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Muhammad and His God Before the Revelation (Be’that)

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This text, written by Dr. Hatem Abu Shahba and translated into English by Jerrmein Abu Shahba, sheds the spotlight on the immaculate character of the Holy Messenger (SA) and his inclination towards divine proximity before the Revelation (Be'that). The reader further realizes and appreciates the special secret relationship which Muhammad (SA) enjoyed with His beloved God long before his official inauguration as Seal of Prophets to deliver the universal message of Islam to all of mankind.

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Category:

Prophethood & Imamate [5]
Early Islamic History [6]
Prophet Muhammad [7]

Topic Tags:

Preislamic arabia [8]
Belief in tawhid [9]

Translator’s Introduction

In the Name of Allah, the Merciful the Compassionate

It is unanimously agreed by all Muslim scholars, researchers, and historians that the noble character of Prophet Muhammad who is the Seal of Messengers, has no like or similarity as he possesses many positive exceptional human attributes compared to all of mankind. His lofty

position as the chosen one by God (Al-Mustafa) and the most beloved to Him (Habeebullah) did not arise from nothing. His status as the best of creation in Allah's eyes speaks volumes and no words can ever do justice to explain the superior position which he enjoys.

Many authors have written books and articles in praise of the Holy Prophet due to his multitude of good attributes such as noble manners, demeanor, wisdom, clemency, and wisdom that manifested itself more clearly after the Revelation. However, not many scholars or historians shed the spotlight on the time period BEFORE the official Revelation came to Prophet Muhammad (SA) on the night of the 27th of Rajab when he was 40 years old.

In light of the nature of the Arab community which existed during his time, we ask ourselves: How did a person like Muhammad with his light of guidance, exceptional wisdom, and dignified manners, rise from such a backward and petrified society? How did a person like Muhammad with his burning desire to seek His God, exist within a society that was born and built on idol-worshipping?

How did a person like Muhammad abandon the pleasures of this world to regularly climb the mountain to Cave Hiraa' in the darkness of night where the scorpions and beasts inhabit, only to isolate himself in pursuit of a secret relationship with his beloved Lord, at a time when the Arabs were busy playing games, trading, fighting with each other and engaging in nonsense activities?

In consideration of all the challenges that existed in the community during his time, we can better recognize the true value of the Holy Prophet who was selected by Allah (SWT) from among all humans, just like a golden needle is picked from a large haystack! This article highlights the fact that Prophet Muhammad (SA) was divinely selected for a well-deserved reason and not randomly!

In fact, it is very important for us as Muslims to understand that the Holy Prophet was chosen by God to become the Seal of Prophets due to his exceptional performance and longing to God long *before* the Revelation took place! In his 40 years of life before the revelation, Muhammad proved that he was a complete embodiment of a perfect human model which Allah (SWT) approved as the template for Islam.

History records that his people used to call him as the *Sadeq Al Ameen* (the honest and trustworthy one) in honor of his amazing noble manners. And when the tribes of Quraish wanted to resolve the conflict of who would have the honor of placing the Black Stone on the Holy Ka'ba, they chose none other than Muhammad (SA) to judge between them with his wisdom and knowledge. Sure enough, at a time when he still did not assume his role of Prophethood, the solution which the Messenger (SA) suggested appeased everyone and prevented bloodshed from taking place.

Muhammad's way of life before Islam was in reality nothing but absolute submission and surrender to his God! His mind was always thinking and reflecting about his Lord and he found solace and tranquility in none other than his beloved Allah (SWT)! His infallibility was well-established before his prophethood and was further confirmed when he assumed his role as Seal of Messengers. May Allah (SWT) send His eternal peace and blessings on Prophet Muhammad and His purified Household!

Light versus Darkness

Muhammad was a simple and kindhearted man who was so gentle, well-mannered, truthful, and trustworthy. His self and heart were like a white page that is free of evil, sins, animosities, arrogance, selfishness, hatred, and the rest of the self and heart sicknesses which contaminate the hearts of most people and give it different shades of black colors that hurt those affected and all others in the society and humanity.

Such a kind and soft heart and such a gentle and humble purified self is always attracted to its creator and tries to get to know Him. It tries to come closer to Him and be devoted to Him. This phenomenon is usually observed in our human life all throughout the years. A more kind and pure heart and a more "white" and truthful self will typically be more attracted and inclined towards his creator. So the proportion here is direct.

Man is created from two parts that are mixed and intermingled with each other, but they are *totally* different from each other and never dissolve with each other. They are like a mixture of oil and water or a mixture of sand and cement. The first part which man is created from is a "light, spiritual and divine" part that is represented by God's blow of life (*nafkhatullah*) as He (SWT) said in the holy verse,

"So when I have made him complete and breathed into him of My spirit, fall down making obeisance to him **[15:29]."**

So the blow of life (*nafkha*) here is that light, spiritual, and divine part in man, without which he is not a human being. Rather, he is only a body made of clay and dust that is just like the other lifeless bodies. This part of man is what elevates him to higher horizons and raises him over the rest of the earthly lifeless creatures. It is the reason why man has compassion, love, affection, sincerity, truthfulness, purity, kindness, humbleness, wisdom, contemplation, feelings, morals, and good manners.

Since that part of man is the blow of life (*nafkha*), spirit, and light from Allah (SWT), it is the reason behind every good thing in man, and it is behind every virtue and nobility in him. It is the energy, strength and capability that motivate him, without which man is without energy, capability, might or strength and so, he would be dead.

That part of man supplies him life, viability, or let us say, this part *is* the life itself since it is derived from Allah (SWT) who is the Permanent and Alive one, the origin of life and its Creator and Provider and He (SWT) is the Eternal Living one. The more this component grows and flourishes in man, the more purified his self becomes and his heart softens, and his conscious becomes clear, and there is increase in his affection, kindness, emotions, and wisdom, and the more well-behaved he his.

In summary, we can say that his humanity is raised above all other creatures. Being that this component of man is divine and luminary, it is a tie that connects him with his God and creator. So, if this spiritual component in man grew, it is logical that this person will naturally be attracted to his creator under the effect of this tie. So, man's tendency to exhibit a kind heart, good manners, clear conscious whose luminary and divine part has grown and developed towards his Lord and creator and the source of his light, is then natural, logical, expected, and understood!

