

Islamic Academy of Coventry

صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ
Sīrah of Muḥammad

Part 35

The Final Illness

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Sirah of Muḥammad ﷺ
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Introduction

The liberation of Makkah had been completed in the 8th year after the migration of Rasūlullāh ﷺ to Madīnah. During that year and the 10th year, many Arab tribes sent delegations to Rasūlullāh ﷺ. That is why both of these years are called ‘The Years of the Delegations’.

Many of the tribes came and embraced Islām. The first tribe to come and see Rasūlullāh ﷺ was the Hawāzin after the battle of Ḥunayn. They had come to ask Rasūlullāh ﷺ if their people and livestock, which had been taken during the battle, could be returned. Rasūlullāh ﷺ had waited some time before distributing the spoils and when the Hawāzin did not arrive, he went ahead and shared it out.

When the Hawāzin eventually turned up, Rasūlullāh ﷺ gave them a choice between their wealth and their people. They chose their people. All the captives were freed and returned.

Among the other tribes, the Banū Thaḳīf came and embraced Islām. They were the same tribe who had taken refuge in the forts of Ṭāif after the battle of Ḥunayn.

The Banū ‘Āmir also came with some of their leaders including, ‘Āmir ibn Ṭufayl & Irbad ibn Qays. They hatched a plot to try and assassinate Rasūlullāh ﷺ but were unsuccessful. The

punishment of Allāh **سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى** came down upon the two leaders, and both perished.

The Banū Ḥanīfah came with Musaylamah al-Kadhhdhāb, the liar. He wanted Rasūlullāh **صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ** to appoint him as his successor, however his request was denied. Musaylamah eventually met his end during the time of Abū Bakr **رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ** when Waḥshī **رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ** killed him with his spear.

Arabia had now become united under Islām and in the 10th year, Rasūlullāh **صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ** made an announcement to perform Ḥajj. Rasūlullāh **صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ** only ever performed one Ḥajj after he migrated to Madīnah.

Many Companions **رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ** joined him on this journey. Some from Madīnah, whilst others joined along the way and the rest came to Makkah.

Rasūlullāh **صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ** was accompanied by his wives **رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُنَّ** and his daughter Fāṭimah **رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا** on this journey. He left Madīnah and went to Dhul Ḥulayfah where he entered into the state of Iḥrām. He then went to Makkah and performed all the rites of Ḥajj, instructing and advising the believers all the time, in a way someone advises when they are about to leave on a journey. Hence this Ḥajj was called the ‘Farewell Ḥajj’.

Summary of events in the 10th Year of Hijri

Rabi‘ al-Awwal

- Khālid ibn al-Walīd رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ was sent to the Banū ‘Abd al-Madān in Najrān.
- The delegation of Al-Ḥārith ibn Ka‘ab came to Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ.

رَبِيعِ الْأَوَّلِ

Sha‘bān

- ‘Adiy ibn Ḥātim al-Ṭā’ī came to Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ and embraced Islām.
- A delegation from Khawlān came as believers.

شَعْبَانَ

Ramaḍān

- A delegation from Ghāmid came to Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ.
- Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ performed I’tikāf for 20 days in this month and Jibrīl عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ went over the Qur’ān twice with Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ.
- A delegation from Ghassān came to Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ.
- ‘Alī رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ was sent to Yemen and the entire tribe of Hamdān embraced Islām upon his hand in a single day.

رَمَضَانَ

Shawwāl

- A delegation from Salāmān came to Rasūlullāh ﷺ.

شَوَّال

Dhul Ḥijjah

- Rasūlullāh ﷺ performed the Farewell Ḥajj.
- ‘Alī رضي الله عنه came from Najrān to Makkah to join Rasūlullāh ﷺ for Ḥajj.
- On the day of ‘Arafah, which was a Friday, during the Wuqūf, Allāh سبحانه وتعالى sent down verse 3 of Sūrah al-Māidah, confirming that the religion of Islām had now been perfected.
- Musaylamah the liar made a claim to Prophecy. Rasūlullāh ﷺ saw a dream with him in it and Al-Aswad al-‘Ansī, which became true as both were false Prophets.

ذُو الْحِجَّةِ

Other Events in this Year

- Delegations from Al-Azd, Zubayd, ‘Abd al-Qays, Banū Ḥanīfah, Ṭayy, Kindah, Muḥārib, Rahāwīyyīn, ‘Abs, Ṣadif, Qushayr ibn Ka‘ab and Bujaylah came to Rasūlullāh ﷺ.
- Ibrāhīm رضي الله عنه, the son of Rasūlullāh ﷺ, passed away.
- On the day Ibrāhīm رضي الله عنه passed away, there was an eclipse and Rasūlullāh ﷺ performed Ṣalāt al-Kusūf.

