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Important Events of Madina

The Prophet's entry into Madina ushers in a new phase for the divine message. Islam gaining fresh followers began to assert its strength and soon started to spread out over the four corners of the Arabian Peninsula.

In the previous chapters we have already noted that the Prophet was 53 years of age at the time of his auspicious migration. In Madina he spent the remaining 10 years of his life and it was here that other brilliant aspects of his immaculate personality became fully manifest. The divine call now entered a decisive stage and many important events took place in Madina, which eventually laid a firm foundation for the spread of Islam to the furthest reaches of the globe. Here we shall study some of the major landmarks in the life of Prophet Muhammad (S) and Islam at Madina.

1. The Building of the First Mosque

The entry into Madina was followed by the building of the mosque, the first-ever for the Muslims who had just emerged from years of oppression in Makkah. It was one of the most important landmarks for Muslims who now had a centre of their own for open uninhibited gatherings, a school for learning the Qur'an and a headquarters for receiving necessary instructions from their leader.

Gone were the days of secret underground meetings in Makkah, where the fear of persecution had always weighed heavily for the faithful. Yathrib which from now onwards was Madinat-an-Nabi (city of the Prophet) or Al-Madina al Munawara (illuminated city), provided a free open atmosphere for the growth of the true faith.

Makkan immigrants mixed with the local populace, the 'Ansar' (Helpers), and cheerfully started giving shape to Islam's first-ever mosque which would be known as Masjid-an-Nabi (Prophet's Mosque). The building was soon constructed of clay and tree trunks with palm leaves serving as a thatched roof. The Messenger of Allah himself took part in the construction and the following year he enlarged its precincts to cover an area of 2475 square meters.

All Muslims enthusiastically assembled there for the daily prayers, which were led by the Prophet himself. He used to deliver sermons there, teach the Qur'an and the laws of Islam to the faithful, discourse with his companions, prepare them for 'Jihad' (holy struggle) and would look into their problems and other relevant issues. Thus, the Mosque was actually the headquarters of the first-ever Islamic State established by the Messenger. It still stands majestically today, frequently enlarged and beautified throughout the last fourteen centuries. The tomb of Prophet Muhammad (S) is situated within its enclosure, and draws millions of Muslims from all over the world.

2. Fraternization

The second important step taken by the Prophet in Madina was the fraternizing of 'Muhajireen' (Makkan Immigrants) with the 'Ansar' (Madinite Helpers) in the bonds of Islamic brotherhood. He fraternised each Muhajir with an Ansar, joining them together as brothers in faith. And he himself clasped the hand of his beloved cousin Ali bin Abi Talib (a) as the supreme symbol of brotherhood, fraternity and solidarity in the Islamic society.

Before proceeding further let us say a few words about the Muhajireen and the Ansar, who formed the pillars of the Islamic State. Allah, the Exalted describes them in the Qur'an as follows:

“And as for the first and foremost of the Muhajireen (emigrants) and the Ansar (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.” (9: 100)

The Muhajireen as the name suggests were the Muslim emigrants from Makkah who had followed the Prophet of Madina to safeguard their faith and to escape persecution from the infidels. They had embraced Islam in its early formative years and most of them had steadfastly endured severe pain and hardship in the way of liberty, truth and justice.

On the other hand, the Ansar were the indigenous inhabitants of Madina, who believed in the Message of Islam and rallied to the help of the Prophet. They welcomed him to their city, and fought alongside him against the pagans of Arabia. It was their faith and selfless devotion which cemented Islamic unity and brought many a glorious victory for Islam.

At the time of the H4ra most of the Muhajireen were poor and possessed nothing, but the Ansar displaying the finest example of Islamic brotherhood, provided them with their needs such as houses, money and food. They lodged them in their own houses, shared their wealth with them and gave their daughters in marriage to the Makkan Muslims.

Such were the Muhajireen and the Ansar – brothers sharing food, clothing and residence, and defending and helping each other as ordered by the Almighty. From them we learn patience, self-sacrifice,

fraternity, piety and devoted zeal to spread the call of Islam to less fortunate people around the world.

