

Significance of Rabī' Al-Awwal

By Sh Kazi Luthfur Rahman

Rabī' Al-Awwal:

The month of Rabī' Al-Awwal is an extremely significant and historical month in Hijri Lunar Calendar. It is the 3rd month in which some of the greatest revolutionary events took place in the history of humanity. The name Rabī' Al-Awwal means the first month or beginning of spring, referring to its position in the pre-Islamic Arabian calendar. Hence this is considered to be a very blessed month.

Birth of prophet Mohammed PBUH:

The birth of the final messenger Mohammed PBUH who came as a mercy for whole entire mankind and as a reminder of the faith of all previous prophets took place on a Monday dated on 12th of Rabī' Al-Awwal. Vast majority historians are of the opinion that, the holy Prophet Mohammed PBUH was born on 12th of Rabī' Al-Awwal although this opinion is differed by some historians.

The advent of this magnificent prophet changed the fortunes of uncountable creation of this universe by the infinite mercy of his lord. His arrival gave a hope to misguided, deprived, oppressed and less privileged people of his society.

This great personality who is considered as the most influential man in the history of humanity contributed immensely towards the betterment and wellbeing of the whole entire creation.

Allah, the almighty praised his noble prophet in the Glorious Quran:

وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَاكَ إِلَّا رَحْمَةً لِّلْعَالَمِينَ

((We have not sent you (Oh Mohammed) except as a Mercy for all creatures))

In another verse of the Noble Quran:

وَإِنَّكَ لَعَلَىٰ خُلُقٍ عَظِيمٍ

((And verily, you (Oh Mohammed) are on an exalted standard of character))

Al-Qalam: 4

Pre-Islamic era at a glance:

The situation of the human societies in every aspect was in decline. Misguided faith, appalling character, extreme injustice, hatred towards females, racism and tribalism were amongst the major characteristic of pre-Islamic era. The discrimination against

their women folk was so severe that they would easily bury their baby girls alive as the birth of girls was a disgraceful incident in their society. In simple, pre-Islamic era tremendously suffered from the crisis of morality and humanity.

The holy prophet Mohammed PBUH could manage to direct that community of darkness which was full of idols to the light of oneness of Allah, the almighty. His relentless and sincere struggle turned that crime-full soci

ety into the most peaceful society ever had been witnessed by mankind over a short period of time. A society which enjoyed diversity, multi-faith, coexistence, fairness, equality, bond of brotherhood, love and affection, women's right on their maximum levels.

The holy prophet PBUH treated the decrease of pride and arrogance of people, taught them the equality and their origin by saying:

عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ قَالَ : قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ : (إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ قَدْ أَذْهَبَ عَنْكُمْ عُبْيَةَ الْجَاهِلِيَّةِ وَفَخَّرَهَا بِالْأَبَاءِ ؛ مُؤْمِنٌ تَقِيٌّ ، وَفَاجِرٌ شَقِيٌّ ؛ أَنْتُمْ بَنُو آدَمَ وَأَدَمُ مِنْ تُرَابٍ ، لَيْدَعَنَّ رَجُلًا فَخَرَهُمْ بِأَقْوَامٍ إِنَّمَا هُمْ فَحَمٌ مِنْ فَحَمِ جَهَنَّمَ ، أَوْ لِيَكُونَنَّ أَهْوَنَ عَلَى اللَّهِ مِنَ الْجِعْلَانِ الَّتِي تَدْفَعُ بِأَنْفِهَا النَّتْنَ) .

((Indeed, Allah removed the deceases from the ear of darkness from you, and its boasting about lineage. Indeed, a person is either a pious believer, or a miserable sinner. And people are all the children of Adam, and Adam was [created] from dust))

Sunan At-Tirmizi

Prophet Mohammed PBUH; A source of mercy:

The crisis of love, affection, kindness and mercy was another characteristic of the people before the advent of Islam. Allah, the almighty decided to send a man with the mission of mercy in this world. This fact was declared in the holy Quran in chapter Ambiah.

وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَاكَ إِلَّا رَحْمَةً لِّلْعَالَمِينَ

((I have not sent you (Oh Mohammed) to the whole entire creation except as a mercy))

Ambiah: 107

The holy prophet of mercy trained the humanity how to be merciful with each and every single creation in this universe.

He said in a statement:

الرَّاحِمُونَ يَرْحَمُهُمُ الرَّحْمَنُ ارْحَمُوا مَنْ فِي الْأَرْضِ يَرْحَمَكُم مِّنْ فِي السَّمَاءِ الرَّحْمَنُ شُجْنَةً مِنَ الرَّحْمَنِ فَمَنْ وَصَلَهَا وَصَلَهُ اللَّهُ وَمَنْ قَطَعَهَا قَطَعَهُ اللَّهُ

((People of mercy will be shown mercy by their merciful lord. Be merciful with the creation on this earth, and you will be shown mercy from the one above the

heavens. The womb is named after Ar-Rahman, so whoever connects it, Allah connects him, and whoever severs it, Allah severs him))

Sunan At-Tirmizi

His compassion was absolutely apparent on the day he freed the captive enemies after the conquest of the holy land of Makkah. His famous statement of that day "Go, you are free today" will be remembered vividly in the history of Islam.

