

Lessons From The Biography Of The Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم)
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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

الحمد لله والصلاة والسلام على رسول الله وعلى آهله وصحبه أجمعين

Class 12

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Class 12: The Beginning of The Revelation

When the prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) reached the age of forty, the Revelation started to come down upon him. It is reported by Anas (رضى الله عنه) that Allāh sent Muḥammad (صلى الله عليه وسلم) as a prophet at the age of forty, and forty is considered the head of maturity amongst men. Ibn Al-Qayyim (رحمه الله) mentioned this in Zād Al-Ma‘ād.

Muḥammad (صلى الله عليه وسلم) Became A Prophet On The Day Of Monday.

The prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) mentioned that he used to fast on Mondays because it was the day he was born on, and the day he became a prophet. Ibn Kathīr (رحمه الله) said there is no difference of opinion among the scholars that Muḥammad (صلى الله عليه وسلم) was sent as a prophet on a Monday.

There is a difference of opinion regarding the month that the Muḥammad (صلى الله عليه وسلم) became a prophet. Majority of the scholars believe it to be Rabī‘ Al-Awwal and this is the correct opinion. Some scholars said it was the month of Rajab. Some scholars say it was the month of Ramaḍān since Allāh (سبحانه و تعالی) said,

﴿ شَهْرُ رَمَضَانَ الَّذِي أُنزِلَ فِيهِ الْقُرْآنُ ﴾

“The month of Ramaḍān in which was revealed the Qur’ān.”

[Sūrah

Al-Baqarah 2: 185]

However, in reality, the correct opinion regarding this verse is that the Qur’ān was revealed from Al-Lawḥ Al-Maḥfūz - The Preserved Tablet, to the first heavens above the earth – specifically Bayt Al-‘Izzah, which is in the heavens above the Ka’bah as mentioned by Ibn ‘Abbās (رضى الله عنه). This statement was deemed correct by Al-Ḥāfiẓ and Al-Suyūṭī (حفظهما الله). Allāh (سبحانه و تعالی) revealed the Qur’ān at one time from the Preserved Tablet to Bayt Al-‘Izzah, then it came down in parts at particular times. The Qur’ān came down a few verses at a time or one chapter at a time or according to the events that were happening around the prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم).

The First Verse Of The Qur’ān That Was Revealed.

There is also a difference of opinion regarding what the first āyah was that was revealed. Some scholars said it was,

﴿ اقْرَأْ بِاسْمِ رَبِّكَ الَّذِي خَلَقَ ﴾

“Recite by the name of your Lord Who created.” [Sūrah Al-‘Alaq 96: 1]

This is the most common verse that the scholars say was revealed first and this is the most correct opinion. Other scholars say the first verse was,

﴿ يَا أَيُّهَا الْمُدَّثِّرُ ﴾

“O you enveloped (in garments)!” [Sūrah Al-Muddaththir 74: 1]

There is a ḥadīth in ṣaḥīḥ Muslim that is deemed weak or fabricated regarding the āyah in Sūrah Al-Muddaththir being the first verse to be revealed. The āyah in Sūrah Al-Muddaththir came down after the revelation had been cut off for a while. This is why Shaykh Muḥammad Ibn ‘Abdil Wahhāb (رحمه الله) said Muḥammad (صلى الله عليه وسلم) was chosen to be a prophet with the āyah (اقْرَأْ) and he (صلى الله عليه وسلم) was chosen to be a messenger with Sūrah Al-Muddaththir

﴿ يَا أَيُّهَا الْمُدَّثِّرُ ﴿١﴾ قُمْ فَأَنْذِرْ ﴿٢﴾ ﴾

“O you enveloped (in garments)! Stand up and warn.”

[Sūrah

Al-Muddaththir 74: 1-2]

This is because the verses in Sūrah Al-Muddaththir includes a command to stand up and proclaim the message, so he (صلى الله عليه وسلم) became a messenger with these verses. Imām An-Nawawī and Al-Ḥāfiẓ agreed with this.