Hadīth Jibrīl

A few days after returning from Ḥajj, Jibrīl عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ came to see Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ in the form of a human being.

The narrations say that a man came to visit Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ whose clothes were intensely white, and hair was intensely black. There were no signs of travel upon him, so this indicated he wasn't an outsider, but no one recognized him locally, so who was this person? This incident is reported in many books of Ḥadīth including the Ṣaḥīḥayn and is called Ḥadīth Jibrīl.

عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ قَالَ قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ
"سَلُونِي" فَهَابُوا أَنْ يَسْأَلُوهُ¹

Abu Hurayrah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ narrates that Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said 'Ask me (about matters pertaining to religion)', but they (the Companions رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ) were too much overawed out of profound respect for him to ask him (anything).

فَجَاءَ رَجُلٌ فَجَلَسَ عِنْدَ رُكْبَتَيْهِ

Meanwhile, a man came and sat near the knees of Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ.

¹ Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim 10

فَقَالَ يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ مَا الْإِسْلَامُ
 قَالَ " لَا تُشْرِكُ بِاللَّهِ شَيْئًا وَتُقِيمُ الصَّلَاةَ وَتُؤْتِي الزَّكَاةَ
 وَتَصُومُ رَمَضَانَ "

He said, ‘O Rasūlullāh ﷺ, what is Islām?’. Rasūlullāh ﷺ replied, ‘You must not associate anything with Allāh, and establish Ṣalāḥ, pay the Zakāh and observe (the fasts) of Ramaḍān.’

قَالَ صَدَقْتَ

He said, ‘You (have) told the truth’.

قَالَ يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ مَا الْإِيمَانُ

He then said, ‘O Rasūlullāh ﷺ, what is Imān?’.

قَالَ " أَنْ تُؤْمِنَ بِاللَّهِ وَمَلَائِكَتِهِ وَكِتَابِهِ وَلِقَائِهِ وَرُسُلِهِ وَتُؤْمِنَ
 بِالْبَعْثِ وَتُؤْمِنَ بِالْقَدْرِ كُلِّهِ "

Rasūlullāh ﷺ said, ‘That you affirm your faith in Allāh, His Angels, His Books, His Meeting, His Apostles, and that you believe in Resurrection and that you believe in Qadr (Divine Decree) in all its entirety’.

قَالَ صَدَقْتَ

He said, ‘You (have) told the truth’.

قَالَ يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ مَا الْإِحْسَانُ

He then said, ‘O Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ, what is Iḥsān?’

قَالَ " أَنْ تَخْشَى اللَّهَ كَأَنَّكَ تَرَاهُ فَإِنَّكَ إِنْ لَا تَكُنْ تَرَاهُ فَإِنَّهُ يَرَاكَ "

Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said, ‘That you fear Allāh as if you are seeing Him, and though you see Him not, verily He is seeing you’.

قَالَ صَدَقْتَ

He said, ‘You (have) told the truth’.

قَالَ يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ مَتَى تَقُومُ السَّاعَةُ

He said, ‘When will the hour of doom (Qiyāmah) take place?’

قَالَ " مَا الْمَسْئُولُ عَنْهَا بِأَعْلَمَ مِنَ السَّائِلِ "

وَسَأَحْدِثُكَ عَنْ أَشْرَاطِهَا

Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said, ‘The one who is being asked about it, is no better informed than the inquirer himself, I will tell you some of the signs.’

إِذَا رَأَيْتِ الْمَرْأَةَ تَلِدُ رَبَّهَا فَذَاكَ مِنْ أَسْرَاطِهَا

‘When you see a slave (woman) giving birth to her master - that is one of the signs.’

وَإِذَا رَأَيْتِ الْخُفَاءَ الْعُرَاةَ الصَّمَّ الْبُكْمَ مُلُوكَ الْأَرْضِ
فَذَاكَ مِنْ أَسْرَاطِهَا

‘When you see barefooted, naked, deaf, and dumb (ignorant and foolish persons) as the rulers of the earth, that is one of its signs.’

وَإِذَا رَأَيْتِ رِعَاءَ الْبَهْمِ يَتَطَاوَلُونَ فِي الْبُنْيَانِ فَذَاكَ مِنْ أَسْرَاطِهَا فِي
خَمْسٍ مِنَ الْغَيْبِ لَا يَعْلَمُهُنَّ إِلَّا اللَّهُ "

‘And when you see the shepherds of black camels exult in buildings - that is one of its signs. The (Doom) is one of the five things (wrapped) in the unseen. No one knows them except Allāh.’