He was highly merciful with the animal world let alone the humans. The following story can clarify for this point.

عن ابن مسعود رضي الله عنه قال: كنا مع رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم في سفر، فانطلق لحاجته، فرأينا حمرة معها فرخان، فأخذنا فرخيها، فجاءت الحمرة فجعلت تعرش فجاء النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم فقال: "من فجع هذه بولدها؟ ردوا ولدها إليها" ورأى قرية نمل قد حرقناها، فقال: "من حرق هذه؟" قلنا: نحن. قال: "إنه لا ينبغي أن يعذب بالنار إلا رب النار.

((On the authority of Ibnu Masud Radiallahu Anhu:

We were with the Messenger of Allah PBUH in a journey when he drew apart (to relieve nature). In his absence, we saw a red bird which had two young ones with it. We caught them and the red mother bird came, beating the earth with its wings. In the meantime the Prophet PBUH returned and said, "Who has put this bird to distress on account of its young? Return them to her.

He PBUH also noticed a mound of ants which we had burnt up. He asked, "Who has set fire to this?" We replied: "We have done so." He PBUH said, "None can chastise with fire except the creator of the fire))

Sunan Abu-Dawud

Love for Prophet Mohammed PBUH:

Muslims extremely love Prophet Mohammed PBUH as well all the prophets and messengers of Allah, the almighty. Love for the prophet is a condition and requirement of their faith.

روي الخاري عن عبدالله بن هشام قال: كنا مع النبي - صلى الله عليه وسلم - وهو أخذ بيد عمر بن الخطاب، فقال له عمر: يا رسول الله، لأنت أحب إلي من كل شيء إلا من نفسي، فقال النبي - صلى الله عليه وسلم -: ((لا والذي نفسي بيده، حتى أكون أحب إليك من نفسك))، فقال له عمر: فإنه الآن والله لأنت أحب إلي من نفسي، فقال النبي - صلى الله عليه وسلم -: ((الآن يا عمر))

On the authority of Abdullah Bin Hisham Radiallahu Anhu:

We were with the Prophet PBUH and he was holding the hand of Omar Bin Al-Khattab. Omar said to Him, "O Allah's Messenger PBUH! You are dearer to me than everything except my own self." The Prophet PBUH said, "No, by Him in Whose Hand my soul is, (you will not have complete faith) till I am dearer to you than your own self.

Then Omar said to him, "However, now, by Allah, you are dearer to me than my own self." The Prophet PBUH said, "Now, O Omar, (now you are a complete believer)

The meaning of a true love:

The genuine meaning of love in Islam is not merely an expression of love rather it must be demonstrated through the actions and obedience.

Allah, the almighty said:

قُلْ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تُحِبُّونَ اللَّهَ فَاتَّبِعُونِي يُحْبِبْكُمُ اللَّهُ وَيَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ ذُنُوبَكُمْ ۗ وَاللَّهُ غَفُورٌ رَحِيمٌ

((Say (O Muhammad PBUH to mankind): "If you (really) love Allah then follow and obey me, Allah will love you and forgive you of your sins. And Allah is Most Forgiving, Most Merciful))

Al-Imran: 31

Famous Arab poet Nabigah Az-Zunbyani said:

إِنَّ الْمَحَبَّ، لَمَنْ يُحِبِّ، مُطِيعٌ

((A true lover is the one who obeys his beloved one))

So, love for prophet Mohammed PBUH must be shown through adhering to his tradition in every aspect of our life.

Celebration of Prophet's Birth:

Indeed, the birth of prophet Mohammed PBUH is the happiest moment for the whole creation. He is the most precious gift from Allah, the almighty to whole entire mankind.

We celebrate his arrival in every second and moment of our life by sending uncountable Salams and Salutations upon him, accepting his way and most importantly following his Sunnah. He is the most successful man in this world and the best role model as a prophet, preacher, ruler, commander, humanitarian, father and husband.

The scholars of Islam differed on the issue of specifying 12th of Rabiul Awaal for celebrating prophets birth.

Some scholars considered the celebration of prophet's birth is an act innovation and it must be avoided as there is no evidence can be found during the early era of Islam.

However, there is a big number of scholars which include Imam Ibnu Hajar Al-Asqalani, Imam As-Suyuti and Imam Ibnu Taymiah are of the opinion that it is permissible if some Muslims gather on that day to send Salaams upon prophet PBUH, remember and study his biography only.

Unfortunately, many Muslims excessively exaggerate on 12th of Rabiul Awaal which is very similar to what many Christians do on their Christmas Day such as decorating the houses, putting extra lights on prayer places, cutting the big cakes and other non-islamic activities which truly go against the teaching of our beautiful religion.

May Allah increase our knowledge and grant us the correct understanding of his religion.