As for the second component from which man has been created, it is made from the earthly, materialistic, and dusty clay. It is the part which Allah (SWT) refers to in the Qur'an,

"So when I have made him complete **[15:29].***"*

And also the verse saying,

"Surely I am going to create a man from clay* [38:71].*"

This part was created first before the blow of life as the holy verse depicts,

"There surely came over man a period of time when he was a thing not worth mentioning* [76:1].*"

One of the interpretations of this verse is that it refers to that period of time which came after the creation of man from dust and clay, and before the blow of life from Allah (SWT). During that period of time, man, represented in Prophet Adam (AS) was just a dead and lifeless body and was nothing compared to the world of the living. This earthly and dusty materialistic component in man is the tie which connects man all the time with earth and everything on it.

So, it always pulls him down to earth and the life of this world and its elements and everything created from it. This component of man is the one responsible and the reason behind his lower desires, (eating, drinking, shelter, clothing, mating, entertainment, etc) and the love of money since money is the tool by which you fulfill all these lower desires. Hence, this earthly part in man is also indirectly responsible for the conflict, struggles, and fights resulting from the love of man to wealth and his lower desires.

This conflict and struggle is the basis and source of all evil, sins, defects, and bad deeds which taint humanity. Mankind needs these evil sins and misbehavior to improve its ability to fight. These evils and negative aspects of man are like the canines, claws, and muscles of beasts. Without them, man cannot struggle, fight, or win this earthly competition.

This earthly component in man is also the cause of his connection with earth and his love for gaining more of its bounties and fruits. It is the reason behind his interest in discovering, inventing, flourishing, and escalating in it. This part is also the reason behind man paying attention to himself and his love and admiration to himself.

This state of mind naturally leads to the acquisition of attributes like arrogance, selfishness, self interest, vanity, pride, and that in itself is a reason behind the struggles and conflicts. This part is also behind the concern of man with his appearance, beauty, health, longevity, and entertainment in every way and all means.

This materialistic component in man is the one which remains after his death. It returns back to Earth to dissolve in it, for it is the source of that component. So this part of man is the tie between himself and Earth and its elements. Therefore, the more this component grows in a human being and flourishes, the more his love for lowers desires increases in all its forms! Likewise, the more his love for wealth increases as well as his struggle for money and power.

Consequently, his claws and canines represented by evil and sins will increase. And his selfishness, arrogance, and pride will also increase. His concern about his health and longevity will increase. This of course will cause him to be pulled more and more towards the earth.

In summary, this earthly and dusty component in man is the dark side within him and it is the entrance for the devil. The more the darkened part of man becomes strong and well-developed, the more his divine, spiritual and lightened part will diminish and decrease, and the more he will be distant from his Lord, God, and creator.

Thus, he comes out from light of guidance and goes to the darkness of ignorance. The tendency of such person to fulfill his lower desires, selfishness, and consequently, his evils and illnesses of his

heart, and corruption of his self, and consequently, his distance from knowing his Creator, is logical, expected, and understood.

And the opposite is also true. The creation of man from these two contradicting parts is the reason behind the conflict inside him and is the reason behind his worry and misery as depicted in the Qur'anic verse,

"*Certainly We have created man to be in distress* [90:4]."

Every person is created by Allah (SWT) with both parts in equal amounts out of His Justice and Grace. Hence, no person has a blow of life more than another and no person is created with more clay than another. Everyone is equal and that phenomenon is clearly observed in the innocent child who has the same amount of the two parts; the earthly dark component *and* the divine, enlightened component, regardless of the appearance, color, gender, or type of parents of this child. All of the children in this world are similar in this aspect and that is clearly observed in front of our eyes without a doubt.

Here, the following important question is posed: Why and how can the earthly and dark component of man grow and dominate him? And why and how can the enlightened, spiritual divine component in man can grow and dominate him? What are the factors which control that?

Animals too are created from two components. One part is earthly, materialistic, and made from clay, and the other part is spiritual, without which the animal would be dead. So what is the difference between humans and animals?

The difference is in one thing only but it is substantial. The difference is that Allah (SWT) the Creator, Glory be to Him, gifted man with a mind and made that mind serve as a judge which can rule and give a verdict between the two components. Allah (SWT) then gave this intellect the executive power represented in the free human will.

So the mind thinks, judges, rules, chooses, and carries out. This mind is in essence a complete government with its three branches; the legislative, judicial, and executive. This ability to use the mind has not been given to animals; rather, Allah (SWT) created animals a simple brain which can perform simple life functions to enable them to survive. But this brain can not judge, rule, or choose between the two components. Since man was gifted with the intellect, he became responsible in front of Allah (SWT), and has the freedom of choice, and will therefore be held accountable.

The mind is the one who chooses for the human being and it determines which side he will take. Will he lean towards the luminary, spiritual and divine side of the self, or to the earthly, dusty, and dark side within him? Man also owns the will to carry out and execute that decision afterwards.

So if a human being chooses with his mind and thinking to follow the earthly dark side in him, that part of him will grow, increase, and will dominate him. It will misguide that person to darkness away from his Creator and Lord. The opposite will take place if the mind chose to follow the luminary divine side of him. This side will also grow and dominate him such that his heart becomes purified, his behavior improves, and his spirit elevates. By that, man will come out of the earthly darkness and live in peace with himself and his surroundings. He will immediately, naturally, and logically become closer towards his Lord, as the butterfly is attracted towards the source of light. So, the human being is the one who makes the choice because he has a mind, and therefore, he is responsible of his choices.

However, there are two other factors which control the life of man and it cannot be ignored. The first factor is that Allah (SWT) by His compassion helps man and his mind to make the right choice and make the matter very clear to him. Allah (SWT) sent to him the prophets, messengers and divine guides to explain, instruct, enlighten his way, teach him, and educate him.

The second factor is invisible and it is guaranteed by Allah (SWT). It is a very important factor and that is the guidance and misguidance inspired by Allah (SWT). So whoever chooses with his mind and free will to follow his dusty earthly dark side once, twice, and thrice, then Allah (SWT) will misguide him more and more, and will facilitate that path for him and beautify it for him, since he chose it by his own free will in the first place.

This will keep on happening except if this man wakes up and recognizes his mistake and poor choice he made, and if decided by his own will to refrain from treading that path and instead, repent and return to the source of light within himself.

As for he who chooses by his own mind and free will the luminary part of himself and chooses to develop and grow the divine, spiritual part within himself, then Allah (SWT) will bless that in him and guide him more and more, and facilitate this path for him and make him pleased with his choices.

