

The Prophet's death

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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the name of Allaah, the Most Merciful, the Bestower of Mercy

Allaah (*Glorified and Exalted be He*) addresses His Prophet (*May the peace and blessings of Allaah the Most High be upon him*), saying:

[Verily you (O Muhammad (*May the peace and blessings of Allaah the Most High be upon him*)) will die, and verily they (too) will die.]

He (*Exalted be He*) also says:

[Muhammad (*May the peace and blessings of Allaah the Most High be upon him*) is no more than a Messenger, and indeed (many) Messengers have passed away before him. If he dies or is killed, will you then turn back on your heels (as disbelievers)?]

And:

[And We granted not to any human being immortality before you (O Muhammad (*May the peace and blessings of Allaah the Most High be upon him*))): then if you die, would they live forever?]

He (*May the peace and blessings of Allaah the Most High be upon him*) died after having fulfilled the trust and conveyed the Message of his Lord, striving with all his being in the Cause of Allaah. Near the end of his life, the Ayah of Soorah al-Maa'idah was revealed as a witness for him, saying:

[This day, I have perfected your religion for you, completed My Favour upon you, and have chosen for you Islaam as your religion.]

By the revelation of Soorah of Al-Nasr, Allaah (*Glorified be He*) announced to the people the approach of the death of the Prophet (*May the peace and blessings of Allaah the Most High be upon him*).

It is reported in Saheeh al-Bukhaaree on the authority of Ibn `Abbas (*may Allaah be pleased with him and his father*) that he said: "'Umar used to make me attend the gatherings of the elders who had fought in the Battle of Badr. But it seemed that one of them felt uncomfortable about it and so said to `Umar, 'Why do you bring this boy to sit with us while we have sons of his age?' `Umar replied, 'It is because of his status (knowledge and merit), which you are well aware of.' Then, one day `Umar invited me to sit with them, and I think

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that he invited me that day only to show them. `Umar asked them, 'What is your interpretation of the Statement of Allaah (*Exalted be He*):

[When there comes the Help of Allaah (to you, O Muhammad (*May the peace and blessings of Allaah the Most High be upon him*) against your enemies) and the conquest (of Makkah).]

Some of them said, 'We are commanded to praise Allaah and seek His Forgiveness when He gives us help and victory.' Others remained silent. Then `Umar asked me, 'Do you agree, Ibn `Abbas?' I said, `No.' He said, 'What do you say then?' I said, 'It is Allaah informing His Messenger of his impending death. Allaah (*Exalted be He*) says,

[When there comes the Help of Allaah (to you, O Muhammad (*May the peace and blessings of Allaah the Most High be upon him*) against your enemies) and the conquest (of Makkah).]

This is a sign of the end of your life. Therefore,

[So glorify the Praises of your Lord, and ask His Forgiveness. Verily, He is the One Who accepts the repentance and Who forgives.]

`Umar said, 'I only know it to mean what you have said.'"

The Prophet (*May the peace and blessings of Allaah the Most High be upon him*), near his death, was given the choice between the splendour of this worldly life and what Allaah (*Exalted be He*) has in store for him.

Aboo Sa`eed al-Khudree (*may Allaah be pleased with him*) narrated: The Messenger of Allaah (*May the peace and blessings of Allaah the Most High be upon him*) sat on the Minbar (pulpit) and said,

'Allaah gave one of His Servants the choice between whatever he may wish of the splendour of this world and what is with Him. He chose what is with Him.'

At that Aboo Bakr wept and said, 'May our fathers and mothers be sacrificed for you!' We were amazed at him and the people said, 'Look at this Shaykh! The Messenger of Allaah (*May the peace and blessings of Allaah the Most High be upon him*) is telling about a servant to whom Allaah has given the choice between the splendour of this world and what is with Him, and he says: May our fathers and mothers be sacrificed for you!' But it turned to be that the one who had been given the choice was the Messenger of Allaah and Aboo Bakr knew more than we did. The Messenger of Allaah (*May the peace and blessings of Allaah the Most High be upon him*) said,

'Aboo Bakr has been, of all people, the most generous to me both with his companionship and his wealth. If I were to have taken a close friend from among my followers, I would

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have chosen Aboo Bakr, but sufficient is the brotherhood of Islaam. Let no private doorways into the Masjid (mosque) remain except that of Aboo Bakr.¹

It is also reported in Saheeh al-Bukhaaree on the authority of Ibn `Abbas (*may Allaah be pleased with him and his father*): The Messenger of Allaah (*May the peace and blessings of Allaah the Most High be upon him*) in his last illness came out with a piece of cloth tied round his head... And he narrated a similar report.

Muslim also reported a Hadeeth on the authority of Jundub that this sermon was given five days before his death.

The Prophet (*May the peace and blessings of Allaah the Most High be upon him*) died as all people die. He (*May the peace and blessings of Allaah the Most High be upon him*) suffered the agonies of death and then his soul departed from his body which subsequently became lifeless.

