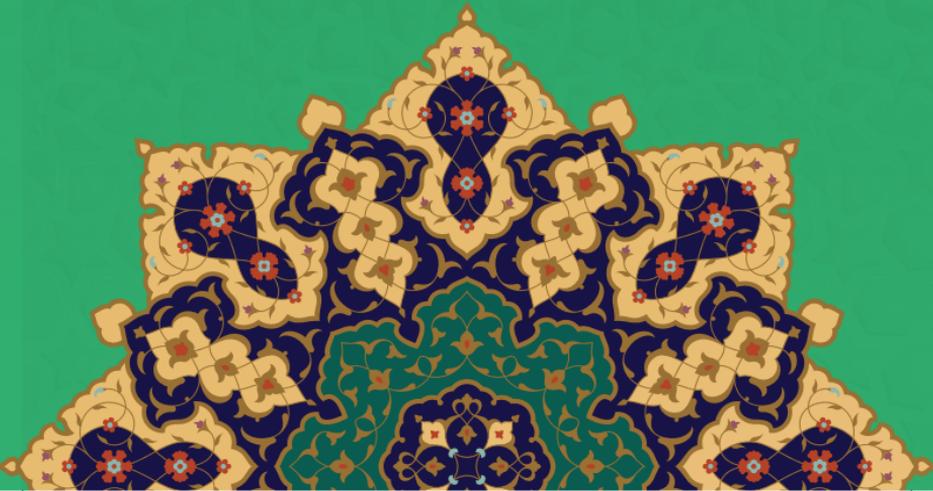




The Prophet Muhammad

(peace be upon him)







The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him)



Who is Muhammad?

In 571 AD, a child was born to a noble family via the prophetic lineage of Ishmael, son of Abraham, in Mecca on the Arabian Peninsula. His name was Muhammad, "the praised one." He was orphaned at an early age; hence he understood the plight of orphans and the under-privileged. Muhammad grew to be a young man with an outstanding character. Allah the Almighty protected him from the evils of the Arab way of life of the Age of Ignorance (Jahiliyya) such as drinking alcohol, fornicating, and theft. He was known as *al-Amin*, the

trustworthy, for people entrusted him with their valuables trustfully. Even before Islam, Muhammad was interested in the problems of his society and sought the establishment of virtue in the society, such as the prevention of injustices being perpetrated against foreign traders.

Prophethood

At the age of 40, he received his first revelation from Allah during the ninth month of the lunar calendar, *Ramadan*, delivered by the Archangel Gabriel. The first message revealed to him was, *“Read/Recite in the name of your Lord, Who created you!”* Hence Islam, the way of life Muhammad was sent to teach, emphasized the acquisition and the dissemination of knowledge since its inception.