Allah (SWT) will double his steps for him unless the human chooses by his own will to turn back on his heels and return to his earthly and darkened side. In such case, Allah (SWT) will abandon him and if he goes deeper in that way, Allah (SWT) will misguide him more and more, and so on and so forth. This idea is stated very clearly in Surat Maryam,

"*Say: As for him who remains in error, the Beneficent Allah will surely prolong his length of days* [19:75]."

Furthermore, the events of man's life is also controlled by Allah (SWT). So if man chooses his earthliness, darkness, and materialism, Allah (SWT) will make the events of his life and the personalities he meets pull him more towards his choice and allow him to dive deeper in misguidance and darkness. But if he chooses his enlightened, spiritualism, divine side by his own free will, Allah (SWT) will make the procession of his life, its events and personalities take him more towards the way of his God and lead him out of darkness towards the light of guidance

Except if Allah (SWT) wants to test and examine his faith through certain events and characters or bounties to test his persistence in choosing the path of his Lord and assess his determination to go through that way. If he passes the test, Allah (SWT) will reward him by elevating him to higher levels and will bless his steps in that way even more.

As a result, the luminary and divine part in him will grow and manifest itself. So, darkness leads to more darkness, and light leads to more enlightenment. As the verse in Surat Hud indicates,

"*And whoever seeks the life of this world and its glitter, Allah (SWT) will increase in his wealth and sustenance and he will not have a share in the Hereafter, and Allah (SWT) will increase him in his deeds such that he sees it as good* [11:15]."

Allah (SWT) has said in Surat Al Kahf,

"*Then whosoever will, let him believe, and whosoever will, let him disbelieve* [18:29]."

He (SWT) also says in Surat Al A'raaf,

***"Whomsoever Allah guides, he is the one who follows the right way; whomsoever He causes to err, these are indeed the losers* [7:178]."**

So the choice comes first from man and his intellect. Guidance or misguidance from Allah (SWT) then follows that choice and is based on it. Hence, it will affect the procession of man's life after that. Here, some people may ask: Why did Allah (SWT) create man from these two components: the spiritual, divine, luminary part *and* the earthly dusty, darkened side, and make the mind act as the judge between them so long as He (SWT) desires man to become spiritual, pure, and enlightened? Why didn't He (SWT) create him from one part only?

After all, the wisdom and will of Allah (SWT) is above everything and before everything. As Allah (SWT) says in Surat Al Anbiya',

"*He cannot be questioned concerning what He does but they will be questioned* [21:23]."

It is impossible to encompass the wisdom of Allah (SWT). However, there is no harm in using our minds and sound judgment. When Allah (SWT) created man, He (SWT) did want to create an angel. The angel is a creature created from soley the divine, spiritual, and enlightened part.

If Allah (SWT) created man in that fashion, then man would be an angel. But by His absolute ability, He (SWT) willed to combine both parts together in one integrated mixture...the live spirit and the dead body together. Light and darkness together, good and evil together in the same pot! The elevated lordship and the low earthliness together...in one place and in one creature with the mind present along with them acting as the judge. Just like joining two wrestlers or boxers together inside one ring and along with them a referee to rule and make decisions and determine the winner. But what is the wisdom behind that?

We say and Allah (SWT) is most knowledgeable, that gathering opposites together in the same place definitely shows the contrast and the distinction between them. So if you want something to be known and identified, then bring its opposite along with it so that the distinction takes place.

For example, light can not be identified and distinguished except if darkness exists. The living can not be known and identified except if the dead exists. A positive charge can not be known and identified except if negative energy is present. North cannot be identified except if we know where the south is. The salty can not be recognized without knowing what the sweet tastes like. Good can not be shown and identified except if evil has been known and identified.

This is what we call "contrast" or "resolution". Through the process contrast and resolution, it is possible to identify things and draw a picture. Without that, the picture is vague and unclear and cannot be recognized at all. That's why we see that in the life around us, everything Allah (SWT) provided its opposite so that one is distinguished over the other. That is from the necessities of life and the requirement of learning...white and black, tall and short, big and small, fat and thin, beautiful and ugly, good and bad, and so on and so forth.

So if Allah (SWT) desires the light to be known and identified and if He (SWT) wants the right and the good to be established, and if He (SWT) wishes that life and spirit to be recognized, then He (SWT) must then gather them with their opposites in the same place and in the same creature! Thus, the creation of man was for the purpose of achieving this goal and wisdom.

So, who will be the one to recognize, identify, and judge? It is the intellectual mind! Thus, Allah (SWT) bestowed it to man so that he may recognize with it, identify, rule, and achieve the great goal and wisdom of the creation. That is, the recognition and identification of the light, the good,

the correct, life, spirit and the absolute might of Allah (SWT) through all that, since He (SWT) has created and originated everything from nothing.

This will then lead to the recognition (ma'refat) of Allah (SWT) and expression of His praise with complete surrender while confessing His power, perfection, beauty, kingship, and hence, submitting to Him through worshipping and prostration. All that leads man to love and obey his Creator. Through knowledge, admittance, surrender, submission, love and obedience, the utmost goal and wisdom behind man's creation can then be accomplished**!**

Gathering opposites together in the same creature and in the same place is a very difficult task and may almost seem impossible in our world as it requires great power. Combining opposites in man with the presence of a judge between them is in itself a proof and indication to the capability of Allah (SWT) and a manifestation to His Greatness and Power!

Allah (SWT) desires for the light to overcome darkness and change it to light. He (SWT) wishes for the good and virtue to defeat the evil and bad and change them to good and virtue too. He (SWT) wants the soul to transform the dusty and dead clay into life, viability, and livelihood. He (SWT) desires for elevation and highness to pull up the dust and lowliness and raise it along with it.

He (SWT) desires for spiritualism and lordship to overcome and defeat materialism, animalism, and lower desires and change them to a more clean and purified form. Allah (SWT) wants man with his two parts, but *after* his darkness changed into light, and his inferiority changed into highness and superiority, and after transforming his lifeless dusty clay into a purified and elevated life. He (SWT) wants man with his two parts, but *after* purifying his lower desires, and turning his evil into good.

Secret of Muhammad (SA)

We now return to Muhammad (SA), the man with the noble manners, kind heart, simple, humble, soft, and gentle man who lives in peace with himself and with others. With these noble manners and attributes, Muhammad (SA) have grown and developed his luminary and divine component within himself. He chose the side of his luminary self by his own free will, and so this divine part dominated him.

