

Home > Prophet Muhammad [s] – A Brief Biography > The Upbringing of the Prophet > Abu Talib Assumes Guardianship

The Upbringing of the Prophet

As was the custom in those days, babies of noble families were normally entrusted to the care of strong and healthy wet nurses, who not only gave suck but taught their wards manners and etiquette. The young Muhammad (S) was accordingly put under the care of a noble wet-nurse called Halima bint Hareth As-Saadiyah, who brought him up along with her own children; Abdullah, Eisa and daughter Shaima. 1

After four years Halima brought back the child to his mother and grandfather. Everyone was happy as the toddler started to grow up into a pretty, sober and intelligent boy, marked out from the rest of the children by his suave manners and loved and admired by all.

Mother and Grandfather Die

At the age of six, his mother took him to Yathrib to visit her family. Umm Ayman their maid accompanied them on the journey. At Yathrib, the young boy saw the grave of his father, whom he had never seen in life. What a moving scene it may have been when mother and son, set eyes on Abdullah's grave!

After a short stay in Yathrib they started back, but on the way Amina became seriously ill. The party stopped to nurse her but her condition became worse and finally she breathed her last and was buried at a place called Abwa, situated between Makkah and Madina. The child was naturally sad at losing his only surviving parent, at the tender age of 6. Now he was an orphan on both sides and alone in this wide world. But Almighty Allah is Great and Omnipresent and He alone decrees destinies. Umm Ayman escorted Muhammad (S) to Abdul Muttalib, who was shocked on hearing news of his daughter-in-law's sudden death. The doting grandfather took upon himself the task of bringing up the young orphan, never letting him feel the slightest discomfort. But there was yet another shock in store for Muhammad (S), for when he reached the age of 8, he lost his loving grandfather too.

Abu Talib Assumes Guardianship

Before his death, Abdul Muttalib instructed his son Abu Talib to see his orphaned grandson's upbringing. Accordingly, Abu Talib gladly assumed guardianship of his nephew and took young Muhammad (S) under his roof. Abu Talib and his wife Fatimah bint Asad raised the orphan as their own child, never making him feel the slightest thought of being a destitute. They loved him dearly and he loved them in turn. In later years he was often heard saying that Fatimah bint Asad, (the mother of Imam Ali) was like a mother to him.

1. A deep affinity developed between the Prophet and his foster brothers and sister, and later in life they also accepted Islam.

Source URL:

<https://www.al-islam.org/prophet-muhammad-a-brief-biography-al-balagh/upbringing-prophet>