

## Arrival In Yathrib

When the people of Yathrib heard that the Prophet (pbuh) had left Mecca and was on his way to their city, they anxiously awaited his arrival. Each morning they would go to the edge of the city to see if he were coming. Finally, on Monday, September 27, in the year 622 A.D., someone saw him in the distance and shouted to everyone, 'Here is Muhammad! (pbuh) the Messenger of Allah has arrived!' All the Muslims went out to greet him, shouting, "Allahu Akbar"! Allah is Great! Muhammad the Messenger of Allah has arrived!' The women and children sang songs to show how glad they were to see him. The Prophet (pbuh) entered the city with his friend Abu Bakr. Most of The people there had not seen him before and as they gathered around they did not know which of the two was the Prophet (pbuh), until Abu Bakr got up to shield him with his cloak from the burning sun. Yathrib would now be Called al-Medina, which means, The City.

The Messenger of God (pbuh) stayed in Quba', which is a place at the entrance of Medina, for three days. On the first Friday after his arrival the Prophet led the congregation in prayer. After this many of the wealthiest men invited him to come and live with them and share their riches. But he refused and, pointing to his she-camel, Qaswa', said, 'Let her go her way', because he knew that his camel was under Allah's command and would guide him to the spot where he should stay. They let the camel go until she finally knelt down beside a house belonging to the Bani an-Najjar, the tribe to whom the Prophet's mother was related. This house was used as a drying-place for dates and belonged to two young orphan boys named Sahl and Suhayl. They offered to give it to the Prophet (pbuh) but he insisted on paying them for it, and so their guardian, As'ad the son of Zurarah, who was present, made the necessary arrangements.

The Prophet (pbuh) ordered that a mosque and a place for him to live be built on the site. All the Muslims worked together to finish it quickly- even the Prophet (pbuh) joined in. It was here that the Muslims would pray and meet to make important decisions and plans. The building was quite plain and simple. The floor was beaten earth and the roof of palm leaves was held up by tree trunks. Two Stones marked the direction of prayer. At first worshippers faced Jerusalem, but Soon after the direction of prayer was changed towards the Ka'bah in Mecca.

After the building of the mosque, the Prophet (pbuh) wanted to strengthen the relationship between the people called the Muhajirah or Emigrants, who had left Mecca with him, and the people of Medina, who

were known as the Ansar, or Helpers. Each man from Medinah took as his brother a man from Mecca, sharing everything with him and treating him as a member of his own family. This was the beginning of the Islamic brotherhood. In the early days of Islam, the times for prayer were not announced and So the Muslims would come to the mosque and wait for the prayer so as not to miss it. The Prophet (pbuh) wondered how to tell the people that it was time for prayers. He discussed it with his friends, and at first two ideas were put forward; that of blowing a horn as the Jews did, and that of using a wooden clapper like the Christians.

Then a man called 'Abd Allah ibn Zayd came to the Prophet (pbuh) and told him he had had a dream in which he had seen a man dressed all in green, holding a wooden clapper. He had said to the man, 'Would you sell me your clapper in order to call the people to prayer?' The man had replied, 'A better way to call the people to prayer is to Say: "Allahu Akbar, Allah is Most Great!" four times, followed by "I bear witness that there is no divinity but Allah, I bear witness that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah, Come to prayer, come to prayer, Come to salvation, come to salvation. Allahu Akbar, Allahu Akbar! There is no divinity but Allah!"'

When the Prophet (pbuh) heard this, he said it was a true vision from Allah. He sent for Bilal, who had a beautiful, strong voice, and ordered him to call the people to prayer in just this way. Bilal did so and soon after 'Umar came out of his house and told the Prophet (pbuh) that he had seen exactly the same vision himself.

The Prophet (pbuh) replied, 'Allah be praised for that.' The adhan, or call to prayer, which came to 'Abd Allah ibn Zayd in his dream and was performed by Bilal on the instruction of the Prophet (pbuh), is the one we still hear today being called from the minarets of mosques all over the world.