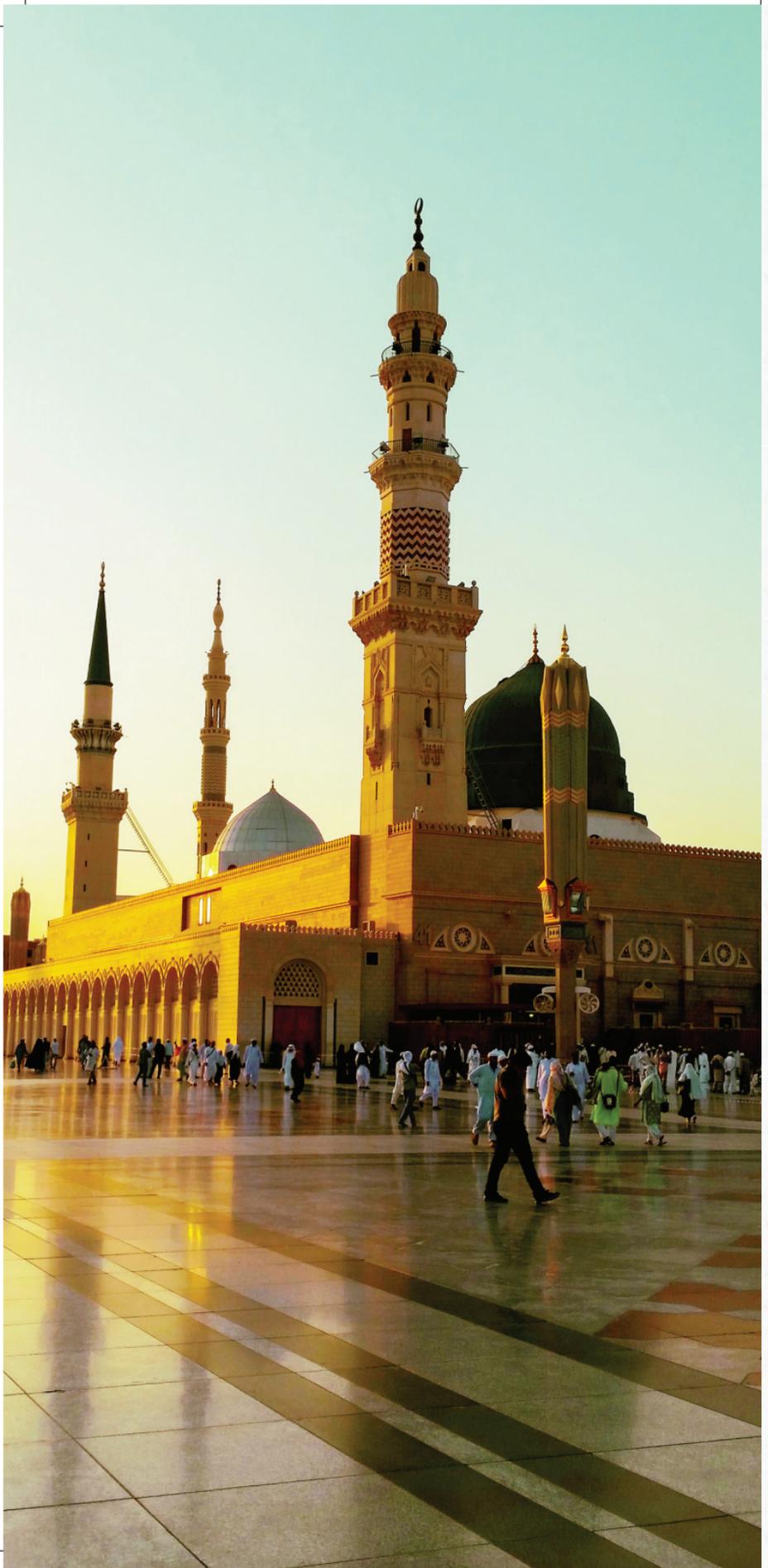
He received revelations over a period of twenty-three years. Named as “the Qur’an” by Allah, this message is addressed to all humanity and has a basic message; *belief in the oneness of Allah, the Creator; His angels; His Messengers; His Books; the Day of Judgment; and His Divine Decree over all His creation.*

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

عَنْ عَلِيٍّ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى عَنْهُ
 كَانَ آدَاءُ وَصْفِ النَّبِيِّ مُحَمَّدٍ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ
 قَدْ رَكِبْتُ بِالْأَعْيُنِ الْمُنْطَوِّ وَالْأَلْفِ الْفَصِيحِ لِلدَّوْدِ كَانَ نَبِيًّا
 مِنْ الْقُرُونِ وَلَا يَكُنْ إِعْدَا الْفَقْلَطِ وَلَا بِالْمَكْلَمِ كَانَ
 جَعْدًا رَجُلًا وَمِنْ تَجَرُّ الْبَطْطِ وَلَا بِالْمَسْطِ وَكَانَ فِي الْوَسْمِ
 أَدْوَرًا أَيْضًا مُشْرَرًا أَدْعَى الْعَيْتِينَ أهدبًا لَأَشْفَا
 جَلْبَلُ الشَّاشِ وَالْكَيْدِ أَعْرُودُ وَمُسْرَبِي شَتْرُ الْكَفَيْنِ
 وَالْقَدَمَيْنِ إِذَا مَشَى يَمْلِكُ كَمَا تَمَّ بِمَنْ فِي صَبِيبِ
 وَإِذَا لَفَّتْ الْفَتَى مَعَا

وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَاكَ إِلَّا رَحْمَةً لِّلْعَالَمِينَ