ثُمَّ قَرَأَ { إِنَّ اللَّهَ عِنْدَهُ عِلْمُ السَّاعَةِ وَيُنزِلُ الْغَيْثَ وَيَعْلَمُ مَا فِي
الْأَرْحَامِ وَمَا تَدْرِي نَفْسٌ مَّاذَا تَكْسِبُ غَدًا وَمَا تَدْرِي نَفْسٌ بِأَيِّ
أَرْضٍ تَمُوتُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلِيمٌ خَبِيرٌ }

Then Rasūlullāh ﷺ recited (the following verse):
“Verily Allāh! with Him alone is the knowledge of the hour and
He it is Who sends down the rain and knows that which is in the
wombs and no person knows whatsoever he shall earn on
morrow and a person knows not in whatsoever land he shall die.
Verily Allāh is Knowing, Aware.”

قَالَ ثُمَّ قَامَ الرَّجُلُ فَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ
" رُدُّوهُ عَلَيَّ "

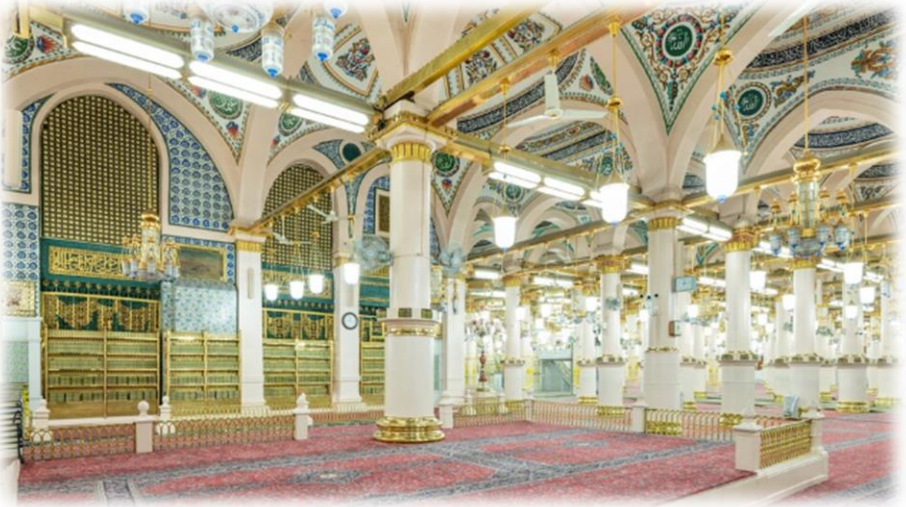
Abū Hurayrah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ said: Then the person stood up (and left).
Rasūlullāh ﷺ said ‘Bring him back to me’.

فَالْتَمِسَ فَلَمْ يَجِدْهُ

He was searched for, but they (the Companions رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ) could not
find him.

فَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ
" هَذَا جِبْرِيلُ أَرَادَ أَنْ تَعَلَّمُوا إِذْ لَمْ تَسْأَلُوا "

Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ thereupon said, 'He was Jibrīl عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ and he wanted to teach you (things pertaining to religion) when you did not ask (them yourselves).'



The Sariyah of Usāmah ibn Zayd رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ

Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ spent Dhul Hījjah and Muḥarram in Madīnah. It was now the month of Ṣafar. On the 26th, Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ gave the command to send an army to confront the Romans towards Ubnā, which was the location of the battle of Mu'tah. The battle had taken place near Kerak in southern Jordon.



Figure 1 - Site of the battle of Mu'tah

During this battle, three prominent Companions of Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ were martyred. Zayd ibn Ḥārithah the father of Usāmah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ, Ja'far رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ, the paternal cousin of Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ and 'Abdullāh ibn Rawāḥah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ.

The Final Expedition

This was the final Sariyah which Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ sent and he appointed Usāmah ibn Zayd ibn Hārithah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ as the commander of the army, even though he was very young.

Many of the illustrious Companions رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُمْ, from the early migrants as well as the Anṣār participated in this expedition. The army assembled just outside of Madīnah, but due to the illness of Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ, the army did not proceed towards their destination.



The Early Signs

Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ had returned to Madīnah after performing the Farewell Ḥajj. He now started preparing for his final journey which would be from this world into the hereafter.

Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ busied himself in glorifying and praising Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى as well as asking for his forgiveness. The first sign that Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ received from Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى indicating his time to leave this world was drawing near, was the revelation of Surah An-Naṣr

إِذَا جَاءَ نَصْرُ اللَّهِ وَالْفَتْحُ ﴿١﴾

وَرَأَيْتَ النَّاسَ يَدْخُلُونَ فِي دِينِ اللَّهِ أَفْوَاجًا ﴿٢﴾

فَسَبِّحْ بِحَمْدِ رَبِّكَ وَأَسْتَغْفِرْهُ إِنَّهُ كَانَ تَوَّابًا ﴿٣﴾²

“(O Prophet,) When there comes Allāh’s help and the Victory, (1) And you see people entering Allāh’s (approved) religion in multitudes, (2) Then pronounce the Purity and Praise of your Lord and seek forgiveness from Him.

