

## The Sunrise of Prophethood on Mount Faran

When Rasulallah ﷺ reached forty, as per his earlier routine he was in the cave of Hira, when suddenly an angel appeared in the cave. He entered, greeted him with Salaam and said: “Read!” Rasulallah ﷺ replied: “I am unable to read.” Rasulallah ﷺ recounts: “Upon this the angel embraced me so forcefully that there was no limit to my suffering. He then released me saying, “Read!’ Yet again, I responded:

مَا أَنَا بِقَارِئٍ

“I am unable to read.”

Continuing further, Rasulallah ﷺ relates: “The angel likewise forcefully embraced me a second and then a third time, released me and bade me to recite the following verses:

اقْرَأْ بِاسْمِ رَبِّكَ الَّذِي خَلَقَ ۝ خَلَقَ الْإِنْسَانَ مِنْ عَلَقٍ ۝ اقْرَأْ وَرَبُّكَ الْأَكْرَمُ ۝ الَّذِي عَلَّمَ بِالْقَلَمِ ۝ عَلَّمَ الْإِنْسَانَ مَا لَمْ يَعْلَمْ ۝

“Read (with the aid) of the name of your Rabb Who has created (the entire universe). He has created (above all) man from a clot of blood. Read! And your Rabb is the most gracious Who has taught (knowledge) by the use of the pen. He has taught man that which he did not know.” [Surah ‘Alaq verse 1]

Thereafter, Rasulallah ﷺ returned home trembling in anxiety. The moment he entered, he requested Hadhrat Khadijah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا to wrap him up. When his anxiety and agitation subsided, he related the whole incident to Hadhrat Khadijah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا saying: “I was terrified of losing my life.” In other words, since the spiritual illumination of divine revelation and the spiritual radiance of the angel were abruptly thrust upon the human nature of Rasulallah ﷺ and due to the magnitude of the divine revelation, Rasulallah ﷺ assumed that if the intensity of this Wahi persists in this manner, his human nature would very unlikely be able to withstand the burden of Wahi. It could also mean that saddled by the burden of prophethood, he thought he would perish. The following verse refers to this very burden:

إِنَّا سَنُلْقِي عَلَيْكَ قَوْلًا ثَقِيلًا ۝

“We will reveal upon you a very burdensome word.” [Surah Muzzammil: 5]

If Rasulallah ﷺ were receiving divine revelation whilst mounted upon a camel, the camel would be constrained to sit down. Hadhrat Zaid bin Thaabit رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ narrates: “On one occasion, Rasulallah’s ﷺ thigh was on my thigh when he started receiving divine revelation. His thigh suddenly became so unbearably heavy that I was afraid of my thigh being reduced to pulp.”

Thereafter Jibraa’eel عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ appeared before him giving him glad tidings of Allah Ta’ala choosing him as His messenger until Rasulallah ﷺ felt at ease. He then bade him to recite. Rasulallah ﷺ asked: “How must I recite?” Jibraa’eel عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ replied: “Read in the name of your Rabb Who created...” up to the verse “that which he knew not.” Rasulallah ﷺ accepted the message of Allah and returned. Every tree and stone he passed en route to his home greeted him with “As-Salaamu’alayka Yaa Rasulallah!” This is how he returned home in high spirits and with firm conviction that Allah Ta’ala has conferred upon him a rank of incalculable magnitude; prophethood.”

Nonetheless, he returned home and furnished Hadhrat Khadijah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهَا with a detailed account of what transpired. He also expressed his fear of losing his life. Hadhrat Khadijah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهَا consoled him saying: “Congratulations to you! This is a source of glad tidings. Do not panic! By Allah! He will never disgrace you. You maintain favourable family ties. Your efforts at maintaining good family ties are notable. You always speak the truth. You bear the burdens of others. You shoulder the debts of others. You attend to the affairs of the poor. You are trustworthy; you return whatever has been entrusted to your care. You always fulfil the rights of the guests. You are always willing to assist in good works.”

Hadhrt Khadijah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهَا also added: “You have never even been close to an evil woman.”

In short, a person with such outstanding character, a man of such superior values, a human being with such purity, a man who is an embodiment of virtue and perfection can never be subject to any form of humiliation. He cannot be put to shame, neither in this world nor the hereafter. Whosoever Allah Ta’ala blesses with such exceptional character and virtue, Allah Ta’ala will shield him from all calamities and misfortune as well.

Khadijah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهَا consoled him saying: “By Allah in whose absolute control lies Khadijah’s life! I firmly expect you to be the messenger of this Ummah.”

According to other narrations, Rasulallah صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ gave Khadijah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهَا a detailed account of what transpired. She responded: “By Allah! Take heart and accept glad tidings. Allah Ta’ala will never do anything to you but good. So accept whatever status Allah Ta’ala has conferred upon you because it is distinctly authentic. And congratulations to you as I also maintain that you are truly the messenger of Allah.”