3. The Islamic State

The other important event after the Hijra was the establishment of the Islamic State and Government by the Prophet, who by applying the gradual unfolding of divine commandments, moulded the hitherto ignorant Arabs into a real Islamic society. Expounding the eternal miracle of the Holy Qur'an and setting his own divinely inspired personality as a practical example, he firmly erected the pillars of justice and virtue. In short, Prophet Muhammad (S) presented to the dark world seething under tyranny and oppression, the most perfect ever constitution – spiritual, social and political and a key to their salvation both in this mortal life and the hereafter.

4. Jihad

The next stage was Jihad or holy struggle, a thing not known in Makkah. It was the natural consequence to the setting up of a state. Unbelievers, ever-intent to stamp out the divine call but seeing Islam finely knit unto a secure state, resorted to arms, and the Muslims had to follow suit to defend their faith, and according to Allah's injunctions went out to do battle with the aggressors.

The first ever battle between Islam and blasphemy occurred in the second year of the Hijra at a place called 'Badr' in which the new-found Islamic State, assembling a modest force of only 313 Muslims defeated a vastly outnumbering army of disbelievers. The victory led to many other battles and skirmishes with the Makkan infidels, who each time came out in larger numbers to avenge their previous setbacks, but by Allah's Grace suffered defeat after defeat at the hands of the faithful.

The victories brought strength and courage to the Muslims and helped facilitate the spread of Islam and monotheism to the farthest reaches of polytheist Arabia.

5. End of Jewish Plots and Treacheries

Ever since the Prophet's entry into Madina, the treacherous Jews had vehemently opposed him and his Islamic call, evoking memories of their hostility to the previous Prophet, Jesus Christ (a), half a millennium ago. The crafty Jews entered into an alliance with the polytheist Quraish in a bid to stamp out Islam. They conspired to kill Prophet Muhammad (S) despite the fact that he was lenient towards them and had treated them kindly, hoping to convince them of Islam's truth. But eventually as Jewish plots and aggressions increased, he had no choice other than to take up arms against them, in order to protect Islam and the Muslims. At the battle of Khaiber which is famous for Imam Ali's (a) heroic exploits, the Prophet defeated them ending Jewish intrigues and conspiracies in Arabia.

6. The Treaty of Hudaibiyah

Another important landmark in the Prophet's life and progress of the Islamic call was the treaty of Hudaibiyah.

One night Prophet Muhammad (S) had a dream in which he saw that he and his companions were entering the precincts of the Holy Ka'aba in Makkah to perform the 'Tawaf' (circumambulation), but the infidel Arabs were trying to obstruct their entrance. Following the dream, he decided to go to Makkah with some 1,500 Muslims to perform the pilgrimage. It was in the sixth year of the Hijra, and when the party arrived at a place called Hudaibiyah, the infidels confronted them and blocked all routes to Makkah. After some deliberations the infidels and the Prophet concluded a treaty, stipulating that the Muslim party would for the moment go back to Madina, but would return the next year for performing the pilgrimage. There were some other terms too.

As per the treaty the Messenger and his companions turned back to Madina, but the next year the Prophet along with a group of Muslims entered Makkah – 7 years after his historical migration – to perform the Umrah ritual (the lesser pilgrimage). Thus, his dream came true, and it was another undeniable proof of his Prophethood.

7. The Conquest of Makkah

Next followed the great event in the history of Islam, that was the conquest of Makkah, the then bastion of ignorance and disbelief. With it, idolatry was purged from the greater part of Arabia once and for all, and Allah's Sacred House the Ka'aba was cleansed of the filth of man-made objects. The event took place during the month of Ramadhan, in the year 8 A.H. and Makkah was liberated without a fight. Almighty Allah instilled the hearts of the idolaters with such fear that when Abu Sufyan, the leader of the infidels, and his men, saw the Muslim forces they were struck with awe and meekly surrendered. Thus the Messenger and his companions entered Makkah triumphantly, smashed the idols, performed the Tawaf, and returned to Madina.

