophet, and they marvel at his unparalleled achievement in raising the Arabs and other races to such heights in spirit and mind within so short a period, as remains, even today, a mystery to all students of human affairs.

May God reward Mohammad, his companions and all his true followers for their services to God and humanity.

It is indeed a prestige and an honour for us all to have with us today His Excellency **Monsieur Mohammed Kabir Ludin**, The Afghan Ambassador, who will speak to us on this auspicious occasion. His extensive knowledge is concealed under a modest and charming exterior, and I am sure that what we shall hear from him this evening will enlighten us and be an inspiration to us all.

I now have great pleasure in asking His Excellency to address us.

The Life of The Prophet Muhammad

*ADDRESS OF HIS EXCELLENCY
MR. MOHAMMED KABIR LUDIN*

Your Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

We are gathered here today to celebrate the anniversary of the Birthday of the Prophet of Islam, Peace be upon him, and to share in the blessings of this occasion; to rededicate our lives, in whatever measure that may be afforded to us, to the spiritual and moral virtues given so high a place of recognition in the message of the Prophet of God. Human society and the fulfilment of human destiny stand in need of the attributes of brotherly love, compassion, kindness and consideration. The life of the Prophet, in words and deeds, was a perfect practical example of such virtues which he preached.

The life history of the Prophet of Islam has been recorded in great detail. Volumes have been written on the life of the Prophet, his mission and his teachings. A short address could only give a resume of his life history.

He was born in the year of 570 A.D. in the City of Mecca. He was the post-humous child of Abdullah, Son of Abdul Mutallib a nobleman of Qureish. The Prophet of God was not yet six years old when his mother died and he went under the care of his Grandfather. His Grandfather died when the Prophet was eight years old. On the death of his Grandfather, his uncle Abu-Talib became the guardian of the Prophet. Abu Talib was extremely fond of his nephew and took tender care of him. He took Mohammed on a journey to Syria when Mohammed was thirteen years of age. The Prophet made another journey to that country when he was twenty five years old, to advance the commercial interests of Khadija, a rich widow of noble birth amongst the Qureish of Mecca. At the successful conclusion of this trip he married her.

His personal conduct in dealing with his fellow men was exemplary and earned him the title of "Alameen," The Truthful, The Trustworthy and honest in all matters.

When he was 35, by his keen insight and judgement he settled a matter of grave consequence that might have resulted in an intensive feud and even civil war amongst the people of Mecca. In 605 A.D. the Temple of Kaaba was being rebuilt. The question arose as to who should carry and place the holy black stone in its niche. The disputants agreed that who-ever should first enter through a certain gate of Harem would have that honour. The Prophet happened to be the person who so entered. He advised them to place the black stone on a piece of cloth

and each one of them should share the honour of lifting it up by holding a part of the cloth. Thus the holy stone was placed in its niche and the reconstruction of Kaaba completed.

The Prophet spent much of his time in secluded meditation, contemplation and prayer in a cave in Mount Hera near Mecca. Now he was reaching forty years of age.

It was in true dreams that Mohammed received the first revelations. He continued secluding himself in the Cave of Mount Hera to worship there day and night. From time to time he would return to his family in Mecca and then go back to Mount Hera taking with him the necessities of life. One day the revelation came and an Angel appeared to him and said "Read." Mohammed was an illiterate man. He had not received instruction in reading and writing. He said to the Angel "I am not a reader." The Angel took hold of him and squeezed him as much as he could bear and then said again, "Read." The Prophet answered for a second time, "I am not a reader." For the third time this was repeated and the Angel said, "Read in the name of thy Lord and Cherisher who created man out of a mere clot of blood. Read and the Lord is most bountiful. He who taught (the use of) the Pen. Taught man that which he knew not."

I should like, if I may, to put forth an explanatory and commentary resumé, translated into English by A. Yusif Ali, of the above verses.

Iqraa may mean "read" or "Recite or rehearse" or "proclaim aloud" the object understood being God's message.

The declaration or proclamation was in the name of God the Creator. It was not for any personal benefit to the Prophet: to him there was to come bitter persecution, sorrow and suffering. It was the Call of God for the benefit of erring humanity.

The lowly origin of the animal in man is contrasted with the high destiny offered to him in his intellectual, moral and spiritual nature by his most bountiful creator. On the contrary through the faculties freely given to him he acquires it in such measure as outstrips his immediate understanding, and leads him ever to strive for newer and newer meaning.

The symbol of permanent revelation is the Mystic Pen and the Mystic Record.

There is a reference to "The Pen" in the chapter of the Quran named "The Pen" where it is stated. "By the pen and by the (record) which (men) write"—i.e. the collective memory and knowledge of the human race as they are recorded by the pen. The importance of "Pen" and of written record in man's progress towards his future destiny is significant.

The Arabic words for "teach" and "knowledge" are from the same root. It is impossible to produce in translation the complete orchestral harmony of the words for "read" "teach" "pen" (which implies reading, writing, books, study, research)



Dr. Abdel-Kader giving the Opening Address.

"knowledge" (including science, self knowledge, spiritual understanding) and "proclaim," an alternative meaning of the word for "to read." This proclaiming or reading implies not only the duty of blazoning forth God's message, as going with prophetic office, but also the duty of promulgation and wide dissemination of the Truth by all who read and understand it.