Hence, it purified and cleansed more of his attributes and Allah (SWT) have blessed him as we demonstrated earlier. So it was natural and logical that Muhammad would be attracted to his Creator and the source of his light and enlightenment. It is natural that he tries to know more about His Creator and get closer to Him, and to occupy his thoughts and mind in this matter and for it to be the focus and axis of his life and his main concern!

So, we find Muhammad immediately abandoning the worship of idols and does not do what his people and ancestors used to do. He never prostrated to an idol or sacrificed for it. Rather, his enlightened heart and self that is attached to its true Lord and Creator yearned for the religion of his great-grandfather, Abraham (SA), which is the upright and true faith.

This religion was distorted and disfigured by idol and statue worshiping to the point that the sacred House of Allah (SWT) which Abraham and Ishmael (AS) built by the command of Allah (SWT) so that people can perform pilgrimage and worship in it became surrounded by idols! This house

in Mecca is the origin and source of the upbringing of this nation. It is a manifestation of its gathering and the focus of its veneration and sanctity. This house has been filled with idols and became a place to worship these idols instead of Allah (SWT).

The enlightened and purified heart of Muhammad (SA) guided him to the fact that his true Lord is really the Lord of his grandfathers Abraham and Ishmael (AS) and that He (SWT) is the true Lord of this House, the Lord of Moses and Jesus (AS), the Lord of the Jews and Christians, and the Lord of all the prophets and messengers who called for oneness and worship of God, by His command.

However, Muhammad (AS) sees the religion of Abraham (AS) abandoned and forgotten, while the religion of Moses and Jesus (AS) has been distorted and changed, and the worship of idols have prevailed once again! He (SWT) observes that ignorance, misguidance, fabricated stories, fantasies, and darkness have become widespread.

There is no guider to guide the people, no instructor to seek the true knowledge from, and no source of light in the midst of this darkness and misguidance. The true believers were waiting and anticipating the appearance of a prophet whom Allah (SWT) will send to lead the people from darkness of ignorance to the light of guidance, and to lead them to the true path of God.

Muhammad (SWT) was one of those devout believers who loves his Lord and seeks His worship and pleasure. But Muhammad is different from most or all of them as he follows the way of his grandfather Abraham (AS) who stated before,

"*I will go to my Lord! He will surely guide me* [37:99]!"

And Abraham (AS) also said:

"*Unless my Lord guides me, I shall surely be among those who go astray* [6:77]."

Muhammad (SA) resorts to Allah (SWT) directly just like Abraham (AS) who was the first to accept Islam and the first to surrender to Allah (SWT) directly seeking His guidance. So, Allah (SWT) made Abraham a prophet and friend and honored and elevated him, and gave prophecy to his progeny and gave him the best and most noble attributes.

Similarly, Muhammad did the same. He resorted to his Lord directly asking for guidance and light and he headed towards it by his own free will, submitting his affairs to Him and seeking His help to take him out darkness and bring Him closer to Him and get to know Him better. He did all that with a surrendering, intact, and humble heart and an anxious soul to meet his Lord!

That is why Muhammad (SA) used to go out to the mountain alone from time to time to be away from the people and stay inside a cave to worship his God alone sincerely and seek his guidance and light. He used to leave his beloved wife and household, his friends and his loved ones, and leave his home and place of comfort…to go out in the darkness of night in the midst of the desert and rocks and mountains…exposing himself to great dangers, beasts, scorpions, snakes, and thieves…to climb the mountain and enter a small dark cave!

All that was for the sake of his Lord and out of love for Him. This amazing scene repeats itself time and time again while Muhammad has all the perseverance to do so for years without being bored or desperate, and with all certainty that Allah (SWT) will guide and respond to him, just like he responded to his father Abraham (AS). Allah (SWT) witnesses all that from him day after day and He (SWT) knows the clarity and sincerity of his heart and his intentions.

You can imagine the amount of love, sincerity, and attraction to the one creator which drove

Muhammad, who lived in the midst of idol worshippers, and in the midst of a materialistic, petrified, and luxurious society. After all, there is no place for God or His worship.

Everyone is busy and occupied by his trade, business trips, journeys, livestock, pleasure, entertainment, social gatherings, battles, poems, and idols, and that is all the lifestyle of the community, and nothing else. So why in the midst of all that atmosphere do we find Muhammad attracted to the worship of his Lord and Creator in such a way such that he leaves his family, friends, business, and daily comfort to go out in the desert and dangerous mountains alone, seeking the worship of his true Lord, and desiring to learn more about Him and get closer to Him, and seeking His help and guidance?

No one on the face of earth during that time or even before or after did such an act in such a community and in such circumstances. Why didn't the historians, writers, and Orientals, whether Muslim or non-Muslims, pay close attention to this unique phenomena?

Why didn't they give it the required attention and focus the spotlights on it and research and study this matter carefully**?** Everyone passes by this truth quickly without paying much attention, whether intentionally or unintentionally, or out of ignorance.

As a result, this unique phenomenon stayed hidden and ignored in the darkness of history. You can barely see or know its value although it is an important and logical introduction to faith and belief in the prophecy of Muhammad and the divine selection for him to become the Seal of Prophets and Messengers.

After all, if this phenomenon had been studied and presented well, it would've had a great effect in convincing the non-Muslims everywhere that Muhammad was indeed a prophet sent by God, because the prophecy of Muhammad and the divine selection to him did not rise from nothing!

The heart of Muhammad had been totally occupied with the love and worship of Allah (SWT) almost all his life even before his prophecy. He used to sit down to glorify Him with His Praise, contemplate, remember, pray and worship while his heart is very attached to that Great Creator whom the people became misguided from His worship.

The heart and mind of Muhammad was totally occupied and attached to his Lord to the point that we don't find him entertaining and enjoying like the other youth used to do. We don't find him having any personal ambitions in life. He did not seek to become wealthy or have fame or power or leadership or authority, despite the fact that he had all the capabilities and talent which would enable him to achieve and acquire all that.

Unlike his people and generation at that time, we do not find him having concerns with wealth or women or poetry or travel, or social gatherings, or meetings, or hunting, or any of these things which occupied the minds of his people during that time. Why?

Muhammad was not a merchant but he did trade. Nor was Muhammad a Shepard, but he herd the sheep. Muhammad did not take on a profession or occupation to give it all his time and concern even though he had lots of talent. Why?

