



## PROPHET MUHAMMAD (PBUH)

FUNDAMENTALS OF ISLAM

LEVEL 3

مُحَمَّدٌ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ (ص)

### LESSON 1: THE EARLY LIFE OF THE PROPHET

#### Objectives >>>

#### Students should:

- Recall that the Prophet's parents passed away when he was very young and he was brought up first by his grandfather then his uncle.
- Understand that even before being made Prophet, Muḥammad was trustworthy and truthful and these were his titles.
- Know briefly some of the customs of the Age of Ignorance
- Understand that the prophet got married to Khadijah and had a daughter named Fāṭimah
- Understand that Islam does not accept that a person be treated differently because of his skin colour, gender, family relations etc...
- Remember the description of the First revelation and the be aware of the incorrect narrations
- Understand that the Holy Prophet ascended the heavens (me'rāj) in many different occasions
- Understand that the Holy prophet was 'unlettered' and in fact this is a virtue for him
- Understand the difficulties the Prophet and some of his companions faced during the period of the spread of Islam including the loss of his first wife and uncle and the treaty that the Holy Prophet made with the pagans at that time
- Understand that the Prophet taught and practiced the highest levels of patience against calamities
- Appreciate the loftiness of patience from its benefits
- Know the reasons for the migration of the prophet to Medina and the way the Prophet left Makah
- Know the history of the battle of Ūḥud
- Understand that in-order to protect faith from being corrupted, it is compulsory on us to speak up when something wrong is happening (even if it means fighting for our rights) and assist in the doing of good
- Know the definition of 'amr bil ma'rūf' as enjoining what is good and 'Nahy 'anil Munkar' as forbidding the evil and also
- Understand briefly the benefits of enjoining good and forbidding evil and the harms of not doing them
- Understand the very basic rules of this especially not humiliating others in public.

As we learnt in the previous lesson, the Holy Prophet lost both his parents when he was at a very young age. His father 'Abdullāh passed away two months before his birth and Āminah, his mother, died when the Prophet was only five years old. About two years later, Abdul Muḥalib, the grandfather of the Prophet died and the Prophet was looked after and grew up in the house of his uncle, Abu Ṭālib. With such losses at such a young age, it can be said that Allah (SWT) was carefully preparing His Prophet for a future full of hardships.

#### WHAT WAS THE COMMUNITY LIKE BEFORE PROPHET MUḤAMMAD?

The Arabs at that time were mostly uncivilized in their behaviour. Here are some examples:

- They used to worship idols made of wood or stone. They would make the idols themselves and then worship them, which of course did not make any sense
- If they had daughters, they would often bury them alive. They were ashamed of having daughters
- They used to mistreat women and not give them any rights or respect.
- They drank excessive amounts and were often drunk.
- They used to engage in long and violent wars for no good reason
- They were very racist and used to look down upon certain races and take them as slaves

The Holy Prophet on the other hand was so well-mannered that even the hard-hearted and selfish people in Mecca were naturally attracted to him. His exemplary character shone like a bright flame in a dark cave. Whenever they used to travel, they would leave their valuables with the Prophet in trust, and on returning they would collect all their belongings without anything missing. They also realised that whenever the Prophet spoke, he spoke only the truth. For these reasons, they gave him the title of 'al-Amīn' which means 'The Trustworthy' and 'al-Ṣādiq', meaning 'The Truthful'. The Prophet made no distinction between rich and poor, male and female, black and white. He treated everyone equally and also preached the same.

### THE PROPHET'S MARRIAGE AND THE BIRTH OF HIS ONLY CHILD FĀṬĪMAH

When the Holy Prophet became a youth, Abu Ṭālib arranged a job for him with Khadijah's trade caravans. Khadijah, who was one of the wealthiest and most generous persons among the Quraysh, readily accepted the Prophet because she had heard of his sublime character. She sent a caravan with the Prophet to Syria and asked two slaves to accompany him and to report back to her about the Prophet. When they returned from Syria, Khadijah noticed that the profit generated from this caravan more than all previous trips made and also, the slaves testified to the spirituality and greatness of Muḥammad. The trip to Syria made Khadijah increasingly interested in the Prophet's skill and courage. Because of her piety, she wanted to marry only a pious man and she saw no one appropriate other than Muḥammad. Soon after, they married, and a few years later, Fāṭimah (as) was born from this marriage.

### THE PROPHET DID NOT TOLERATE DISCRIMINATION AND RACISM

One of the main parts of the Prophet's message was that everyone, whether male or female, black or white, rich or poor, Arab or foreign, were all equal and only the more pious would enjoy greater superiority over others in the eyes of Allah. The Prophet did not differentiate between these classes and this was most annoying to the arrogant people of the Quraysh. They were asked to sit and dine together with the poor, accept their proposals of marriage to their daughters and also to share positions of leadership with them.