The comprehensive meaning of Iqraa refers not only to a particular person and occasion but also gives a Universal direction. And this kind of comprehensive meaning, as we have seen, runs throughout the Quran for those who will understand.

God teaches us new knowledge at every given moment. Individuals learn more and more day by day; nations and humanity learn fresh knowledge at every stage. This extension and progress of knowledge is a continuous process. This is even more noticeable and important in the spiritual world.

These few verses of the Quran are examples of the beauty, comprehensiveness and the miracle of The Quran.

The Prophet repeated the Words with a trembling heart.

Thus the religion of Islam was born.

However, the polytheists and idolators of Mecca were not prepared to receive the message of God with open heart and an open mind. The Prophet had to strive, suffer great hardships, persecution, social ostracism, a state of complete boycott and siege, and finally exile, before the cause of righteousness and truth prevailed.

The Prophet and his followers had to leave their homes and belongings behind in Mecca and emigrate to Medina, where they were given help, comfort and shelter by the people of that city who had recently accepted Islam through the preaching of the Prophet.

The Prophet was one of the few who emigrated last at the risk of his life.

This forced emigration of the Prophet or Hijra is the beginning of the new era and the origin of the Muslim calendar.

The Prophet in Medina layed the foundation of the new Muslim commonwealth. The struggle for maintenance of the new state against the ploytheists and idolators of Mecca continued, demanding further hardship and sacrifice on the part of the Muslims.

Gradually the light of Islam penetrated minds and souls of men and many people of the Qureish accepted Islam.

For six years since Hijra the Prophet and his Meccan companions had not seen the city of their Birth. Naturally their hearts yearned to return to Mecca and to perform the pilgrimage in Kaaba. A group of unarmed Muslims in the company of the Prophet set out for the journey. The Qureish stopped them at the threat of force. The envoy of the Prophet was abused. Finally



His Excellency Mr. Mohammed Kabir Ludin addressing the Congregation.

a treaty was concluded between the prophet and the representative of the Qureish which stipulated that the pilgrimage should be postponed for another year and among other provisions it was set forth that any tribe which would wish to enter into alliance with either Qureish or the Muslims should be at liberty to do so. This treaty came to be known as The Peace of Hudeibiya. The Prophet and his followers then returned to Medina.

About the end of the seventh year of Hijra, the Qureish and their Allies, the Beni Bakr violated the terms of the peace of Hudeibiya through attacking and having massacred a large number of Benzi Khuzzah who were allies of the Muslims. Beni Khuzzah appealed to the prophet to redress their just grievances. The Prophet was determined to put an end to the injustice, oppression, and persecution which had reigned in Mecca for so long. He moved towards Mecca at the head of ten thousand Muslims. The City submitted without any resistance.

The submission of Mecca was the harbinger of the acceptance of Islam throughout the Arabian Peninsula. Both in Mecca, and on return of the Prophet to Medina, delegations from various parts of the Peninsula came to the Prophet and declared their adherence to Islam. Thus the Prophecy of the Quran in the Chapter on Help (nashr) was fulfilled.

The Mission of the Prophet was completed.

As an example of the pronouncements of the Prophet I should like to quote a few of the noble words he said on the occasion of the farewell pilgrimage.

In February of 632 A.D. he left Medina in the Company of a large number of Muslims for pilgrimage to the City of Mecca. It is estimated that from 90,000 to 140,000 accompanied him. During the observations of the pilgrimage rites on Mount Arafat he addressed the Muslims in these words:

"Oh men! Listen to my words. I do not know whether I shall ever meet you in this place again after this year. Your blood and your property are sacrosanct until you meet your Lord, as this day and this month are Holy. You will surely meet your Lord and he will ask you of your work. I have told you. He who has a pledge let him return it to him who entrusted him with it. All usury is abolished but you have your capital. You have your rights over your wives, and they have rights over you. You have taken them as a trust from God. I have left with you something which if you hold fast to it you will never fall in error—a plain indication, the book of God and the practice of His Prophet, so give heed to what I say.

"Now every Muslim is a Muslim's brother, and that the Muslims are brethren. It is only lawful to take from a brother what he gives you willingly, so wrong not yourselves. Let him who is present tell this to him who is absent. It may be that he who is told this afterward may remember better than he who has now heard it."

The Prophet concluded his sermon by exclaiming : "Oh Lord, I have fulfilled my message and accomplished my work." The Muslims who heard this all cried in one voice "Yea, verily thou hast."

The Prophet again exclaimed : "O Lord, I beseech thee, bear witness unto it."

The eleventh year of Hijra was the last year of the prophet's life, which he spent in Medina. On approaching death his mind was calm and serene. Even though he was weak and feeble he was able to lead the public prayers until within three days of his death. The last time he appeared in the Mosque, he addressed the congregation, after the usual prayer was over, in these words: "O Muslims if I have wronged anyone of you here I am to answer for it; if I owe aught to anyone, all I may happen to possess belongs to you." A man in the crowd rose and claimed three dirhams which he had given to a poor man at the request of the Prophet. They were immediately paid back with these words : "Better to blush in this world than in the next."

He died in the house of Ayesha, and thus the glorious life of the Prophet ended, but his life as an exemplifier of spiritual and moral virtues and as inspiration for devotion, love and sacrifice, shall ever endure.

