

# Historical Event of Ghadir

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It was in the month of Zilhajj 10 A.H. when the Holy Prophet becoming intuitively aware of his approaching end, decided to make a farewell Pilgrimage to Mecca. As the time for the Pilgrimage approached, he started to make preparations for the journey. Hazrat Ali who was in

Yemen was asked to complete his work and join the Prophet in Mecca.

The Prophet reached Mecca on Sunday the 4th of Zilhajj 10 A.H. Soon after his arrival, Ali, who hastened back from Yemen ahead of his men, joined the Prophet, who was very glad to see him and affectionately embracing him asked what vow he had taken for the pilgrimage. Ali replied, "I have taken upon me a vow to perform the same pilgrimage as the Prophet, whatever that might be, and I have brought thirty-four camels for the sacrifice". The Prophet joyfully exclaimed, 'Allah-o-Akbar', (Great is the Lord), and said he had brought sixty-six. He added, that in all the rites of the Pilgrimage, as well as in the sacrifice, he (Ali) would be his partner.

Thus Ali also performed the Greater Pilgrimage along with the Prophet.

Before completing the rites of the Pilgrimage, the Holy Prophet addressed the assembled multitude from the top of the Jabal-ul-Arafat in words, which yet live in the hearts of Muslims. As the various ceremonies were to be treated as models for future guidance, the Prophet observed rigorously each rite, whether in compliance with revelations or in accordance with the patriarchal usage.

Thus, when the hundred camels were to be sacrificed, he and Ali offered them conjointly. A repast, prepared from the meat of the sacrificed camels was served; the Prophet sat down with no other but Ali to partake of it. The ceremonies of the pilgrimage ended with shaving of the heads and paring of the nails after the sacrifice of animals. The pilgrim's garb was then removed and Ali, who rode on the Prophet's Duldul, proclaimed that the restrictions of Pilgrimage were over.

## THE SERMON AT GHADIR-E-KHUM AND THE LAST DECLARATION

Bidding farewell to his native city of Mecca, the Prophet set out for Medina on the 14th Zilhajj, 10 A.H., accompanied by the same congregation of Muslims. Now as his swift camel sped on with its long swinging strides, a life of tireless toil was nearing its end, a mission of mercy and devotion was approaching its culmination and the seeds of Divine dispensation were about to begin to bear fruit. His mien and bearing showed the signs of sublime peace, coupled with an

overwhelming sense of gratitude and an insatiable yearning for his Creator and Cherisher. Yet on close scrutiny, his serene features could not have failed to disclose the signs of deep contemplation as if he was weighing the pros and cons of some momentous decision. What could be the cause of this restlessness? Had he not accomplished all that he had set his mind to do? The Unity and Justice of God had been convincingly instilled into the hearts of men; the belief in the angels, the scriptures, the Prophets, the resurrection of the dead, and the Day of Judgment had all been authoritatively expounded.

But with the meticulous thoroughness of his genius, Prophet Muhammad realized that the most important part of his task still remained unfulfilled, and it was this, which made him restless at the moment of his greatest triumph. He saw that the sands of time were running out and the cup of his life was filled almost to the brim.

'This being so, the most Important task was to ensure the continuity of his life's work by someone endowed with all the moral values which he had upheld or else. He has miraculous achievements during the twenty-three years of his apostolic ministry stood In danger of being Irretrievably undone. It was a matter of prime Importance that Divine guidance should continue after him and that the Divine sovereignty should be exercised by the chosen ones of God, to be appointed by the Prophet.

He had already designated his Ahl-ul-Bait on several occasions, as the Ark of Noah, the strong rope of God, the door of forgiveness, the purified ones, and made the love of these holy ones incumbent upon his followers. He had similarly, on many occasions, pointed out Ali as "My brother and Successor", "The door of the city of knowledge", "The most equitable judge", "The embodiment of faith", and having the position in relation to himself as "Aaron was to Moses".