Surely, He is Ever-Relenting. (3)”

² Sūrah an-Naṣr

There is a narration in Zarqānī, which mentions when Jibrīl عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ came with this Sūrah, Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said ‘O Jibrīl, I have been given news about my death in this Sūrah’.

Jibrīl عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ replied:

وَلَاخِرَةُ خَيْرٌ لَّكَ مِنَ الْأُولَى³

“Surely the Hereafter is much better for you than the present life”

There were a number of signs which had come to pass, showing that Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ had completed his mission on this earth.

- The help and victory of Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى had come
- Disbelief and polytheism had been vanquished
- The message of Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى had been delivered to the word
- The religion of Islām had been perfected
- People were entering into Islām in droves

Now that the mission of Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ had been accomplished, it was time to prepare for the everlasting hereafter.

³ Sūrah Aḍ-Ḍuḥā’ verse 4

Remembrance

Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ would now read the following supplications whilst he was sitting, standing, coming, or going:

سُبْحَانَكَ اللَّهُمَّ رَبَّنَا وَبِحَمْدِكَ
اللَّهُمَّ اغْفِرْ لِي وَتُبْ عَلَيَّ إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ التَّوَّابُ الرَّحِيمُ

‘Glory be to You O Allāh, Our Lord and all Praise be to You, O Allāh forgive me and accept repentance from me, indeed You are the most forgiving, most Merciful’

He would also recite:

سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ وَبِحَمْدِهِ أَسْتَغْفِرُ اللَّهَ وَأَتُوبُ إِلَيْهِ

‘Glory be to Allāh, and Praise to Him. I seek forgiveness from Allāh, and I turn to Him in repentance’

سُبْحَانَكَ اللَّهُمَّ وَبِحَمْدِكَ أَسْتَغْفِرُكَ وَأَتُوبُ إِلَيْكَ

‘Glory be to You O Allāh, Our Lord and all Praise be to You, I seek forgiveness from You, and I turn to You in repentance’

Revision of the Qur’ān

On one occasion Fāṭimah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهَا came to visit her father Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ. He sat her down and said:

إِنَّ جِبْرِيْلَ كَانَ يُعَارِضُنِي الْقُرْآنَ كُلَّ سَنَةٍ مَرَّةً
وَإِنَّهُ عَارِضُنِي الْعَامَ مَرَّتَيْنِ وَلَا أُرَاهُ إِلَّا حَضَرَ أَجَلِي⁴

‘Jibrīl عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ used to come and revise the Qur’ān with me once only, every year, and this year he has revised it with me twice. I think that my time to leave is approaching.’



⁴ Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī 3624

The Farewell Ḥajj

During the farewell Ḥajj, Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى revealed the verse:

أَلْيَوْمَ أَكْمَلْتُ لَكُمْ دِينَكُمْ وَأَتْمَمْتُ عَلَيْكُمْ نِعْمَتِي
وَرَضِيتُ لَكُمُ الْإِسْلَامَ دِينًا⁵

“Today, I have perfected your religion for you, and have completed My blessing upon you, and chosen Islām as a Dīn (religion and a way of life) for you.”

When this verse was revealed, Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ realised this was a sign from above. During the farewell Ḥajj, he would mention in his sermons, that maybe they would not meet again after this. The advice he would impart, would be like a person who was about to leave. He bade farewell to his faithful followers.



⁵ Sūrah al-Mā'idah verse 3

The Signs of Illness

During the final 10 days of the month of Şafar, one-night Rasūlullāh ﷺ got up and woke his servant Abū Muwayhibah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ, and told him that he had been commanded to go and pray for the people of Baqīʿ. Abū Muwayhibah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ was also to go with Rasūlullāh ﷺ.

They both went and Rasūlullāh ﷺ prayed for the deceased. He then turned to Abū Muwayhibah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ and told him that he had been given a choice between a long life in this world with its keys and treasures, followed by paradise, or to meet his Lord and paradise (immediately). Abū Muwayhibah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ urged Rasūlullāh ﷺ to select the first choice, but Rasūlullāh ﷺ accepted the second. When Rasūlullāh ﷺ returned from Baqīʿ, he suddenly fell ill. He developed a headache and fever.



That day was a Wednesday, and it was the turn of Maymūnah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهَا. As per the normal practice of Rasūlullāh ﷺ, he continued to stay with each of his wives when it was their allotted day, even though he was ill.

Moving to the House of ‘Ā’ishah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهَا

Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ remained unwell for a number of days. When his illness became more severe, he sought permission from his wives and went to stay at the house of ‘Ā’ishah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهَا. He moved to her residence on a Monday, and the following Monday Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ breathed his last in this world.