The answers to these questions lay in one thing only. It is the heart and mind of Muhammad which was totally occupied by his relationship in getting to know his God and Creator!! This matter dominated his whole being and left no place for any other occupation or concern. It was a *secret* between him and his Lord, and that is what pushed him to go out secretly at night to a dark cave inside a mountain, in the midst of a tough and endless desert and between imminent dangers! He

was alone without any announcement or propaganda.

He was there to freely practice his only hobby which is the love and worship of his creator and seeking help and guidance from Him alone, on the path of his father Abraham (AS). When Muhammad went out to the cave, he was like a lover who would go out to a special date with a dear and beloved one who owned his heart, mind and conscience and preoccupied his self and spirit.

It was as if there was a very special secret between him and his Lord, so he goes out to softly talk to Him without the people knowing that. That is because Muhammad didn't want anyone to know the secret of his life which took over his heart. Exactly like any loved one does with his lover. He kept his love and relationship with his lover a secret between himself and his loved one in order to protect his love and very special relationship with his loved one.

Muhammad didn't have any hobby, interests, or ambitions in this life except to pray, worship, supplicate, and love His Lord. All that was before his prophecy! For that reason, the luminary and divine part in Muhammad grew and completely dominated him, so it escalated him to a very high rank. Thus, his feelings softened, his manners became perfected, and his self purified. Among his people, he was the truthful and trustworthy one who did commit lies, foolishness, envy, or arrogance.

He was clement, wise, smart, and intelligent. He used to keep contact with his kin and was very hospitable to his guests. He came to the rescue of any one facing tough time. He was very kind and compassionate with the poor, the weak, the children, orphans, servants and slaves. He was loyal to his companions, steadfast in righteousness, and he had dignity and respect.

Everything good in him was reflected first in his household. So he was the best of husbands, the best of fathers, the best of kin, the best of sons, the best of friends, the best of merchants, and the best of companions. He was fair and gave everything its due right. He was easygoing as his parable is that of water flowing freely from a purified spring! This was the state of Muhammad (SA) was before his prophecy.

Such was also the case with the prophets and messengers before Muhammad (Peace be upon him). They were men whose hearts were attached to their creator, so it preoccupied them and kept them busy from giving attention to anything or anyone else. Hence, their hearts were cleansed and purified, so Allah (SWT) chose them to deliver His Message. He (SWT) honored them by permitting them to speak on His Behalf and in His Name.

Reciprocal Divine Love Manifested

Muhammad (SWT) was not a secular man and he was not created for the life of this world. Rather, he was a divine man who was concerned with the Hereafter and worked for it. He enslaved all his life for the service of the Hereafter. Muhammad (SA) lived in this life with his body only. But his heart, mind, souls, interests, and concerns were all with his lord, creator, and his beloved one. If these were the feelings of Muhammad and what he presented towards his Lord before his inauguration as prophet, was that love and giving from one side only? Or was it reciprocal between Muhammad and his Lord?

Without a doubt, it was reciprocal! And how couldn't it be when Allah (SWT) says in His sacred tradition, *{Whoever comes closer to Me one hand length, I will come closer to him one arm length. And whoever comes closer to Me one arm length, I will come closer to him a mile. And whoever comes to Me walking, I will come to him rushing!}*

So, what were the bounties of the Lord of Muhammad *to* Muhammad? Muhammad was an orphan, so Allah (SWT) took care of him and sent his grandfather Abdul Mutaleb, then his uncle Abu Taleb who were the chiefs of their tribe to be his guardians and take care of him and raise him in the best and most perfect way. Allah (SWT) sent to Muhammad (SA) the kind-hearted Haleema to become his nursing mother and caretaker.

Allah (SWT) guided him to know him more and made him feel more comfortable in the way of his Lord. He (SWT) protected him during his dangerous trips to that dark cave in that lonely mountain, so no scorpion, snake, beast, or thief dared to attack him. Allah (SWT) alleviated his feeling of loneliness to the extent that he didn't feel it. Allah (SWT) kept him away from entertainment, nonsense, the pleasures of life, and He (SWT) did not preoccupy Muhammad from His worship.

Allah (SWT) sent to him Khadeeja with her wealth, love, compassion, affection, honor, nobility in family, and her prosperous trade. Muhammad (SA) married her and worked in her commercial caravans. Allah (SWT) showered them with his blessings and sustenance. So Muhammad (SA) came out from poverty and tough life to a better and easier life. Allah (SWT) then gifted him with Al-Kawthar that is manifested in his beloved daughter Fatima to please him and introduce happiness to him. He (SWT) gave him Ali as a brother, cousin, adopted son, beloved companion, and the source of happiness and pleasure to his own self and soul.

He (SWT) gave him Zaid as a sincere servant and obedient son to assist him in the matters of life. Allah (SWT) instilled Muhammad's love in the hearts of the people, so he had sincere and close companions and relatives who loved him very dearly. Muhammad belonged to a respected and noble tribe and held an honorable position among the people. These were some of the bounties of Allah (SWT) to Muhammad (SA). As Allah (SWT) said to Muhammad in the Qur'an,

"*Did He not find you an orphan and give you shelter* [93:6]?"

The love was reciprocal, the relationship was continuous, and the bounties were ongoing until the great bounty, virtue, and honor which had no similarity or resemblance from the Lord of the Worlds! It took place in that fateful night in Cave Hiraa'!

That is why the selection of Allah (SWT) to Muhammad did not come from nothing. Muhammad submitted to God before he received the divine revelation, and he rushed towards Allah (SWT) before he was inaugurated as prophet. Muhammad was attracted to light at a time when only darkness was known.

He willingly headed to his true Lord at a time when people did not accept anything but idols, lies, personal interests, nonsense, and fantasies. He filled himself with divine light at a time when man only knew materialism.

Hence, Muhammad was qualified for the divine selection and bounty, as Allah (SWT) is the absolute Justice and there is no way that He (SWT) would choose for His prophecy except the best of the qualified persons. This was the personality, heart, conscience and spirit of Muhammad by which he deserved the selection of Allah (SWT). This character with all what it possesses is the one we will see later manifesting itself clearly after the inauguration of prophecy while conveying the final divine message!

By that divine selection, it indicated the reality of his attachment to his lord even before the inauguration of prophecy. This is the personality which will suffer a lot when facing the rejection of the nonbelievers to his call for Islam and the worship of Allah (SWT) alone.

"*...And if their turning away is hard on you* [6:35]."