The conquest of Makkah and the purging of idols from Holy Ka'aba proved a great victory for Islam. Following the event which is famous for Muhammad's (S) magnanimity towards his archenemies, the Makkan pagans, who all accepted Islam, people started embracing the true faith in multitudes.

8. Monarchs, Heads of State and Tribal Chiefs Invited to Islam

Allah bestowed victory upon His Prophet in his many battles, and the Muslims were now strong. Since the light of Islam had expelled ignorance from the greater part of the Arabian Peninsula, the Messenger of Allah now felt it his duty to enlighten neighbouring people about the truth of Islam. Accordingly he sent envoys to the Emperors of Persia, Byzantine and Abyssinia (Ethiopia) and to other heads of state and

tribes inviting them towards guidance and reform. Some accepted, some gave polite 'diplomatic replies', while some others such as Chosroes of Persia were arrogant enough to betray their ignorance, by haughtily tearing the letters from the 'Mercy to the Worlds'.

9. Event of Mubahala

Among the messages which the Prophet (S) sent to kings and heads of state inviting them to Islam, was the one addressed to the Christians of Najran in Yemen. On receiving the letter the Christians refused to accept Islam but however decided to come to Madina to challenge the Prophet and to defend their deviated belief in the divinity and purification of Prophet Jesus (a).

In Madina, the Prophet presented them with proof and facts about Islam's eternal truth, citing references from the previously revealed Scriptures, but the Christians' irrational obstinacy prevented them from seeing the manifest truth. In the end the two parties decided to meet at an open place and invoke divine curse and punishment upon the lying side. Allah thereby ordered His Prophet to take along with him his immediate family to the meeting ground for the Mubahala¹.

“And whosoever disputes with you concerning this after the knowledge that has come to you, say: ‘Come now, let us call our sons and your sons, our women and your women, ourselves and yourselves, then let us earnestly pray for Allah’s curse upon the ones who lie.’” (3:61)

The Christian elders came to the venue with their whole flock, and the Prophet as ordered by Allah came with his immediate family members, namely: daughter Fatimah, son in-law Ali and their two children, Hasan and Husayn. Never had the Christians seen such enlightened visages before. The moment the Chief Priest beheld Prophet Muhammad (S) and his noble family, he was filled with awe.

He realised that without doubt truth was with this blessed group of five and most surely Allah will respond to Muhammad (S) and his family's invocation if they choose to curse and destroy the Christians of Najran. Thus the Christians backed away from the challenge of Mubahala, and wisely came to terms with the Prophet, pledging to pay an annual tribute to the Muslims.

10. The Farewell Pilgrimage

In the tenth year of the Hijra, the Messenger of Allah (S) performed the Hajj (pilgrimage), with all his wives and a fairly large number of his Companions.

He reached Makkah on the 4th of Dhul Hijja and was soon joined by Ali (a), who hastened back from his successful missionary deputation to Yemen. During the Hajj ceremonies, the Prophet addressed a great multitude from Mount Arafat, in words which are eternal to this day in the hearts of believers. After praising the Almighty, he expounded the laws and tenets of Islam and abolished all existing practices of the days of Jahiliyah, charging the gathering to inform those not present and also to convey to posterity

his eternal message.

The famous tradition called 'Thaqalain' was part of this sermon and we reproduce it below from 'Sahih Tirmidhi' for the benefit of our readers.

“I have been summoned (by Allah) and the moment is near for me to answer (to die). I leave among you the 'Thaqalain' (two precious things): the Book of Allah and my progeny; Allah's Book is like a rope extending from heaven to earth, and my progeny are the Ahlul-Bayt. The Merciful informed me that the two will not part with each other until they meet me at the pool (of Kawther in Paradise). I warn you against deserting them.”

11. Ghadir Khum

After performing the Hajj, he bade farewell to his native Makkah and set out for Madina. When the great procession reached the place from where the routes of the different caravans coming from various points of Arabia normally parted, suddenly the signs of divine revelation appeared and he stopped at a place called al-Juhfa near the spring (ghadir) of Khum. The Archangel Gabriel came with the following verse in order to impress the urgency of the divine command:

“O Prophet proclaim what has been revealed to you from your Lord, for if you do it not, you have not conveyed His message; and Allah will protect you from the (evil designs of) people...”Holy Qur'an (5: 67)

At once the Prophet ordered the whole party to be assembled, even summoning back those who had already left, for he had an important message to be delivered.

