



The Glorious Night Journey

Glory be to Him who took His slave on a journey night from Masjid Al-Haram to the Masjid Al- Aqsa whose surrounding we have blessed in order to show him some of our signs. He is the All-hearing, the All-seeing.

(Surah Bani Israel, Ayah 1)

"When that which covered the Lote-tree covered it. His eye did not waver nor did he look away. He saw some of the Greatest Signs of his Lord."

The beloved Messenger ﷺ had been preaching day and night for over ten years in Makkah, the result was a small band of fortunate souls heeded his message. The rest of Makkah not only remained oblivious but became actively hostile to him ﷺ and his ﷺ followers. The hostility grew, they socially boycotted the Messenger ﷺ they would not trade with him ﷺ and they mocked and jeered at him ﷺ. At this dark time, when his ﷺ foes were everywhere he ﷺ had two staunch allies: Khadijah, his wife and Abu Talib, his uncle. They would comfort and console him whenever he was afflicted. In the year of preaching in Makkah both his friends died one after another. What deep scars this made on his ﷺ soft, tender and loving heart is difficult to imagine. He ﷺ called this year the "year of mourning." Left without a worldly protector and some source of solace and comfort the Messenger ﷺ decided to visit the nearby city of Taif hoping that the inhabitants of this fertile valley may respond to Islam. However, to his ﷺ dismay he ﷺ found them to be even harsher and unwilling to listen. They even ignored the common practice of respecting a guest, instead they chased him ﷺ out of the city, stoning and catapulting him ﷺ until his feet were covered in blood. It was after this dreadful journey that one night as the Messenger ﷺ laid asleep the angel Jibreel came to him ﷺ and awoke him ﷺ. Jibreel revealed the purpose of his untimely intrusion and told him ﷺ how he had been summoned by the Lord to His mighty presence. He ﷺ was to be the guest of Allah, the heavens were decorated and prepared to welcome this 'wonderful guest'.

The above verses describe the two parts of this most remarkable ascent. The opening word of the verse of Isra (night journey) is 'subhan'. Subhan describes the absolute might, power, control and Greatness of Allah emphasising that He is free from any kind of weakness, frailty, shortcoming and need. He is glorious certainly. It was Subhan who took his beloved on this journey from the Kaabah to Jerusalem and from there to heavens, then to the Lote tree (Sadratul-Muntaha), and then to the

Kaabah of Angels and then to the Divine presence, all of which took as little as the twinkling of the eye. The Quran is reminding us of Divine Power and what it is capable of doing. Hence this Quranic verse explains to us how and why this wondrous Miracle happened when it says to "Show our signs".

All the Prophets were honoured by Allah in one-way or another but none were given this Divine reception that was given to Mohammed ﷺ

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