Were these pronouncements in the course of time going to be forgotten, misinterpreted or ignored by his followers after him? Could the Prophet allow thorn to be set aside by power-seekers? He knew that he had to make a final and unchallengeable declaration regarding his successor. The choice of the appropriate moment, however, depended not on him but on

Divine Inspiration. With these thoughts in his mind he marched on towards Medina. As he arrived at Ghadir-E-Khum, suddenly the signs of a revelation appeared. The voice of Archangel Gabriel was heard saying "O thou esteemed Messenger, impart the guidance that has been revealed unto thee", \* and in order to impress the urgency of the command, Gabriel went on to say: "For if thou doeth it not, thou has not imparted His Message at all";

and again in the same breath to allay his fears and misgivings the angel added: "God will protect thee from the evil designs of men". (Ch. 5 'verse 67) It is held that the Prophet had already been commanded to proclaim Ali as his successor, but he had postponed the

announcement for some suitable occasion to avoid misinterpretation.<sup>1</sup>

\* It refers to the Commandment contained in Sura XCIV of the Quran, which says Have We not  
opened thy breast for thee?  
And put off thy burden from thee,  
Which galled thy back?  
And have We not raised thy name for thee?  
Then verily, with trouble cometh ease,  
Verily, along with trouble cometh ease;  
And when thou art eased, set up (thy successor), And turn to thy Lord with fervor.

In the 7th verse God has commanded the Prophet to appoint his successor. On hearing this imperious command, the Prophet made up his mind instantly. He motioned the muezzin Bilal to stop and recite the Azan with the words, "Hayya' ala Khair il'amal" (hasten towards the best of deeds), for surely the acceptance thereof was to be a crucial event upon which the perpetuity of the Prophet's Mission depended.

As the Prophet pulled up his reins, the whole entourage came to a halt. Those who had gone ahead were summoned back and those who followed gathered round casting inquiring glances at each other. The Prophet soon dismounted and ordered his followers to clear the ground. The pebbles and thorns that lay scattered about were promptly brushed aside. Others, on receiving his express directions, began to untie the saddles from the backs of their camels, and to pile them one on top of another so as to make a pulpit. The arrangements thus completed, the throng squatted upon the bare ground, some spreading their cloaks below to protect themselves from the burning sand, others holding up their handkerchiefs to shield their eyes from the sun's glare, for it was nearly midday.

The people having clustered round the pulpit, the Prophet stepped forward and on his right was Ali, whose turban, black in color, with its ends hanging over both of his shoulders, was arranged by the Prophet himself. Then obeying the Divine Injunction to the letter, he addressed the multitude in the following memorable words.<sup>2</sup> "All praise belongs to God. In Him do I put my faith and from Him do I crave support. Him do I trust and His protection seek against the malice of our souls and evils of our deeds. The misguided have no guide save Him, and those who are guided by Him can never go astray. I bear witness that there is no one worthy of worship save Him and that I, Muhammad, am His slave and Messenger."

"O ye folk, behold, the All-knowing God hath informed me that the days of my life are coming to an end and the time is fast approaching when I shall be called away from your midst towards the eternal abode. But you and I, each one of us is answerable unto God for all things

arc duc unto Him from us. What then do you say?" And the listeners answered, "we bear witness that thou hast done thy duty and never stinted to guide and advise us according to the Divine Will."

"Then do ye bear witness", asked the Prophet, "to the Unity of God and the Apostleship of this servant of God, who now speaks to you by His command, and do ye not bear witness that the resurrection and judgment, heaven and hell and the life hereafter are certainties?"

And they all answered, "Yea, verily Yea."

"Now then", continued the Prophet, "Listen to me carefully; I have been commanded to tell you that I will soon be taken away from your midst, but I leave unto you my Legacy of two grand precepts, each of which surpasses the other in its grandeur-God's Holy Book (The Quran) and my Ahl-ul-Bait (my irrevocable Progeny, consisting of Ali, Fatima, Hasan and Husain). Never shall they separate from one another until they reach me in Heaven at the Fountain of Kausar, and so long as you will adhere unto both my legacies, you will never be led astray after me. Therefore, O ye folk, it is my last Will and Testament unto you that you should always remain faithful to the Holy Quran and my Ahl-ul-Bait as true Muslims until death."

By these portentous words all those who loved their teacher and benefactor were moved to tears.

And he continued, "Do not lag too far behind them and do not walk ahead of them, for in either event you will go astray. But follow them and walk in their footsteps and they will guide you along the Straight Path."

Then he asked, "Who do you think is more worthy of obedience than your souls?"

And they answered, "God and His messenger know best."

And he continued, "Lo! God is my Master, and am I not worthy of obedience from you?"

And they all said, "Yea, verily Yea."

Then the Prophet bent down and lifted up Ali in his hands, showing him to the crowds on all sides of the pulpit, and proclaimed, "Mun Kunto Maulaho fe haaza Ali-yun Maulah"

"Of whomsoever I am the Master (Mauls), this Ali is his Master (Mania)". So saying the Prophet raised up his hands heavenwards and prayed, "O our God, love those who will love Ali, despise those who will despise him; support those who will support him; and reject those who will reject him. 3" Announcing this thrice, he got down from the raised platform, and seated Ali in a tent, where the people did him homage. Omar bin Al-Khatib was the first to congratulate

Ali and to acknowledge him 'Guardian of all Believers' 4

Saying "Bakhin bakhin laka ibne Abi Talih Asbahta Maul ayee Wa Maula kulla Momineen wa Mominaatin."