A pulpit made of camel saddles was hastily set-up. Ascending it, he delivered a sermon asking the people to be witness that he had faithfully performed the task of Prophethood entrusted to him by the Almighty.

The multitude cried in one: *“We bear witness O Messenger of Allah.”*

He asked, who in their opinion was more worthy of obedience than their souls, to which they replied that Allah and His Prophet know better.

Then he said: *“O people! Allah is my Maula (Master) and I am the Maula (master) of believers.”*

“Verily O Prophet of Allah”, came the unanimous reply.

Prophet Muhammad (S) then bent down and lifting up Ali bin Abi Talib (a) in his hands, showed him to the vast crowd and proclaimed those famous words, which guaranteed the continuation of divine leadership:

“For whomsoever I am Maula (master), this Ali is his Maula (master)...”

Thrice he proclaimed these words before descending the pulpit, relieved by having performed the great task which would save the Ummah from going astray.

The great multitude of Muslims surged towards Ali bin Abi Talib (a), felicitating him on his divine appointment. According to such famous scholars as Zamakhshari and Nasai, the first one to congratulate and swear allegiance (bai'ah) to Imam Ali (a) was Umar bin Khattab, who later became the second Caliph.

Gabriel descended again with another revelation, showing that the Almighty was pleased with His Prophet for having excellently performed the great final mission to mankind.

“...Today have I perfected unto you your religion and completed upon you My blessings and approved for you Islam as your religion...”Holy Qur'an (5:3)

This most important task ensured the continuity of divine guidance. Since the Prophets were divinely appointed, so should be the successors or trustees of the Prophets, especially so in the case of Islam, which is the final message to the human race.

All scholars and historians have testified that the event of Ghadir Khum² did take place, and moreover books of Hadith are witness that on many and occasion, the Prophet had emphasised his cousin's pre-eminence, over all other Muslims.

12. The Prophet's Death

Two months after his return to Madina, the Messenger of Allah fell ill, Madina wore a look of gloom, because for a fortnight, the Prophet of Islam was confined in bed. The dawning of 28th of the lunar month of Safar proved to be fateful, for on that day the 'Mercy to the worlds' although weak with fever made his way to the mosque to lead the prayers, which also proved to be for the last time. Following a brief speech he returned to the house and after giving necessary instructions to his divinely ordained successor Imam Ali (a), he breathed no more. The sad day marked the end of final Prophethood.

Allah, through His last and greatest Messenger has revealed the perfect and the most comprehensive set of laws for the entire human race, a constitution, which is capable of catering to the needs of all generations till doomsday. Now the need for further revelations will no more arise, for the Almighty in His Eternal Wisdom has embodied each and everything in the Holy Qur'an and taken upon Himself the responsibility of guarding it from interpolation. Moreover the Prophet practically showed the implementation of divine laws.

The Qur'an together with the Prophet's Sunnah (traditions) is to remain a guiding light for all mankind, and to ensure their correct meaning and application, Allah granted the leadership of the Ummah to the

Prophet's infallible household, the Ahlul-Bayt, who are the torch bearers of guidance for all Muslims.

Prophet Muhammad (S) was laid to rest in his mosque, and an aggrieved Imam Ali (a) performed the last rites of his noble cousin and father-in-law. He was survived by his daughter Fatimah and her two sons.

Today the grave of the Prophet is the site of pilgrimage and veneration for Muslims from all over the globe.

[1.](#) Mubahala means to invoke Allah's curse upon the lying side when two parties are contesting for truth.

[2.](#) For more details on the historic event of Ghadir Khum refer to such famous books as: Musnad Ahmad bin Hanbal, Part 1, page 118 & 119, part 4, page 281-370-372-373, part 5, page 347-370. Sunan bin Maja, Chapter 'Merits of Ali'. Mustadrik al-Hakim, part 3, page 109. Bin Kathir's History, part 5, page 210.

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