The same personality which will agonize itself because of the disbelief of the people and their lack of faith!!

"*Perhaps you will kill yourself with grief because they do not believe* [26:3]."

It is the same personality that will give sighs of pain on those who go astray and do not obey their God, as depicted in the Holy Qur'an,

"*So let not your soul waste away in grief for them* [35:8]."

It is the same personality which will exhaust itself in conveying the message and urging the people to accept faith and Islam, to the extent that the Creator Himself who is the sender of the message and the one who ordered to convey it, intervenes to limit the overwhelming and extreme efforts of Muhammad in conveying the message. So we find Allah (SWT) revealing verses such as:

• **"*Remind them, for you are only a reminder. You are not a watcher over them* [88:21-22]."**

• **"*As for him who considers himself independent, To him do you address yourself* [80:5-6]."**

• **"*Surely you cannot guide whom you love, but Allah guides whom He pleases* [28:56]."**

• **"*Do not move your tongue with it to make haste with it* [75:16]."**

• **"*And do not make haste with the Qur'an before its revelation is made complete to you* [20:114]."**

And He (SWT) says,

"*Will you then force men till they become believers* [10:99]."

And countless other verses which all show and indicate that Muhammad was not just a messenger who was assigned to convey a message and so he carried out a mission which he was assigned to do. *No*, and a thousand times NO! Muhammad was assigned to convey a message which *he* himself loves, adores, and is fond of it! He lives it with all his soul, being, and conscience even before he knew about it and was assigned to convey it.

That is because faith was mixed with his flesh, blood, and bones. It was as if it became a non-detachable part of him even before the divine inspiration to him. After all, we may be assigned with a task or mission in our lives and we may perform it well. But there is a big difference if we are assigned a task which we ourselves love and enjoy and have total faith in the mission and its importance. Surely, that will reflect on our performance of that task. Consequently, our performance of that mission or task will stand as a proof and witness to the extent of our love, conviction, and sincerity of that mission.

Divine Selection to Muhammad (SA)

As history narrates and as the Holy Qur'an depicts, the performance of Muhammad (SA) as a prophet stands as the greatest witness and proof which indicate the love and sincerity of Muhammad to the Message and its Sender. The fact of the matter is that Allah (SWT) has chosen the *best*, most loved, and most sincere person to Him to convey His Message. And He the Almighty knows best what's in the hearts. As He (SWT) says in the Qur'an,

"*Allah chooses for Himself whom He pleases, and guides to Himself those who turn (to Him)* [42:13]."

He (SWT) also says,

"*Allah best knows where He places His message* [6:124]."

After all, if Allah (SWT) knew of any person more sincere, loving, devoted and fearful of Him than Muhammad, He (SWT) would've surely chosen him. But, Muhammad deserved the divine selection due to his extreme love to his Lord and his attachment and sincerity to Him.

As for those people who envied Muhammad and felt it was too much for him to be chosen by Allah (SWT), they said,

"*Why was not this Qur'an revealed to a man of importance in the two towns* [43:31]?"

Who from them loved Allah (SWT) and came to Him like Muhammad did?

Who from them knew Allah (SWT) and was sincere to Him like Muhammad was?

Who from them abandoned life and its ambitions and ornaments, and instead made his God and Creator be the center of his life, like Muhammad did?

Who from them abandoned idol worshipping voluntarily and willingly went to worship Allah (SWT) alone, treading the path of Abraham (AS), like Muhammad did?

Who from them left his home, family, friends, servants, and comfort to go out in the dark nights alone to the rocky ways of Mecca and climb a scary mountain to stay in a small cave inside it, to pray to His Lord, seek His Help and speak softly to Him, as Muhammad did?

Who from them did all that in order to deserve the divine selection?

They thought that the divine choice would be determined based on worldly power, wealth, fame, or tribal seniority, while they forgot that Allah (SWT) has other standards and measures in making His selection which is different from the human standards.

Allah (SWT) chooses good hearts which truly and sincerely loves Him. He (SWT) chooses the purified and enlightened selves and He chooses the good, noble manners and righteous souls that voluntarily obey Him, and which are preoccupied in His worship over others. So Allah (SWT) honors them by His divine selection. In brief, Allah (SWT) chooses those who *choose* Allah (SWT) and He loves those who love Him, and He guides those who seek His guidance.

It was a ***SECRET*** between two! The fact of the matter is that there was a special secret between

Muhammad and His God! A secret which no one knows except both of them *before* the Divine Revelation! A ***very*** special and unique relationship! Muhammad was very careful to keep it a hidden secret throughout the years until he turned forty years old and received the divine revelation.

This secret and this unique relationship is what made Allah (SWT) choose him to convey His Final Message. It was not a temporary or limited relationship; rather it started a long while ago when Muhammad was still a very young lad opening his eyes to life. This pure, sincere, and unique divine relationship between Muhammad and His Lord is what poured rivers of light upon him and veneration from Allah (SWT). It is what made the clouds shadow him wherever he went. It is what made the priests from the Jews and Christians recognize him when they saw him accompany his uncle (Abu Talib) and they warned him to protect Muhammad from the conspiracies and envy of his enemies.

It is what made love and respect surround him such that no one saw him without falling in love with him and respecting him. This special and unique relationship which was kept a secret and will continue to be a secret which no one knows or understands, or truly appreciate except very few people!

And if history narrates to us more about the life of Prophet Muhammad *before* the revelation of the Message, we will find thousands of proofs that would indicate the presence of this special and unique relationship between Muhammad and his Lord. Here, we see Muhammad in his commercial travels trips to the north and south as he enjoys meeting the priests and worshippers and those who dedicate their lives for God (like himself). He is happy to meet them out of his love to his Creator, as if he is happy to remember his loved one with them.

These honorable meetings in the love and worship of Allah (SWT) which Muhammad was later accused unjustly that he came to know the stories of past religions from them, while these meetings were short, transitory, and were for those who tread the path of Allah (SWT) and yearn for His worship.

Is there any wonder after that if we see Muhammad (after the Revelation of the Message) prolonging his prayer and supplication to his Lord at night, such that his feet swell and he sleeps very little? Shall we then wonder if we see him turning his face on the ground from long prostration out of love and humility to Allah (SWT), such that his wife Ayesha thought that he died due to his long prostration? Shall we then wonder when we see him crying out of fear of Allah (SWT) and laughing and speaking very little? Shall we then wonder when we listen to him saying that the comfort of his eyes is in prayer?

