

Khalifa Ali bin Abu Talib - Death of the Holy Prophet

The Holy Prophet's address

A day later the fever subsided and the Holy Prophet took a bath. Refreshed by the bath he felt some relief, and went to the mosque to offer the noonday prayer. At the conclusion of the prayer, the Holy Prophet took his seat on the pulpit to address the congregation. The Holy Prophet said: "There is a servant whose Lord has given him the option between the life on this earth, and the life hereafter in nearness to his Lord, and the servant has chosen the latter."

Thereupon tears trickled down from the eyes of the companions and they said, "Holy Prophet, how can we live without you".

The Holy Prophet continued: "O People! It has reached me that you are afraid of the approaching death of your prophet. Has any previous prophet lived forever among the people to whom he was sent, so that I should live forever among you. Behold, I am about to go to my Lord. You too will go there sooner or later."

After the address, the Holy Prophet retired to the quarter of Ayesha. The exertion had its effect, and the fever became violent again. The night following the seventh of June 632 C.E. lay heavy on him. He was overheard praying constantly to Allah for His blessings, the morning of the eighth June brought some relief, when the fever and pain somewhat subsided. Moving the curtain he saw the Muslims offering their prayers. The Holy Prophet supported by Ali walked to the mosque. The people made way for him, opening their ranks as he stepped forward. Abu Bakr stepped backward to vacate his seat for the Holy Prophet. The Holy Prophet told Abu Bakr by a motion of his hand to continue to lead the prayers.

After the conclusion of the prayers, the Holy Prophet took his seat on the pulpit. He said that he had heard that the people were objecting to send an expedition to the Syrian front under the command of Usama. He observed that their objection was not valid as Usama was fit to lead the expedition to avenge the death of his father. He exhorted the people to do what was lawful and to refrain from doing that which was unlawful. He said that he had not made lawful except that which God had declared lawful nor he had prohibited anything but that which God had forbidden.

The Muslims were happy to see the Holy Prophet in their midst. They felt that the Holy Prophet had recovered, and that there was no danger to his life. Thereafter the Holy Prophet returned to the apartment of Ayesha. The exertion had its effect. The condition of the Holy Prophet grew worse, and within a few hours he passed away.

The faithful assembled in the mosque. There was an air of uneasiness in the atmosphere. There was a whispering that the Holy Prophet of Islam was dead. There were suppressed sobs and sighs. What would happen to the Muslims when the great prophet was to be no longer in their midst was the thought that disturbed everybody. All eyes were turned to the quarter of Ayesha. The faithful had the fond hope that the door of the chamber would open any moment, and the Holy Prophet would emerge with his face radiating divine light.

In the courtyard of the mosque, Umar moved among the people and said: "Who says that the Holy Prophet is dead. I testify that he is alive and has gone to Allah like Moses, and would return to us after some time." Then Abu Bakr came and addressed the people, saying: "Listen to me, ye people. Those of you who worshipped Muhammad know that he is dead like any other mortal. But those of you who worship the God of Muhammad know that He is alive and would live forever." Thereafter Abu Bakr quoted the following verses from the Holy Quran: "Muhammad is but a Messenger. Messengers of God have passed away

before him. What if he dies or is killed. Will you turn back upon your heels? And whosoever turns back upon his heels will by no means do harm to Allah."

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