Allāh Made Seclusion Beloved To The Prophet.

Muḥammad (صلى الله عليه وسلم) used to love to go to the cave of ḥirā' and stay there in seclusion for several nights on end so that he can worship Allāh alone while he was away from everybody. Muḥammad (صلى الله عليه وسلم) would stay in the cave of ḥirā' until he ran out of provisions. He would then return to his wife Khadījah to get more provisions. He (صلى الله عليه وسلم) continued doing this until the revelation came down upon him from Allāh (سبحانه و تعالى) via angel Jibrīl (عليه السلام).

Jibrīl (عليه السلام) Came To Muḥammad (صلى الله عليه وسلم) In The Cave of Ḥirā'

When Muḥammad (صلى الله عليه وسلم) was worshiping in the cave of ḥirā', the angel Jibrīl (عليه السلام) told the prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) 'Read!' Muḥammad (صلى الله عليه وسلم) answered Jibrīl saying, 'I am not a reader.' Shaykh 'Alī Al-Ḥudhayfī (حفظه الله) said, this does not mean 'I do not know how to read.' The correct meaning was, 'I am not good at reading.' The scholars have said that Muḥammad (صلى الله عليه وسلم) knew how to read but he was not good at reading. This did not mean that Muḥammad (صلى الله عليه وسلم) was completely illiterate as many Muslims believe.

Jibrīl (عليه السلام) hugged and squeezed Muḥammad (صلى الله عليه وسلم) until the prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) was exhausted. Jibrīl (عليه السلام) again told him, 'Read,' and Muḥammad (صلى الله عليه وسلم) told him once again he cannot read. This repeated three times and on the final time Jibrīl (عليه السلام) said, (اقْرَأْ بِاسْمِ رَبِّكَ الَّذِي خَلَقَ) – 'Read in the Name of your Lord who created You.'

The Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) Returned To Khadījah (رضي الله عنها) In Fear.

After this incident Muḥammad (صلى الله عليه وسلم) returned to Khadījah (رضي الله عنها) and he was shaking as if he was suffereing from severe cold and said, (زملوني زملوني) – 'cover

me, cover me.’ Khadījah (رضى الله عنها) covered the prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) until the fear from the incident with Jibrīl went away. The prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) told Khadījah that he feared for himself. Khadījah said to him, ‘no by Allāh, Allāh will never let you down. You keep ties with your relatives, and you help those who need help, and you honor the guest, and you are there for others during hardship and you know what the truth is.’

Khadījah’s (رضى الله عنها) Cousin Waraqah Bin Nawfal Informed Muḥammad (صلى الله عليه وسلم) That He Was A Prophet.

Waraqah bin Nawfal did not believe in idols and he had become a Christian during the times of ignorance. Although Waraqah was blind, he had knowledge of the Torah and the Injīl. Khadījah (رضى الله عنها) said to Waraqah, ‘listen to the son of your brother and tell us what you see.’ When the prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) told Waraqah what happened to him in the cave of ḥirā’, Waraqah said, ‘this is Al-Nāmūs (the Revelation through the angel Jibrīl) that came down to Mūsá (عليه السلام) before you.’ Waraqah had knowledge of the Torah and the Bible so he knew about the narrations in them concerning this.

Waraqah bin Nawfal said to the prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم), ‘I wish that I were a young strong man when you become a prophet to aid and support you. But what I can tell you is that your people will exile you and kick you out.’ Muḥammad (صلى الله عليه وسلم) enquired, ‘will they kick me out?’ Waraqah replied, ‘not a single person came with what you came with, except that his people become enemies to him.’ The prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) was amazed by Waraqah’s statement.

Waraqah bin Nawfal had told the prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) that if he were to live until the time that Allāh sent him as a prophet, he would have surely aided him. Incidentally, Waraqah died shortly after this incident during the time that the Revelation had come to a pause.

وصلى الله على نبينا محمد وعلى آله وصحبه وسلم