Shall we then wonder if his last words when he departed this life was "*to the highest companion*" while his eyes are fixed to the heavens and his heart gives its last heartbeat, a heart that beats in the love of his Creator which it never beat except by Him and for Him. He didn't know or love anyone other than Allah (SWT), such that life became worthless to Him. Or let us say that the *whole* life itself and those in it was nothing to Him but a heartbeat of love and a tune of adoration to Allah (SWT)!

So who from us is more loving to Allah (SWT) than Muhammad? Who from all the hearts of humanity loved Allah (SWT) and was more devoted to Him as Muhammad?

Muhammad's divine selection to become the Seal of Prophets and Messengers and the best of His creation and the Master of His living beings did not come from nothing. The sincere love from Muhammad towards his Lord was present *before* the Divine Revelation and continued to exist and

grow even more after the Revelation.

It was one connected chain and rope between him and his creator which will never be severed! It is a relationship between him and his God and Creator that has no limit. For that reason, Allah (SWT) willed that the divine inspiration begin while Muhammad was at the peak and climax of this worshipping state inside the cave within a mountain at midnight to cherish that moment for Muhammad and to let the people understand that Allah (SWT) did not choose him from nothing. Rather, He (SWT) chose him because Muhammad (SA) chose Allah (SWT) at a time when no one did! He sold himself to Allah (SWT) at a time when it was not heard of. Now, did the people realize that from this divine hint?

After all, if the divine revelation descended for the first time on Muhammad while he was in his home among his family, or while he was in one of his commercial trips, maybe we wouldn't have come to know that Muhammad used to go out to Cave Hiraa' in the darkness of night to worship his Lord!

This fact would've definitely been kept a hidden secret between Muhammad and his Lord without anyone knowing about it. History would've intentionally or unintentionally, or out of ingratitude ignored this unique worship by Muhammad *before* the Revelation and it wouldn't have reached us today.

Praise be to Allah (SWT) that He (SWT) commenced the divine revelation on the master of worshippers Muhammad (SA), on this fateful night in Cave Hiraa' in Mecca while Muhammad was at the climax of this worshipping state to his Lord...to cherish this unique condition and honor that sacred secret which brought Muhammad and his Lord together...between the worshipper and the one who is being worshipped...between the lover and the beloved...and between the heart and whom it loves and desires!!!

Muhammad Personifies Islam

The relationship of Muhammad with his Lord was based on complete faith and absolute sincerity, true love, obedience, submission, and surrender to Him (SWT). If we summarize and describe this very special relationship between Muhammad and his Lord in one word, we will not find a better word than the word "*Islam*".

Yes, this relationship was complete and total Islam (surrender) to Allah (SWT)! This is the type of relationship which Allah (SWT) desires between Him and His worshippers. Muhammad embodied this relationship even before the Revelation. Allah (SWT) desired that this example widespread to all people, so He (SWT) sent Muhammad with it to become a religion and way of life.

Religion, by definition is nothing but a set of guidelines that define the relationship between God and His servants. He (SWT) named this religion *Islam*, to summarize that type of relationship which was started by Abraham (AS) who was praised in the Qur'an in the following verse,

"Abraham was indeed a model, devoutly obedient to Allah, (and) true in Faith, and he was not of the polytheists." **[16:20]**

The prophets after him tread that path, and then it was completed, perfected, and lived by

Muhammad (AS) in the best, purified, and complete form. It is as if Allah (SWT) wants to tell His servants that whoever of you wants to have a religion with me (meaning to have a relationship with me), this relationship should be complete surrender (Islam), as Abraham (AS) the Friend began and was concluded by Muhammad - the Chosen one, on the same basis and foundations.

As for those who seek different way to achieve proximity with Allah (SWT), it will not be accepted from him. Allah (SWT) says in the Qur'an,

"Surely the (true) religion with Allah is Islam [3:19]."

He (SWT) also says,

***"If anyone desires a religion other than Islam, it shall not be accepted from him, and in the hereafter he shall be one of the losers* [3:85]."**

So the relationship of Muhammad with his Lord before Islam was in essence *Islam* (submission). Allah (SWT) loves it, so He (SWT) chose Muhammad (SWT) to spread this Message and make it a path and religion for all of mankind. Allah (SWT) designated Muhammad as the messenger and prophet of Islam; Muhammad would invite the people to it because he already practiced it, mastered it, and was sincere in it.

So Prophet Muhammad (SA) is most worthy of being assigned this job after Allah (SWT) completed and perfected the message with the rules, verses, jurisprudence, obligations, restrictions, and the Holy Book. There is no prophet who didn't call for Islam as a way for the relationship between the Creator and His creation, and to become a religion by which they worship Allah (SWT) who will be pleased of those who worship Him through this way and this approach.

Condition of the People

Now, let us take a quick look at the condition and picture which prevailed, minutes before that decisive moment which was about to take place to change the history of mankind, and all of creation and universe.

The earth was filled with injustice, unfairness, violence, corruption, bloodshed, wars, and struggles between the humans. Life has become like hell that is unbearable, after materialism dominated it and pulled man down as his lower desires and ambitions dominated him.

There is no room or place for morals, principles, values, manners, and compassion among the people and life has become a chaotic jungle!

Man have submitted to his lower desires without limit or control and have become arrogant and oppressor. The strong eats the weak, and the king steps on the heads of those ruled and oppressed. Justice became lost while injustice became widespread.

The wealthy and affluent compose a very small corrupted minority, while the poor and deprived are the majority but they are weak and paralyzed. Chaos has become widespread and the religions all lean towards polytheism, idol and self worshipping. Human desires, fantasies, deviation, fabrication, and misguidance took over and distorted the religions.

The Jews have distorted their religion and their priests have concealed the truth for their own personal interests. The Jews are divided on Earth and most of them are corrupt, envious, and materialistic. Yet at the same time, they claim that they are the "chosen people by Allah" and that they are the "loved ones of Allah"!

They believe that there is no true religion except theirs and they have disfigured their religion and killed their prophets and distorted their purified history. They await the appearance of a prophet whom they know will appear and they find his signs written in their books.

They believe that he will achieve for them final victory from God and they will gain control over the world under his leadership. But of course they anticipate him to be from among them [Bani Israel (sons of Ya'qoob)]. At the same time, they despise the Christians and are happy that they have allegedly killed their prophet Jesus.