These messages were not taken very well by that community because it meant that they would have to change their old habits and attitudes at the onset of accepting Islam. The oppressed loved these teachings but the oppressors detested them. The short incident below is an example of how particular the Prophet was in ensuring that equality prevailed.

Once the Prophet was in the presence of a man who had two children. The man kissed one of his children but did not kiss the other. The Prophet asked: 'Why do you not treat your children equally, you kissed one but not the other'. The man replied: 'But one of them is sleeping, O Messenger of Allah!'. The Prophet (saw) said: 'Even so, you should always do your best to treat them equally. The story demonstrated the care the Prophet took to treat people equally.

Another story that also highlights this point:

A rich person dressed in clean and elegant clothes arrived in the presence of the Prophet (saw) and sat down before him. A short while later, a poor person wearing old and tattered clothes, appeared, saluted the assembly, and sat down upon finding a vacant place.

The Prophet (saw) had taught them that all Muslims were brothers and in an assembly one should sit wherever one finds a place, regardless of any status. Now, it so happened that this poor man was seated next to a very rich man. The rich man felt very disturbed and tried to collect the edges of his dress around himself, so that the poor man didn't touch them.

Having observed this, the Prophet (saw) remarked to the rich man: "Did you fear that the poor person next to you might make your clothes dirty?"

"No," replied the rich person.

"Then why did you behave so?" asked the Prophet (saw).

"I admit that was the most undesirable thing to do. It was an error and I confess my guilt. I have a companion (soul) that makes good deeds appear evil to me and vice-versa. O' Prophet of Allah! As a punishment for this reprehensible act of mine, I gift half of my wealth to the poor man."

Turning to the poor man, the Prophet (saw) inquired, "Do you accept the offer?"

"No, O' Prophet of Allah," said the poor man.

People present were taken by surprise, they thought that the poor man was a fool, but then he explained: "O' Prophet of Allah, I refuse to accept this offer because I fear that I might then become arrogant and treat my Muslim brothers in a bad way as he just did to me."

Another problem in the Arab community was that they treated people of different races (for example Africans) badly. To show them this was a wrong thing, the Prophet (saw) gave the very important task of reciting the Adhān to Bilāl, an African slave. When people complained that Bilāl's accent was not pure, the Prophet (saw) said that Allah (SWT) considers the words of Bilāl to be in pure Arabic because of his faith.<sup>i</sup>

## Review Questions

**Q1. Before the Prophet brought the message of Islam, the Arabs used to worship;**

- One God
- The Idols
- The Sun

**Q2. Throughout his life, the Prophet was known as:**

- The Strong and Tough
- The Truthful and Trustworthy
- The Powerful and Wealthy

**Q3. When it comes to racism, Islam teaches us that:**

- Racism is always wrong
- Racism is sometimes okay
- Racism is okay because every country is different

## LESSON 2: LIFE IN MECCA

### THE FIRST REVELATION

"By the age of forty, the Prophet (saw) would often go to the Cave of *Hirā* to worship Allah and to think about life. On one special day, while the Prophet was in the cave, he received the first ever message from Angel Gabriel. The following *āyah* was read to the Prophet:

*"Recite in the name of your Lord who created (all things). He created man from a clot of blood! Recite, your Lord is the Most Bountiful One, Who by the pen taught man what he did not know"* (96: 1-5)

After receiving this first revelation, the Prophet (saw) felt a great responsibility on his shoulders. The first people he told about this were Imam 'Ali (as) and Khadijah, his wife. They were also the first to believe in the message of Islam.

### THE FIRST PUBLIC CALL TO ISLAM

After the Prophet received the message, he began spreading the message first to his family, near relatives and then to the masses. One day he took his place on a high rock and said aloud: "*Yā Ṣabāḥah!*"<sup>iii</sup> This was the traditional call to warn people of danger.

The Holy Prophet's call received attention. Some persons belonging to different families of Quraysh ran up to him. Then he turned to those assembled there, and said: "O

people! Will you believe me if I tell you that your enemies have taken positions on the other side of this hill and intend to attack your lives and property?" All of them said, "We have never heard anything false from you throughout our lives". Then he said: "O people of Quraysh! Save yourselves from the fire. I cannot do anything for you in the presence of Allah. I warn you of a painful torture!" Then he added: "My position is like that of a watchman, who observes an enemy at a far-off point and immediately runs to his people for their safety and warns them of the impending danger".<sup>iv</sup>



## Class Activity

Students should be split into two groups. Each group should spend some time planning and then acting out the above scene. The teacher should allocate extra roles as well (e.g. for Imam 'Ali, Ja'far etc...)