بِزَكِّي نَفِيءُ حَارُ النَّبُوَّةِ وَهُوَ حَاكِمُ النَّبِيِّ أَعْرُودُ النَّاسِ
 صَدْرًا وَأَهْدَى فَهْمُهَا وَالْيَهُنُ عَرِيكَةٌ وَأَكْرَمُهُ عَيْشَةٌ
 مِنْ سُرَاهِ بَيْهَةِ هَاهُنَا وَمِنْ خَالِطِهِ مَعْرِفَةُ آتِيهِ يَقُولُ تَأْيِئْتُ لَرَأَيْتَهُ
 وَلَا بَعْدَهُ وَنَالَهُ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ اللَّهُمَّ صَلِّ وَسَلِّمْ عَلَيَّ وَعَلَى آلِي
 وَشَعْبِي أَلَمْ تَجْعَلْ رَأْسِي وَصِيَّةً لِّلْجَمْعِ نَمَقَهُ حَسْبِي عَفْرَلَهُ



In the first thirteen years of his prophethood, he invited people to abandon idol worship and to believe in One God. The first believer was the Prophet's wife, Khadijah, who is known and respected as "the mother of Muslims". Unfortunately, as he delivered this message, the Meccans saw him as a danger to their lifestyle, particularly idol worshipping. As he called for the rights of the weak, he drew the anger and wrath of the strong. He stood by the poor and the oppressed.

In order to persuade him to abandon his belief and duty of prophethood, all sorts of schemes like bribery, torture and banishment were used. Despite all these abuses, none of his followers deserted Islam. In 622 AD, Muhammad received a command from Allah to migrate to Medina, a city north of Mecca. This event was so momentous that the Islamic calendar begins with this migration (*Hijrah*). In Medina, Muslims became a cohesive society. More people from every religion, tribe and race embraced Islam. People from all parts were affected by the outstanding character and grace of the Prophet.



سوس



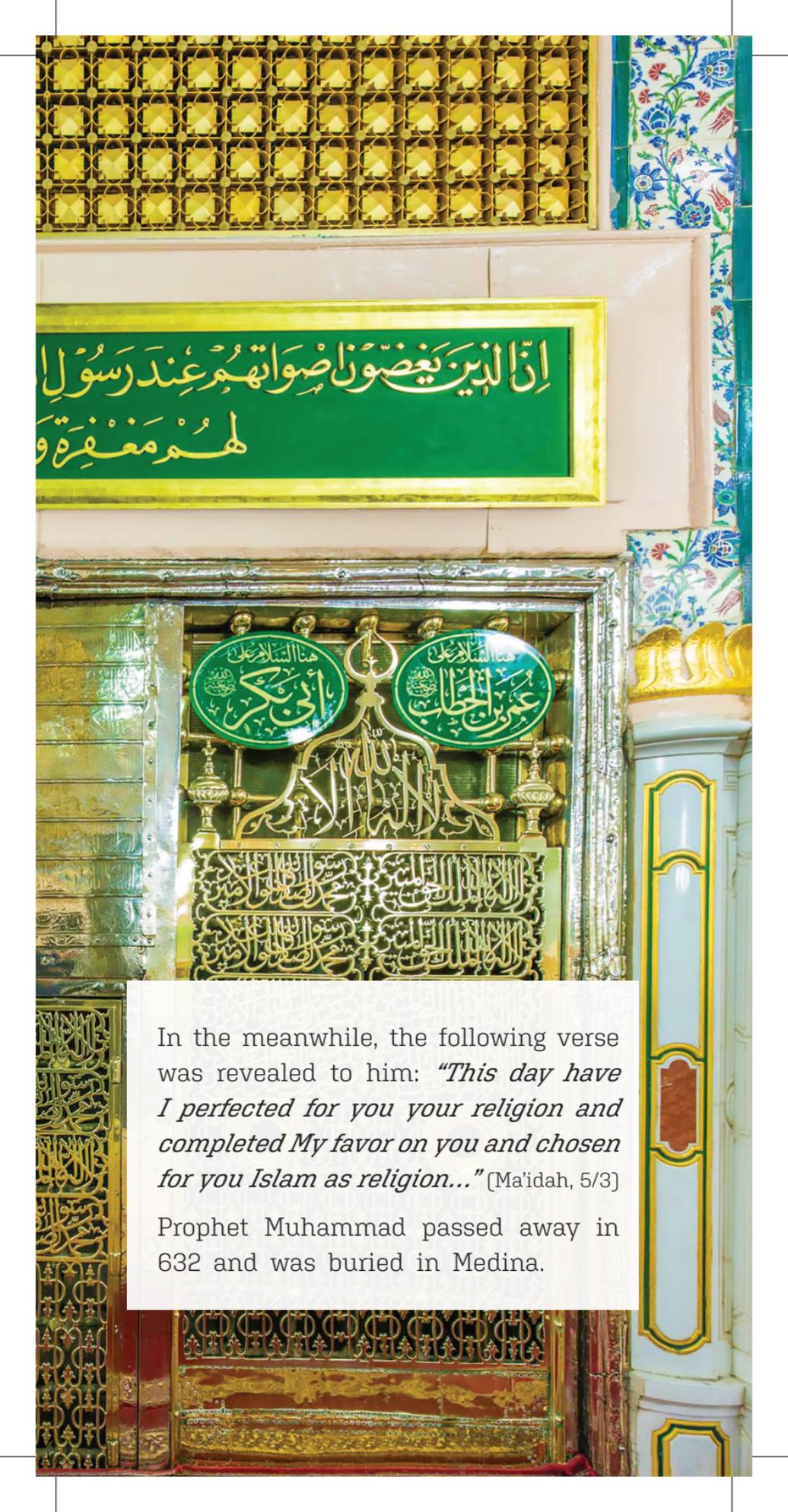
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Eight years after the *Hijrah*, the Prophet Muhammad returned to Mecca with an army of 10,000 men under the strict order that no blood was to be spilt, no revenge was to be taken. He respectfully rode into Mecca on the back of his camel bowing so much so that his head nearly rested on the camel's neck. Upon entering the city, he told its Meccans: *"I say to you what the Prophet Joseph (Yusuf) said to his brothers, 'This day, no reproach be cast on you. May Allah forgive you. You are free.'"*