On the other hand, the Christians went astray and have become misguided. They worshipped their prophet Jesus instead of God and they said the grave utterance and falsely claimed that Allah (SWT) has a son! They deviated from the laws of their religion and distorted their Book and followed their misguided priests and displeased their God.

They thought that they were on the right path while the others are misguided and they bear animosity towards the Jews. Their scholars also knew that a prophet was about to appear, whose signs were indicated in their books.

As for the Zoroastrians, they also distorted the religion of Abraham (Peace be upon him) and they worshipped the Fire. The Arabs have distorted the religion of Ishmael and worshipped the idols. Disbelief and polytheism have become widespread with all its different types and forms. Everyone practices his ignorance, deviation, and disbelief with all sincerity, fanaticism, and involvement.

The true believers are a very small minority and Muhammad is one them. You can almost count them on the fingers of one hand as they are scattered here and there. They were a minority who were wandering and didn't know where to go as they searched for the truth in the midst of darkness and sought the help of their Lord.

They requested Him to send a messenger to guide them and show them the truth from falsehood, and lead them out of darkness to the light of guidance. They too were waiting and anticipating the appearance of this prophet sent from God so that they can believe in Him and march under his banner and leadership.

Allah (SWT) sees, hears, watches, and observes everything. He (SWT) sees the nonbelievers, polytheists, and those who are displeased with from the Jews and the misguided from the Christians, and the idol worshippers who associate another God with Allah (SWT). He (SWT) hears the prayers of the oppressed people, the weak, the deprived, and the believers.

With His compassion, He (SWT) watches and observes all those people who have been deceived by the life of this world and tempted by the ample time which Allah (SWT) gave them, till they thought that He (SWT) is oblivious of them, or that He (SWT) is absent from them or does not see them. He (SWT) also sees those who believe in Him and are never desperate from His mercy and compassion. Those who never give up hope that one day He (SWT) will answer their prayers as they have very deep faith and trust in Him. And Muhammad was surely one of them!

This condition reminds us of the same situation which was present before when Allah (SWT) spoke with Prophet Moses (May Allah be pleased with him). The sons of Israel were enslaved in Egypt for

many long centuries. Pharaoh used to torture them, kill their children, rape their women, and enslave them in the worst conditions.

The believers among them kept praying to their God day and night to relieve from this torture and bondage, and liberate them from slavery, and send to them a messenger, leader, and deliverer to lead them out of this torture. They were expecting the imminent appearance of that prophet as they know from their books. One of those believers who prayed to God to save his people from torture, persecution, and inferiority was Moses (AS) who was the most humble, submissive and loving to God from all of Bani Israel!

Suddenly, the mercy of Allah (SWT) poured at a fateful moment...and also in the middle of a bare desert...and also in the middle of the darkness of night...and also on top of a mountain. Moses sees the fire and goes towards it to get a light.

But instead, Allah (SWT) speaks directly to him and informs him that He (SWT) is the God of Abraham and Jacob and that He (SWT) listens and sees the condition of the sons of Israel and the oppression of pharaoh. He (SWT) informs him that he has been chosen to become the awaited prophet and the expected deliverer to stand against Pharaoh by the power of Allah (SWT) and lead his people out of bondage to the dignity of God's obedience, and out of poverty and inferiority to independence and sovereignty!

The tradition of Allah (SWT) is the same and you will not find change or replacement in the way of Allah (SWT). Once again and under similar circumstances, and after hundreds of years, the same situation repeats itself exactly and the similarity is clear to any person.

Once again, the mercy of Allah (SWT) poured on the believers, the weak and deprived, and the oppressed. And His wrath descended on those nonbelievers, polytheists, counterfeiters, distorters, misguides, hypocrites, arrogant, those whom Allah (SWT) is displeased with, the luxurious, and the unjust, those who want to achieved highness on earth and be worshipped besides Allah (SWT).

The Fateful Moment

Suddenly, the light appeared and dawn rose to override darkness and fill the earth with knowledge and enlighten the path and enjoin the truth and forbid the evil. But how did it come and from where? It came from where no one expected and this also is the tradition of Allah (SWT)!

Who would've expected that Moses, the fugitive and the chased one would become the prophet and deliverer chosen by Allah (SWT) to liberate the sons of Israel? And *who* would've expected that Taloot would become the awaited king to defeat the giants? And *who* would've expected that David (the poor young man) would kill Golaith, the great giant king?

This time, Allah (SWT) chose His sincere, truthful believer and servant, Muhammad, who carries an intact heart, who was worshipping Him inside this cave in the heart of the mountain, in the middle of the night!

He (SWT) chose him to become the awaited prophet and messenger who will lead all of humanity out darkness of ignorance to the light of guidance, and who will demolish the foundations of polytheism, disbelief, injustice, arrogance, corruption, and hypocrisy. Muhammad was chosen to

become the deliverer of the final divine Message from the Great Creator to all people in every time and place, such that no prophet or messenger will come after him till the Day of Judgment!

There are no more prophets to await. The only event left to anticipate is the reappearance of the Self-Guided (Al Mahdi) Imam from the descendent of the holy household of Muhammad (Peace be upon him), to act as the proof of Allah (SWT) and the sustainer of His religion. By the will of Allah (SWT), he will establish justice and fairness on earth, and will revive and revitalize the message of his grandfather, the Seal of Prophets and Messengers.

Allah (SWT) has chosen Muhammad (Peace be upon him) for His Message from the entire minority of believers who were scattered here and there. Now we understand why! Allah (SWT) chooses and selects whomever He (SWT) wants and does as He (SWT) pleases! Without a doubt, it is the special and unique relationship between Muhammad and his Lord which we previously discussed!

Allah (SWT) wills, by His Grace and Mercy that on this fateful moment, the doors of heavens open suddenly, and the angels led by the trustable Gabriel descend for the first time since the elevation of Prophet Jesus (AS)...while Muhammad is engaged in the worship and supplication to his Lord.

He is about to receive the great honor that Allah (SWT) is about to bestow him by choosing and selecting him over all mankind to become his Seal of Prophets and Messengers! He is yet to officially receive the huge responsibility and great message which is about to fall on his shoulders. He is yet to embrace the great honor which await him and which he's about to experience in Cave Hiraa' on the night of the 27th of Rajab!

May the peace, prayers, and blessing of Allah (SWT) be upon Muhammad, His Noble Messenger and the Seal of the Prophets and his blessed and purified holy household!

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