“Greetings be to thee O son of Abu Talib!

Thou hast dawned as my Leader and the Leader of all faithful men and women.” After the men, came all the women to congratulate Ali. At the conclusion of this installation ceremony, the Holy Prophet asked the congregation, ‘Have I not truly and faithfully delivered unto you the Message?’

And they answered, “Yea, verily Yea.”

Then the Prophet said, “Go now, and let those who have been present here today repeat and convey to those who are absent all that they have seen and heard.” At this moment the Divine

Inspiration again descended upon our Holy Prophet with the memorable words that read, “This day have I perfected unto you your religion and completed upon you My Blessings, and I am well-pleased with Islam as your religion.” (Ch. 5, Verse 3). The tone and purpose of these two religious revelations, firstly, the verse commanding the Prophet to deliver the Message with the warning that any omission on his part would be a complete failure of his mission, and secondly, this last revelation, declaring the Lord’s pleasure at the fulfillment of the task, clearly indicate that they relate to some matter of prime importance and not merely to some abstruse detail of ritual. It is only in the light of the Hadith-e-Ghadir that these two passages of the Holy Quran can be properly understood in their true importance and full significance. By consensus of the exegesis these two verses were revealed after the Prophet’s last pilgrimage.

## **AUTHENTIC PROOFS**

In Mishkat, a tradition of Bara’s Bin Azib and Zaid is quoted here for further clarification from the Musnad of Ahmed ibn Hanbal The Companions state, “We were accompanying the Apostle on his journey. When we reached the oasis of Ghadir-E-Khum, the announcer called ‘Assalato Jamia’, (come to congregational prayer). The earth under the trees was swept for the Apostle. Then after the Zohar prayer was over, the Apostle held the hand of Ali Ibn Abi Talib and said, “O people! Do you know that according to every believer I am superior to his soul?” All of them replied, ‘It is a fact, O Messenger of Allah! To every believer you are superior to his soul’. Then the Apostle said, ‘Ali is also the Lord of him whose Lord I am. O Allah! Befriend him who befriends Ali and be alien to him who is alien to Ali.’ Thereafter Omar met Ali and said, “Hail to thee! O son of Abu Talib, today you become the Lord of all believing men and women.”

Wahidee in Asbab-un-Nuzool; Suyuti in Tafseer-e-Durr-i-Mansoor; Shaukani in Tafseer Fathul Qadir and Sideeq Hasan Khan in Fathul Bayan mention a tradition noted by Ibn Abi Hatim and other scholars from Abu Saeed Khudri in which it is stated that the verse “O Messenger! Make known what has been revealed unto you by your Lord and if you do not do so you have not

made known your message.” The Quran Ch. 5, verse 67-was revealed on the occasion of the event at Ghadir-E-Khum in honor of Ali.

Moreover in another tradition which has been quoted by Aini in his annotation of Saheeh Bukharee, this verse is paraphrased as “O Messenger! Proclaim the order which your Lord has passed and revealed unto you in honor of Ali Ibn Abu Talib.” So when this verse was revealed the Apostle held Ali by his hand and said, “Ali is also Lord of him who has taken me as his Lord.”

Many similar quotations are given by historians and the names of a few are mentioned below:- Abul Fida, Ibn Khallakan in Wafiyat-ul-A’ yaan; Hakini in his Mustadrak; Nasaee in Kitabul Khasais; Ibn Hajar Makki in Sawaiq-i-Muhriqa; Rawdzat-ul~Ahbab; Naishapuri in Tafseer Gharaibul Quran, Hafiz Ibn Mardwaih and Hafiz Abu Naeem from Abu Saeed Khudri.

Muhammad Ibn Saalim Hanafi remarks in his marginal note on Sirajul Muneer-i-Azeezee, an annotation of Jam’i Sagheer of Suyuti, that when the Apostle delivered his speech “Ali is also the Lord of him who has me for his Lord, and some of the people inquired of the Holy Prophet, “Was it not sufficient for us to profess the ‘Creed of evidence, say our prayers and give alms with strict regularity, that the superiority and Lordship of Abu Talib’s son is now being imposed upon us? Do you commission us in this matter of your own accord, or is it ordered by Allah?” The Apostle replied, “By Him other than whom there is no one to be worshipped, this is the order of Allah”.