### THE PEOPLE'S RESPONSE

When the powerful men of Quraysh heard this message, they immediately began to fear for their positions and wealth. They began to plot and plan to stop the Prophet from spreading his message. They tried all kinds of things to stop the Prophet and the Muslims:

- They would torture them in all sorts of ways
- They stopped non-Muslims from dealing with the Muslims and even kicked the Muslims out of Mecca at one stage
- They tried to bribe the Muslims, including the Prophet, with promises of power and wealth

None of these tactics worked and the influence of Islam and the Prophet (saw) continued to spread.

## PATIENCE

Considerable emphasis has been given to patience both in the Qurān and *aḥādīth* and it has been described as the main ingredient of success. We often find ourselves in situations where, if we don't react in a patient way, our actions can have disastrous consequences.

### BENEFITS OF PATIENCE

In many situations in life, patience is our best friend.

Think of when your parents are arguing and the house is full of tension and you feel terrible. In this situation, you have two options. You can also get angry and become rude or disrespectful towards your parents and blame them. Or you can be patient and try to tolerate what is happening and make it better by treating everyone nicely and trying to make peace.

Or think of when school work is hard and you really don't feel like doing homework. You can give up in this situation, or you can think of the benefits of studying and doing your homework and be patient and finish it.

Patience is important in other situations too: to avoid fights at school, to make and keep friends and to be successful in life in general.

Another area where we can practice patience is when we feel small within ourselves because other people seem richer, smarter, thinner or taller than us. Assuming that you were a very short person and every person makes fun of you. Will complaining about your height to yourself or to your parents make you any taller? In fact this way you will feel even worse.

The best way to approach this situation is to thank Allah (SWT) for whatever He has given you and be grateful for the bounty because anything from Him is beautiful. Practice patience in difficult circumstances and believe that there are others in worse situations. If you think and act so, Allah will open up innumerable ways for success both in this world and the hereafter. Consider the narration below:

*“Patience is that a man bears whatever afflicts him and swallows his anger”<sup>v</sup>*

Islam has become the fastest growing religion in the world today simply because in the face of all adversaries and hardship, the Holy Prophet remained patient.

### HOW CAN ONE DEVELOP PATIENCE?

The best way to develop patience is to remember:

- That God sees everything that is happening to us and has a plan for us
- That God will not leave us alone and will always come to our rescue
- That God has promised that He is with those who are patient
- If we are not patient, we will only cause more problems for ourselves and make our troubles worse

## Review Questions

**Q1. When the Prophet (saw) invited people publicly to Islam for the first time:**

- a. Most of them believed in him
- b. Most of them rejected his call
- c. Most of them were undecided

**Q2. One of the ways of gaining patience is to:**

- a. Know that Allah (SWT) has a plan for us and He only wants the best for us
- b. If we are not patient, we will only cause more problems for ourselves
- c. Both of the above

## LESSON 3: THE MIGRATION

In this lesson, we will discuss the Prophet's migration to the city of Medina.

### HIJRAH (MIGRATION)

The enemies of Islam realised that the only way they could stop the message of the Prophet from spreading further was to kill him. Therefore, they decided to attack him in the night when the Prophet would be asleep. The Holy Prophet was informed of this plot by Allah (SWT). He and Imam 'Ali (as) made a plan to save the Prophet (saw). The Prophet escaped from his house at night without being seen, while Imam 'Ali (as) slept in the Prophet's bed. This made the disbelievers think the Prophet was in his bed, while he was in fact making his way to Medina. When they charged into his room in the morning, they found Imam 'Ali (as) and realised they had failed.

When the Prophet reached Medina, he received a very warm welcome and everyone was delighted to see him. One of the first things that the Prophet did was to develop a bond between the Muhājirīn and the Anṣār (the supporters). The Muhājirīn (immigrants) were the Muslim emigrants from Mecca who had followed the Prophet to Medina to safeguard their faith and to escape persecution from the infidels. They had become Muslims early on in the mission of the Prophet and had faced all the hardships we talked about in our last lessons.



The Anṣār were the people of Medina, who welcomed the Prophet and his companions and made so many sacrifices for the success of Islam. Medina was to become the new home of the Prophet.



At the time of the Hijrah most of the Muhājirīn were poor and possessed nothing. However, when they arrived in Medina, the Anṣār shared everything they had with the Muhājirīn. They shared their property and wealth with them, and even helped them to get married.