عَنْ هِشَامٍ عَنِ أَبِيهِ أَنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ كَانَ
 فِي مَرَضِهِ جَعَلَ يَدُورُ فِي نِسَائِهِ وَيَقُولُ
 " أَيْنَ أَنَا غَدًا أَيْنَ أَنَا غَدًا ". حِرْصًا عَلَى بَيْتِ عَائِشَةَ
 قَالَتْ عَائِشَةُ فَلَمَّا كَانَ يَوْمِي سَكَنَ ⁶

‘Hishām narrates from his father that when Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ was in his (final) illness, he started visiting his wives and would say ‘Where will I be tomorrow, where will I be tomorrow’, anxious to be in the house of ‘Ā’ishah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهَا. ‘Ā’ishah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهَا says, ‘When it was my day, Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ became silent (he no longer asked the question)’.

⁶ Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī 3774

The Apostates

The final illness of Rasūlullāh ﷺ lasted for around 13 or 14 days. He spent the final week of his worldly life in the house of ‘Ā’ishah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهَا. During this illness, Rasūlullāh ﷺ received news that Aswad ‘Ansī, Musaylamah al-Kadhdhāb and Ṭulayḥāh Asadī had claimed prophethood and people were turning away from Islām.

Rasūlullāh ﷺ emphasised to the Companions رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُمْ that these people must be dealt with in the relevant manner and sent a group of Anṣār to confront Aswad ‘Ansī. One day before Rasūlullāh ﷺ passed away, the rebellion of the false prophet Aswad ‘Ansī was put to an end and he was no more.



Fāṭimah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهَا

During his final days, Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ called his daughter Fāṭimah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهَا. The following Ḥadīth narrates what happened:

عَنْ عَائِشَةَ رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهَا قَالَتْ دَعَا النَّبِيَّ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ فَاطِمَةَ ابْنَتَهُ فِي شَكْوَاهُ الَّذِي قُبِضَ فِيهِ فَسَارَهَا بِشَيْءٍ فَبَكَتُ ثُمَّ دَعَاهَا فَسَارَهَا فَضَحِكْتُ قَالَتْ فَسَأَلْتُهَا عَنْ ذَلِكَ فَقَالَتْ سَارَنِي النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ فَأَخْبَرَنِي أَنَّهُ يُقْبَضُ فِي وَجَعِهِ الَّذِي تُؤَقِّ فِيهِ فَبَكَيْتُ ثُمَّ سَارَنِي فَأَخْبَرَنِي أَنِّي أَوَّلُ أَهْلِ بَيْتِهِ أَتْبَعُهُ فَضَحِكْتُ⁷

“Ā’ishah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهَا narrates that Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ called his daughter Fāṭimah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهَا whilst he was in his illness, in which he passed away. He told her a secret and she cried. He then called her and told her another secret and she laughed. When I asked her about that, she said that Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ had secretly informed me that he would pass away in his fatal illness, so I cried. Then he secretly told me that I would be the first of his family to join him, so I laughed.’

6 months after Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ passed away, his daughter Fāṭimah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهَا also left this world.

⁷ Ṣaḥīḥ Al-Bukhārī 3625

The Final Week

As mentioned earlier, the final days of the life of Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ were spent in the house of ‘Ā’ishah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهَا.

Around four days before the demise of Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ, on the Thursday his health deteriorated. Some of the Companions رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُمْ were in his room at the time. Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ asked them to bring some paper, ink, and pen so a bequest could be written for the people after which they would not go astray.

When the Companions رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُمْ heard this, there was a disagreement between themselves as to whether they should bring Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ what he had requested or not.

‘Umar رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ said that Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ wasn’t well. Due to the severity of his pain, it wouldn’t be appropriate to put him through any difficulty. They have got the book of Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى (which would save them from going astray) and that would be enough.



Some of the Companions رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُمْ agreed with ‘Umar رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ whilst others said that they should bring the items which Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ has requested and the bequest should be written. Their reasoning was that Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ was free from sin and he would never say anything which other people might say during illness. Therefore, his request should be completed.

The disagreement started to become vocal so Rasūlullāh ﷺ requested that the Companions رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ leave.

The Bequest

After a while, even though Rasūlullāh ﷺ was in severe pain, he left a verbal bequest of 3 things:

- ❖ There should be no polytheists in the Arabian Peninsula
- ❖ Whenever any delegations leave, they should be given a gift in the same way he used to give them gifts
- ❖ Rasūlullāh ﷺ remained silent on the 3rd bequest or the narrator forgot what he had said

Some of the opinions are that the 3rd request was as follows:

- They should act upon the Qur’ān
- The army of Usāmah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ should be sent
- After Rasūlullāh ﷺ passes away, his grave must not be made a place of worship
- Remain steadfast on your Ṣalāh
- Look after your slaves.

We can never be sure whether Rasūlullāh ﷺ asked for the ink and pen to write down the same advice as above or whether it was something else. Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى knows best.