`Aaishah (*may Allaah be pleased with her*) narrated: Truly, among the Blessings of Allaah upon me is that the Messenger of Allaah (*May the peace and blessings of Allaah the Most High be upon him*) died in my house, on the day of my turn, while (his head was) resting between my chest and chin, and Allaah made my saliva mix with his at his death. `Abdul-Rahman came in with Siwak (tooth-cleansing stick) in his hands while I was supporting the Messenger of Allaah (against my chest). I saw him looking at it and I knew that he wanted Siwak. I said (to him), 'Shall I take it for you?' He (*May the peace and blessings of Allaah the Most High be upon him*) nodded his approval. So I took it, but it was too stiff for him to use, so I said, 'Shall I soften it for you?' He (*May the peace and blessings of Allaah the Most High be upon him*) nodded his approval. I softened it and he cleansed his teeth with it. In front of him there was a leather or a wooden container (the sub-narrator, `Umar, is in doubt as to which was right) containing water. He (*May the peace and blessings of Allaah the Most High be upon him*) started to dip his hands in the water and wipe his face with them, while saying,

'La ilaaha illa Allaah (There is no god worthy of worship but Allaah alone). Verily, death has its agonies.'

He (*May the peace and blessings of Allaah the Most High be upon him*) then lifted his hands (toward the sky) and started saying,

'With the highest companions,'

until he died and his hand dropped down to his side.²

He (*May the peace and blessings of Allaah the Most High be upon him*) died on a Monday, as stated by both Anas and `Aaishah (*may Allaah be pleased with them both*) and is reported in Saheeh al-Bukhaaree.

¹ Agreed upon by Al-Bukhaaree and Muslim

² Related by Al-Bukhaaree

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The year and month of his death are also unanimously agreed upon to be the eleventh year after Hijrah in the month of Rabi` Al-Awwal. Concerning the date of his death, Ibn Hisham commented in Al-Sirah Nabawiyyah: "They all agree that he (*May the peace and blessings of Allaah the Most High be upon him*) died in Rabi` Al-Awwal. Some or the majority of them said that it was on the twelfth of that month. However, it could only have possibly been on the second, the thirteenth, the fourteenth, or the fifteenth. The reason for this is the agreed upon fact that the Day of `Arafah (9th of Dhul-Hijjah) during the Farewell Hajj fell on a Friday, meaning that the ninth day of Dhul-Hijjah was on a Friday. This means that Dhul-Hijjah began on a Thursday. This means that the following month, Muharram, started on either a Friday or a Saturday. If Muharram started on a Friday, then the month of Safar would have had to start on a Saturday or Sunday. Supposing that Safar started on a Saturday, then Rabi` Al-Awwal could only have started on a Sunday or a Monday. Therefore, no matter how calculated, there is no way that the twelfth of Rabi` Al-Awwal could have been on a Monday."

The Prophet (*May the peace and blessings of Allaah the Most High be upon him*) was sixty-three years old when he died, as authentically reported by a group of Sahabah (Companions of the Prophet), among them `Aishah, Ibn `Abbas (*may Allaah be pleased with them*) and others.

During the years between his first receiving Wahy (Revelation) and his death, a multitude of great events and honourable stands occurred. From the first to the last of them, he (*May the peace and blessings of Allaah the Most High be upon him*) continued patiently and steadfastly calling to the Way of his Lord; he strove, emigrated, and endured many hardships until Allaah (*Exalted be He*) granted him, his religion, and his Sahabah victory and prevalence on the earth. He (*May the peace and blessings of Allaah the Most High be upon him*) did not die until he had fully conveyed the Message of his Lord. The religion he (*May the peace and blessings of Allaah the Most High be upon him*) was sent with will last until the Day of Resurrection, protected and supported by Allaah; victorious by the Promise of Allaah; superior over all religions and those who adhere to it are the triumphant: And,

[Verily, Our Word has gone forth of old for Our slaves, the Messengers, That they verily would be made triumphant, And that Our hosts! they verily would be the victors. It is He Who has sent His Messenger (Muhammad (*May the peace and blessings of Allaah the Most High be upon him*)) with guidance and the religion of truth (Islaam), to make it superior over all religions even though the Mushrikoon (polytheists, pagans, idolaters, disbelievers in the Oneness of Allaah) hate (it).]

It is the duty of every Muslim to carefully study his Seerah (the Prophet's biography), his persevering efforts to uphold the Religion of Allaah and perfectly fulfil his duties, the persecution he suffered for the sake of this cause, his striving against the enemies of Allaah, and his morals and teachings, are all necessary to know for they are the truth in its purest form. It is the biography of the man whom Allaah made the most perfect of all humans, the noblest, the greatest, and the best to have ever lived.

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It would take many volumes just to shed light on some aspects of the life of this great Prophet (*May the peace and blessings of Allaah the Most High be upon him*), and still we would never be able to give him his due. Therefore, our aim in this brief treatise is only to highlight the most important obligations entailed by our testimony "Muhammad is the Messenger of Allaah" which every Muslim man and woman must know, believe in, and apply in order to attain salvation.

May Allaah protect us and all Muslims from whatever may incur His Wrath, and make us among those on whom He bestows His Mercy. Indeed, He is Ever-Bountiful, Most Generous.