## The Battle Of Badr

The Muslims who had gone to Medinah, had left all their belongings behind in Mecca and these had been taken by their enemies. Thus, when the Muslims heard that Abu Sufyan, one of the leaders of Quraysh, was on his way back to Mecca from Syria with a large caravan of goods, they decided that the time had come for them to retrieve some of their losses. The Prophet (pbuh) gave the Muslims permission for this attack and everyone began to get ready for the raid, for it had been revealed:

“Permission to fight is given unto those who fight because they have been wronged; and Allah is surely able to give them victory” (Qur'an 22.39)

“The Revelation had mentioned that a thing most serious with Allah was to turn (men) from the way of Allah, and to disbelieve in Him and in the Holy Mosque, and to drive his people from there...for persecution is worse than killing”. (Qur'an 2.217)

The retrieval of their goods, however, was not their only reason for wanting to attack the caravan. The Muslims did not think they should simply remain safely in Medinah; they wanted to spread the message of Islam. They thus felt that if Quraysh wanted freedom to trade in safety, then the Muslims must also have freedom to believe in Allah, to follow His Messenger (pbuh), and spread His Word. It was, therefore, thought that the best, and only way to get Quraysh to understand this was to attack what was most important to them—a caravan.

Abu Sufyan, in the meantime, heard about the Muslims' plan and quickly sent a message to Quraysh in Mecca, telling them that the caravan was in danger and asking for help. As a result nearly all Quraysh came out to help him defend the caravan. There were a thousand men and two hundred horses. The women also went along to cheer the men on with their singing. Unaware of this, the Prophet (pbuh) set out with his followers. It was the month of Ramadan and the Muslims were fasting.

There were only three hundred and five of them, most of them Ansar, men from Medinah. With them they had three horses and seventy camels, on which they rode in turns.

They arrived in the area of Badr, some distance from Medinah where they made camp and waited for news of the caravan. Then they heard that Quraysh had set out from Mecca with a strong army. The situation had suddenly changed. They were no longer going to make a raid on a



caravan-they were going to have to fight Quraysh. The Prophet (pbuh) gathered his men around him to find out what they wanted to do. First Abu Bakr, and then 'Umar, spoke for the Muslims who had come from Mecca. They said they would obey the Prophet (pbuh). But the Prophet (pbuh) wanted to hear the opinion of the Ansar, because he did not want to force them into doing something they did not want to do. Sa'd Ibn Mu'adh, one of the leaders of the Ansar, got up and said, we believe in you and we swear before all men that what you have brought is the truth.

We have given you our word and agreement to hear and obey. So go where you wish, we are with you even if you should lead us into the sea!

The Prophet (pbuh) was greatly encouraged by these words and so it was agreed to fight. Abu Sufyan learned where the Muslims were camped. He changed the course of the caravan and quickly took it out of their reach. He then sent word to Quraysh telling them that the caravan was safe and that they should return to Mecca. But the leaders of Quraysh were proud and stubborn men. They refused to return as they had made up their minds to show everyone how powerful they were by destroying the Muslims. Now there was a wadi, or valley, at Badr, with wells on the side nearest Medina, and it was here that the Muslims took up position facing the valley with the wells behind them.

Quraysh meanwhile placed themselves on the other side of the valley. The Muslims then dug a reservoir, filled it with water from one of the wells, and made a barrier around it. Then they stopped up the wells. In this way the Muslims had enough drinking water for themselves, while the Meccans would have to cross the valley and fight the Muslims in order to get water. The night before the battle, while the Muslims slept peacefully, a heavy rain fell.

“When He made the slumber fall upon you as a reassurance from Him and sent down water from the sky upon you, in order that He might purify you, and remove from you the fear of Satan, and strengthen your hearts and make firm (your) fret thereby”. (Qur'an 8.11) On the morning of Friday, the 17th of Ramadan, 2 A.H., (March 17th, AD), the two armies advanced and drew closer to one another. The rain been heavier on the side of Quraysh, making the ground soft and difficult. On the side of the Muslims, however, the rain had backed the sand down hard, making it easy for them to march. The Prophet (pbuh) preferred the men to fight in ranks. As they prepared to march he noticed someone had stepped out in front of the others.