The Water

After the incident with the ink and pen, the Companions رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُمْ left as per the request of Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ. Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ then rested a while and felt a little better. The severity of his pain had eased a little.

At Z̤uhr time, he requested that 7 water skins from different wells in Madīnah be poured over his head. Maybe this would ease his pain and he could then advise people. As per his command, the water was poured over his head, and this brought him some relief.



The Final Sermon

Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ made his way to the Masjid supported by ‘Alī & ‘Abbās رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُمَا and led Ṣalāt. He then delivered a sermon which would be the final time he addressed his faithful Companions رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُم.

Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ climbed upon the pulpit. He began by praising and glorifying Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى then mentioned the Companions رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُم who had been martyred in the battle of Uḥud. He supplicated for them and asked Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى for their forgiveness.

Rasūlullāh now addressed the Muhājirūn and said that they will be in the majority and the Anṣār will be less. The Anṣār gave him a home, so be good to those who are good and pious and be lenient to those who make mistakes.

Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ then said, ‘O people, Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى has given a choice to one of his slaves, that he chooses the blessings of this world or the blessings which are near his Lord (meaning the hereafter) and this person has chosen the blessings which are near his Lord.’



As soon as he had said this, Abū Bakr رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ realised that this slave who Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ was talking about was none other than him, so he started to cry. Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ, asked him to remain firm and then signalled that all of the doors of the Masjid be closed. Only the door of Abū Bakr رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ should be kept open.

Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ then mentioned that the person who had done the most good to him was Abū Bakr رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ. Whosoever had done any favour to Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ, he had repaid it except Abū Bakr رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ. Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى will give him his due on the day of Judgement.

Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ praised Abū Bakr رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ in a way in which no other Companion رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُمْ was equal to him.

This was done so the people would see the high status of Abū Bakr رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ and there would be no disagreement in who would be the successor after Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ. To emphasise this, he gave the responsibility of leading Ṣalāh to Abū Bakr رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ.



In this sermon, Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ also said that the army of Usāmah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ should be quickly dispatched. He said he knew that some people did not approve of the leadership of Usāmah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ (Ibn Sa'ad mentions that this was the hypocrites). The reasoning

those people used was that in the presence of elders, why has a younger person has been given this responsibility? Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said, that these people also had the same reservations when his father Zayd رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ was given leadership. I swear by Allāh that his father Zayd رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ was worthy of leadership and after him, his son Usāmah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ as well. And they are from those who are loved by me.

Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ then mentioned how the Jews and Christians had made the graves of their Prophets into places of worship. This was a warning to the people to ensure they do not do the same.

عَنْ عَطَاءِ بْنِ يَسَارٍ أَنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ
 " اللَّهُمَّ لَا تَجْعَلْ قَبْرِي وَثَنًا يُعْبَدُ أَشْتَدَّ غَضَبُ اللَّهِ عَلَى قَوْمٍ
 اتَّخَذُوا قُبُورَ أَنْبِيَائِهِمْ مَسَاجِدَ " ⁸

‘Aṭā’ ibn Yasār رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ narrates that Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said, ‘O Allāh! Do not make my grave an idol that is worshipped. The anger of Allāh on those people who took the graves of their Prophets as places of prostration was terrible.’

⁸ Mūwaṭṭa Imām Mālik Book 9 Ḥadīth 419

Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ then told the people that he had been informed they were worried about the death of their Prophet. He asked them, has any Prophet before him stayed forever with his people? Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى says:

وَمَا جَعَلْنَا لِبَشَرٍ مِّن قَبْلِكَ الْخُلْدَ ⁹

“We did not assign immortality to any human (even) before you”

وَمَا مُحَمَّدٌ إِلَّا رَسُولٌ قَدْ خَلَتْ مِن قَبْلِهِ الرُّسُلُ ¹⁰

“Muḥammad (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) is but a Messenger, there have been Messengers before him”

Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ was going to meet Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى and everyone else is also going to meet him.

Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ then made a bequest to the Muslims that they treat the early migrants kindly. He then made a bequest to the early migrants that they remain steadfast on Taqwā’ (piety) and ‘Amal Ṣāliḥ (good deeds) because Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى has said:

⁹ Sūrah al-Anbiyā’ verse 34

¹⁰ Sūrah Āl-‘Imrān verse 144

وَالْعَصْرِ (١) إِنَّ الْإِنْسَانَ لَفِي خُسْرٍ (٢)

إِلَّا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ وَتَوَّصَوْا بِالْحَقِّ وَتَوَّصَوْا

بِالصَّبْرِ (٣) 11

“I swear by the Time, (1) Man is in a state of loss indeed, ¹
(2) Except those who believed and did righteous deeds, and
exhorted each other to follow truth, and exhorted each other to
observe patience.(3)

Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ told the Muslims to treat the Anṣār with kindness. They had given Islām a refuge and included others in their houses, lands, orchards, and fruits. Despite of hunger and hard times, they gave preference to others. Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى says with regards to the Anṣār:

وَيُؤْتُونَ عَلَىٰ أَنفُسِهِمْ وَلَوْ كَانَ بِهِمْ خَصَاصَةٌ 12

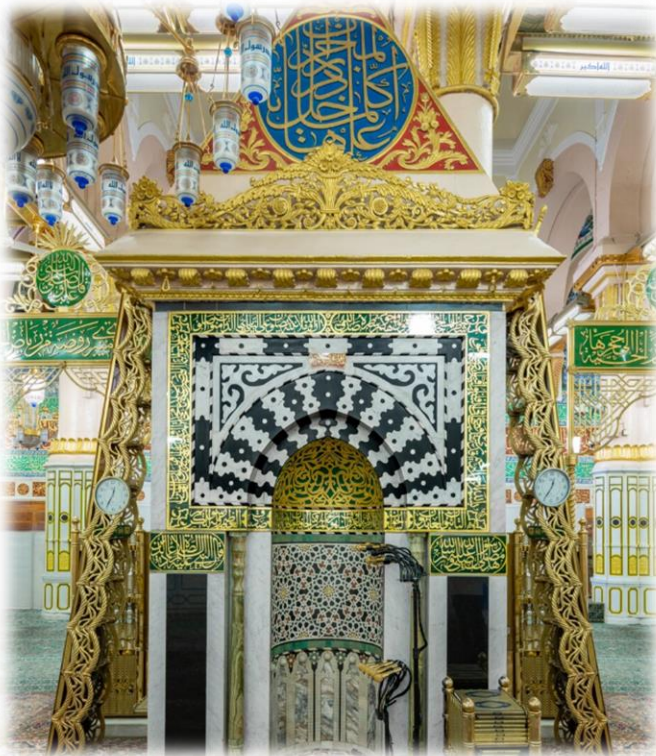
“And (they) give preference (to them) over themselves, even
though they are in poverty”

¹¹ Sūrah Al-ʿAṣr

¹² Sūrah Al-Ḥashr verse 9

The final advice of Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ in this sermon was that he was leaving this world before them. They would meet him again and there meeting place would be the fountain of al-Kauthar.

After this, he climbed down from the pulpit and went into his room.



The Final Ṣalāh of Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ in the Masjid

Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ continued to come to the Masjid and led Ṣalāh, whilst he had the strength to do so. The final Ṣalāh which he led, was Maghrib on the Thursday, 4 days before his demise.

عَنْ أُمِّ الْفَضْلِ بِنْتِ الْحَارِثِ قَالَتْ سَمِعْتُ النَّبِيَّ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ يَقْرَأُ فِي الْمَغْرِبِ
 {الْمُرْسَلَاتِ عُرْفًا} ثُمَّ مَا صَلَّى لَنَا بَعْدَهَا حَتَّى قَبِضَهُ اللهُ¹³

Umm al-Faḍl bint al-Hārith رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهَا narrates

‘I heard the Prophet صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ reciting

(Sūrah) al-Mursalāti ‘Urfan in the Maghrib prayer,

and after that prayer he did not lead us in any prayer until Allāh

تَوَلَّى سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى took his soul’

When the time for ‘Ishā Ṣalāh arrived, Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ asked whether the people had prayed. He was told that they were waiting for him. Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ then tried to get up a number of times, but due to the severity of his condition, he kept on losing consciousness.

¹³ Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī 4429

Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ eventually told the people to tell Abū Bakr رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ that Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ has ordered him to lead the Ṣalāh on his behalf.

‘Ā’ishah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهَا told Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ that her father had a very soft heart and would not be able to lead Ṣalāh because of how upset he would be. Due to his weeping, the congregation would be unable to listen to his recitation. She requested that ‘Umar رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ should be asked to lead the Ṣalāh.

Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ insisted that it should be no one apart from Abū Bakr رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ to lead the Ṣalāh, hence he began to lead.

On the Saturday or Sunday, the health of Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ improved. He went to the Masjid supported by ‘Alī and ‘Abbās رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُمَا. At that time Abū Bakr رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ was leading Zuhr Ṣalāh. Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ went and sat to the right of Abū Bakr رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ. Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ then led the rest of the Ṣalāh. So now Abū Bakr رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ was reading behind Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ and the rest of the congregation were following the Takbīr of Abū Bakr رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ. This was the final Ṣalāh Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ led and the final time he came to the Masjid.



The Army

On the Saturday, Usāmah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ and the other Companions رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ who were getting ready to set off on an expedition came to see Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ. They bade farewell and gathered in Juruf.