Allah, the Exalted describes these two groups in the Qur'ān as follows:

*"And as for the first and foremost of the Muhājirīn (emigrants) and the Anṣār (helpers), and those who followed suit in good deeds; Allah is pleased with them and they are pleased with Him; and He has prepared for them gardens watered by running streams, therein dwelling forever; that is a supreme triumph." (Holy Qur'an 9:100)*

### A MUSLIM NATION AND THE SPREAD OF ISLAM

Once the Prophet (saw) moved to Medina, he began to establish a Muslim community. The social rules of Islam were slowly introduced to people and gradually things like alcohol, gambling and immodesty were removed from society. People began to live an Islamic lifestyle, including daily prayers, fasting, paying charity and so on. At the head of this Muslim nation was its leader and guide, Prophet Muhammad (saw).

At first, the Muslims of Medina faced attacks from the disbelievers of Mecca. After years of fighting, the Muslims were successful in defending Medina from all the attacks. After this, a peace treaty was signed with the Meccans and the Prophet used the time of peace to spread Islam to the rest of Arabia. Tribe after tribe began to convert to Islam, and soon Islam had spread throughout Arabia.

## 'AMR BIL MA'RŪF' AND 'NAHY 'ANIL MUNKAR'

Encouraging others to good and forbidding others from doing evil are obligatory acts in Islam. Whenever we see something bad happening, it is our obligation to speak out against it. This might be something as simple as encouraging someone not to waste water, or as great as protesting against one country oppressing another. This helps to keep people from doing evil things. If we were all quiet when we saw evil happening, then it would spread and there would be no way of stopping it.

Imagine you are at school and there is one smaller boy who is constantly bullied for wearing glasses, being a 'nerd' or being 'uncool'. You know inside yourself that he is hurt by this bullying and that it is wrong. You know that if everyone stood up to the bullies then they would stop and leave this boy alone. Unfortunately, most people would join in the bullying and laugh. In this situation, you have to make a very important decision. You have a very important opportunity to enjoin good and forbid evil.

### **Class Activity: Role Play**

Split the class into three groups and act out the above situation. Encourage the students to use their creativity to come up with ways of handling such a situation.

### **THE CORRECT WAY OF ENJOINING GOOD**

We should also remember that when we do correct someone or teach them something, we should do it in a polite way that won't hurt them. Let us listen to the following story:

When they were young, Imam Ḥasan and Imam Ḥusain (as) saw an old man performing *Wuḍū'* incorrectly. Caring for the feelings of the old man, and instead of correcting him directly, the Imams asked the man to judge who between them as to who was performing the more correct *Wuḍū'*. After the Imams finished their *Wuḍū'*, they asked for the judgement. The old man felt embarrassed and admitted that he was the one who was doing his *Wuḍū'* incorrectly and that theirs was perfect!

The Prophet (saw) dedicated his life to enjoining good and forbidding evil. He fought against many evils like oppression, discrimination, slavery, poverty, cheating and he enjoined many good deeds like charity, justice and good manners. This is one of the most important obligations in our life.

Imam Muḥammad al-Bāqir (as) says:

*"Verily the enjoyment of good and the prohibition of evil is the path of the Prophets, the way of the righteous, a great obligation on which all other obligations are founded and on which ideologies are secured, by which earnings are made lawful, by which inequities are redressed, through which the earth flourishes, justice is sought from enemies and all affairs are kept upright"<sup>vi</sup>*

### **Review Questions:**

#### **Q1. The Prophet (saw):**

- Migrated from Mecca to Medina
- Migrated from Medina to Mecca
- Never migrated

#### **Q2. The people of Medina who helped the Prophet (saw) were called the:**

- Tawwabin
- Anṣār
- Muhajirīn

#### **Q3. When enjoining good:**

- It is okay to humiliate someone
- We should never humiliate a person
- Neither of the above

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- <sup>i</sup> The Message by Ayatollah Ja'far Subhani
  - Prophet Muhammad (saw) – A concise biography by Mahmood Hussein Dato
  - eHawza – Semester 3, course 1 – Muhammad, a mercy to the worlds – Lesson 10
  - <http://www.ezsoftech.com/stories/hazrat.mohammed.asp>

<sup>ii</sup> References

The Message by Ayatollah Ja'far Subhani  
Prophet Muhammad (saw) – A concise biography by Mahmood Hussein Dato  
<http://www.ezsoftech.com/stories/hazrat.mohammed.asp>

<sup>iii</sup> Instead of ringing a bell of danger the Arabs used these words and generally began alarming reports with them.

<sup>iv</sup> The Message – page 205.

<sup>v</sup> (Mizanul Hikmah, no. 3449)

<sup>vi</sup> (Mizanul Hikmah, no. 4734)