Hadhrt Khadijah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهَا then went alone to her cousin Waraqah bin Nawfal. He was a celebrated scholar of the old and the new testaments. He was busy translating the New Testament from Syriac into Arabic. During the pre-Islamic era of ignorance, he steered clear of idolatry and embraced Christianity. By this time he was very old and blind. On hearing the entire episode from Hadhrt Khadijah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهَا, Waraqah remarked:

لَئِنْ كُنْتُ صَادِقْتِنِي إِنَّهُ لَيَأْتِيهِ نَامُوسُ عِيسَى

“If you are truthful in whatever you say, verily this is the same Angel who used to come to ‘Isa عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ.”

Subsequent to this, Hadhrt Khadijah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهَا took Rasulallah صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ along with her to Waraqah bin Nawfal. She addressed him saying: “O cousin! Why don’t you hear it from your nephew (in his own words)?”

Waraqah then addressed Rasulallah صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ saying: “O nephew! Tell me, what did you observe? What happened?” Rasulallah صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ then narrated the entire incident.

فَلَمَّا سَمِعَ كَلَامَهُ أَيَقَنَ بِالْحَقِّ وَاعْتَرَفَ بِهِ

“The moment he heard the details, he became absolutely convinced of the truth and he ardently accepted and wholeheartedly submitted to the truth.”

On listening to these details, Waraqah submitted: “Indeed, this is the same angel that used to appear before Musa عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ. If only I was strong enough during your prophethood when your people will banish you from your birthplace or at least I wish I am alive (to see those times).” Stunned by what he just said, Rasulallah صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ asked: “Will they really drive me out?” Waraqah replied: “This is not confined to you alone. All the Prophets who came with the divine message faced hostility from their own people. If I am fortunate enough to come across that era, I will assist you in all earnestness.” However, not long thereafter, Waraqah passed away.

ہجر سے بڑھ کر مصیب چھین  
اس سے بہتر ہے کہ مر جاؤں کس

*Urdu Couplet: "There is no calamity more severe than separation from the beloved, it is better to die than suffer such anguish."*

Nonetheless, whenever Rasulallah ﷺ would think about this, Jibraa'eel عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ would appear before him and console him saying:

يَا مُحَمَّدُ إِنَّكَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ حَقًّا

*"O Muhammad! You are indeed the true Prophet of Allah."*

On hearing such comforting words, Rasulallah ﷺ would feel somewhat relieved.

On one occasion, Hadhrat Khadijah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا requested Rasulallah ﷺ thus: "When the angel approaches you again, please inform me, if possible." When Jibraa'eel عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ appeared yet again, Rasulallah ﷺ apprised her of his arrival. Hadhrat Khadijah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا then requested Rasulallah ﷺ to come onto her lap. As he placed his head on her lap, she removed her scarf exposing her head. "Can you still spot Jibraa'eel عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ now?" she asked. When Rasulallah ﷺ replied in the negative, she remarked: "Glad tidings unto you. By Allah Ta'ala! This is an angel, not shaytaan."

## Date of Prophethood

All the Muhadditheen and historians are unanimous over the fact that Rasulallah ﷺ was bestowed the mantle of prophethood on a Monday. However, there seems to be some disagreement on the actual month of his ordainment. Hafiz Ibn 'Abdul-Barr رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ says that he was commissioned with the assignment of prophethood on the eighth of Rabi'ul-Awwal. According to this, Rasulallah ﷺ was exactly forty years old when he was ordained as a prophet.

## Salaah - The Primary Obligation after Tauheed and Risaalat

Following Tauheed and Risaalat, the very first lesson imparted to Rasulallah ﷺ dealt with Wudu and Salaah. At the outset, Jibraa'eel عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ stamped his heel on the ground that caused a spring to gush forth. Jibraa'eel عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ performed wudhu with this water whilst Rasulallah ﷺ continued observing his actions. Then Rasulallah ﷺ also performed wudhu accordingly. Thereafter Jibraa'eel عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ performed two Rakaats of Salaah with Rasulallah ﷺ keeping abreast by following him throughout. Following this lesson of Salaah and Wudhu, Rasulallah ﷺ returned home and imparted this ritual to Hadhrat Khadijah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا.

Usamah bin Zaid رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ narrates from his father Zaid bin Haarisah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ that Rasulallah ﷺ said: "During the initial stages of my prophethood and divine revelation, Jibraa'eel عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ appeared before me and tutored me about Salaah and Wudhu."

وَأَقِمِ الصَّلَاةَ طَرَفِي النَّهَارِ

*"And establish Salaah in both parts of the day (i.e. morning and evening).*

*[Surah Hud verse 114]*

Surah Muzzammil was revealed in which Qiyaamul-Layl (Tahajjud) was established.

In the early stages of Islam, Allah Ta'ala had prescribed two rakaats of Salaah for the morning and two rakaats for the evening. Later on five Salaahs were made compulsory on the night of Mi'raaj.