Due to the condition of Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ they did not proceed. On the Sunday, the health of Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ deteriorated. As soon as Usāmah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ found out, he went back to Madīnah to see Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ again.

Usāmah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ saw that Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ could not speak. He bowed down and kissed the blessed forehead of Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ. Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ raised both his arms up towards the heavens, then placed them on Usāmah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ. Usāmah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ realised that Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ was supplicating for him. After a while Usāmah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ returned to Juruf. That was their last meeting.



The Medicine

The Companions رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُمْ thought that Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ was suffering from Pleurisy. This condition causes severe chest pains and worsens when breathing. To treat Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ, they gave him some medicine.

عَنْ عُبَيْدِ اللَّهِ بْنِ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ قَالَ قَالَتْ عَائِشَةُ لَدَدْنَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ فِي مَرَضِهِ وَجَعَلَ يُشِيرُ إِلَيْنَا " لَا تَلْدُونِي ". قَالَ فَقُلْنَا كَرَاهِيَةَ الْمَرِيضِ بِالذَّوَاءِ فَلَمَّا أَفَاقَ قَالَ " أَلَمْ أَنْهَكُمُ أَنْ تَلْدُونِي ". قَالَ قُلْنَا كَرَاهِيَةَ لِلذَّوَاءِ. فَقَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ " لَا يَبْقَى مِنْكُمْ أَحَدٌ إِلَّا لَدَّ وَأَنَا أَنْظَرُ إِلَّا الْعَبَّاسَ فَإِنَّهُ لَمْ يَشْهَدْكُمْ " ¹⁴.

‘Ā’ishah رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهَا said ‘We poured medicine into the mouth of Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ during his illness, and he pointed out to us intending to say, ‘Don't pour medicine into my mouth.’ We thought that his refusal was out of the aversion a patient usually has for medicine. When he improved and felt a bit better, he said (to us.) ‘Didn't I forbid you to pour medicine into my mouth?’ We said, ‘We thought (you did so) because of the aversion, one

¹⁴ Ṣaḥīḥ Al-Bukhārī 6897

usually has for medicine.’ Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ said, ‘All of you will drink the medicine, and I will watch you, except ‘Abbās رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ, for he did not witness this act of yours.’

The Final Day

It was now Monday. Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ had been ill for close to two weeks. In the morning, Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ opened the curtain in his room and looked inside the Masjid. He saw that the Companions رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُمْ were stood in rows reading Fajr Ṣalāh. He looked at them and smiled.

Abū Bakr رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ thought that he would move back from where he was leading the Ṣalāh but Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ made a gesture to him, telling him to continue.

Due to extreme weakness, Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ could not stand up properly. He closed the curtain and went back inside.

This was the last time the Companions رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُمْ would see Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ.

Summary

Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ was now approaching the final part of his life in this world. He had been for Ḥajj and returned to Madīnah.

He had received various signs from Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى indicating that his time to leave this world was approaching. During the farewell Ḥajj, Allāh سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى had sent down Revelation stating that the religion of Islām was perfect. Sūrah an-Naṣr was also revealed which was a sign of the passing of Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ.

Jibrīl عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ came to visit Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ and took the form of a human being. He arrived whilst Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ was sat with his Companions رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُمْ. They did not know who this person dressed in white was. There were no signs of journey upon him, yet no one recognized.

Jibrīl عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ came and sat directly in front of Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ and asked various questions about Imān, Islām, Iḥsān and the signs of the Day of Judgment. Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ gave suitable replies to each of the questions.

After asking the questions Jibrīl عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ left. Later on, the Companions رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُمْ were informed by Rasūlullāh صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ that this person was none other than Jibrīl عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ who had come to teach them about their religion.

In the final days of the month of Şafar, Rasūlullāh ﷺ fell ill after visiting Baqī' one night. He had been to the resting place of many Companions رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ and prayed for them. Upon his return, he complained of a head ache and developed a fever. After this, Rasūlullāh ﷺ would only remain alive for 13 or 14 days.

During his fatal illness, he made every effort to read and lead Şalāh in the Masjid. He delivered his final sermon in the Masjid, advising both the Muhājirūn and Anşār to live and respect each other.

When the time arrived where Rasūlullāh ﷺ was unable to go to the Masjid to lead Şalāh, he appointed Abū Bakr رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ as the Imām, showing his position amongst the Companions رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ.

The final week of his illness had been spent in the house of his wife 'Ā'ishah رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهَا. The day Rasūlullāh ﷺ passed away was a Monday. That morning he looked into the Masjid and saw his beloved Companions رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ beloved performing Şalāh. This would be the last time they would see each other in this worldly realm.

In the final booklet we will learn about the last moment of Rasūlullāh ﷺ and how his successor was appointed.

Sīrah of Muḥammad ﷺ
Part 35 – The Final Illness

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