Tafseer-o-Sa’labi, Noor-ul-Absar, Seerat-ul-Halabiyah and Mustadrak relate that when on that day a man named Haris, son of No’man Fihri refused to acknowledge Ali as his leader and disputed with the Holy Prophet on this matter and said, “O Allah! If this be truly Thy Command then either rain down stones from heaven upon Muhammad or punish us.” A large stone fell upon him from heaven so that he was killed, just as the army of Abraha and their elephants had been killed before. The following verse was revealed on that occasion: - “A questioner asked for the inevitable punishment to befall the disbelievers which no one can avert”. (Chapter 70 Verse 1-2.)

The great research scholar, Allama Sayed Hamid Husain Kintoori, has written a book in two volumes called Abaqatul-Anwar on the investigation of the innumerable sources through which the Hadith-e-Ghadir has come down to us. In recent years the eminent Alim, Ayat-Ullah Shaikh Abdal Husain-al-Ameeni of Najaf has listed the names of one hundred and ten companions of the Holy Prophet who have reported this tradition as eye-witnesses and eighty-three Tabe’in who heard it from their elders and three hundred and fifty-nine Ulema of all sects, arranged chronologically through each of the centuries since the time of the Prophet up to the present -

day, who have recorded the sermon of Ghadir-E-Khum in their books and acknowledged its authenticity.

Ayatullah-al-Aminis major opus 'Al-Ghadir', is a classic of erudition and painstaking research. The book establishes beyond doubt, whatever the criterion of verification adopted, the overwhelming incontrovertibility of the event of Ghadir i.e. the nomination of Ali. It also firmly prescribes the injunction that if ever any tradition is to be believed, the Hadith-e-Ghadir holds the first claim to acceptance.

It will be readily vouched by every scholar of the Arabic language that the word 'Maula' in its meaning is far superior to the word Caliph. A Caliph is only a successor to one in any office, but a 'Maula' means the Lord and Master of everything. In using the word 'Maula' for Ali, the Apostle of God intended to convey the Divine Will that after him Ali should be held in the same position as he himself was for the people.

The Holy Quran says:

"And neither doth he speak of (his own) inclination; it (the wording) is naught but a revelation revealed (unto him)." (Chapter 53, Verse 3 and 4). Ali was undoubtedly the chosen and declared successor of the Holy Prophet from the beginning of his Prophetic Career. Now he had the distinction of being to the Muslims what the Holy Prophet was to them; which meant that Ali was to be treated in place of (Successor to) the Prophet after his death.<sup>5</sup> Shah Ali Hasan Jaisi, a great-celebrated Sunni Sufi, has made the meaning of the word 'MAULA' as implied in the declaration, very clear in his couplet in Persian: "Abus dar maanee-ay mun kunto Maula mee ravce hersoo, Ali Maula ba-on manee keh Paigamber boo-cod Maula".

## TRANSLATION

"In vain doth thou wander in all directions in interpreting the word Maula (Master), Ali is in the same sense Maula (Master) as was the Holy Prophet Maula (Master)."

Philosophers, commentators of the Quran, poets, historians and seekers of truth all unanimously acknowledge this vital tradition as an established fact. The valley of Ghadir-E-Khum owes its fame to this single, unique and unforgettable event, on it the survival of the guidance of Islam depends, and so long as there remains a single grain of sand from that parched and arid wilderness, it will rise and proudly describe how the Prophet of Mercy once trod upon that ground, how he lifted up the worthiest of his disciples and proclaimed him as the Amir-ul-Mominin, for there was no one worthier than him and his descendants the eleven Imams, to defend, expound and propagate Islam's immortal teachings to the world.

The Holy Prophet has said:

"I am the last of time Apostles of Allah (Khatam-un-Nabeeyeen) O Ali, whilst you are the last  
.(of the successors to the Prophets." (Khatam-ul-Waseeyeen

### ***References***

1. Tafsir Kabir; Tafsir Durr.al-Manthur Tafsir Neshapuri; Sirat-al-Halabia.
2. Sayid Safdar Husain.
3. Suyuti has reported thus "O God! Befriend him who is a friend of Ali, and be an enemy to him  
who is an enemy to Ali."
- 4 Mishkat; Khasais Nasai; Rawdzat.al-Ahbab; Rawdzat-al-Safa.
- 5 Tabari; Ibne Athir; Abul Fida, Amir Ali