The following year in the pilgrimage (*hajj*) season, he gave his farewell sermon in which he said:

"We have put the ways of ignorance behind us now. We must drop all ties with usury. Justice needs to prevail, and no one should ever be oppressed. Everyone is equal regardless of black or white, rich or poor, Arab or non-Arab. The thing that distinguishes us from one another is piety; there shall be no more paganism..."



إِنَّ الَّذِينَ يَغُضُّونَ أَصْوَاتَهُمْ عِنْدَ رَسُولٍ
لَهُمْ مَغْفِرَةٌ

In the meanwhile, the following verse was revealed to him: *"This day have I perfected for you your religion and completed My favor on you and chosen for you Islam as religion..."* (Ma'idah, 5/3)

Prophet Muhammad passed away in 632 and was buried in Medina.

His Moral Characteristics



He was very modest, and would never speak with foul words. When he was in the presence of obscenity, he would leave and rebuke it. He never raised his voice or reacted to a bad deed inflicted upon him with a bad deed. He was always pardoning and forgiving. He never took revenge on anyone who oppressed him. He never broke any commandments of Allah. When faced with two options, he always preferred the easier one as long as it did not go against the orders of Allah. He was such a modest person that he would help cook and clean the house. He only talked about that which concerned him. He treated people kindly and made them feel easy in his company. He was generous with whatever he had. He was very balanced in his character. If he sat with someone, he would never leave before his guest left him first. If someone gave him a hard time, he was patient with them. Hence everyone liked his company. He was very affectionate, never harsh or greedy. He never accepted praise except what was reasonable.

Reformation of His Society



The Prophet Muhammad (saw) brought about many changes in his society:

- He was the protector of equal rights of women; he removed the husband's "ownership" of the wife. He established women's right to own property as well as their right to inheritance. He defended women's right to choose or refuse a man for marriage.
- He became a protector of orphans; he established proper treatment for them. A common saying of his was, *"The best home is a home in which an orphan is well treated, and the worst home is a home in which an orphan is mistreated."* He forbade the misuse of the inheritance of the orphan, ensuring that they would receive what was rightfully theirs when they reach the age.

- He was an environmentalist. For example, it was his practice to assign a man from among his companions to collect all of the trash at camping sights when they were journeying.
- He forbade the overloading of any animals. He recommended merciful treatment for all animals.
- He taught his followers to love and respect the nature around them and instructed his followers to plant trees even on the Doomsday. He forbade the destruction of nature, especially trees, even during times of war.
- He was concerned with social health. He helped eliminate the use of alcohol, intoxicants, slavery, and gambling.





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