

In Praise of the Prophet 2

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In the name of God, the Beneficent, the Merciful.

May God's peace and blessings be upon our master Muhammad.

All praises are due to the One who chose Muhammad.

May He bless and grant salvation to Prophet Muhammad.

I wish to list some of the miracles of Muhammad,

for I'm full of love for Prophet Muhammad.

The depth of knowledge of Muhammad is boundless.

Only a little of it has been disclosed to humans by the Lord of Muhammad.

He is made of skin and flesh,¹ and he is the best of creation.

He is the one who went on to the Night Journey.² God named him "Muhammad."

He is the one who mounted the fast one,³ faster than thought,

much like thought outpaced the pedestrian pace of Muhammad.

Al-Buraq traveled like lightning or the blink of an eye or a thought,

an exceptional horse, indeed, thanks to the blessing of Muhammad.

Gabriel accompanied Prophet Muhammad

but when they arrived, God only summoned Muhammad.⁴

God said: "O, the best of the universe,

¹ Being made of skin and flesh means "being human." This idea is often used by Muslims to indicate that one could celebrate Prophet Muhammad's virtues and miracles without treating him as God.

² Here the poet refers to the *Isra'* and *Mi'raj*, the two parts of the Night Journey that Muslims believe that Prophet Muhammad took to meet with other prophets and ascend to heaven to speak with God.

³ Here the author refers to the winged horse called *Al-Buraq* that Muslims believe Prophet Muhammad mounted during the Night Journey.

⁴ Here and in the subsequent lines, the poet suggests that Archangel Gabriel rank lower than Prophet Muhammad before God.

come closer, learn about the secrets of the Lord of Muhammad!"

Then, he entered where no creature with skin and flesh has ever entered.

Never one before him had been there and no one after Muhammad will ever be.

What the Lord offered him was innumerable

at that one time. How great a Lord is the Master of Muhammad!

Great were the privileges that Muhammad received on that day

in knowledge, education, and distinction. All of this was offered to Muhammad.

On his return, God sent Muhammad with

perfect verses, verses that were pleasing to Muhammad.

Through these verses, He showed creation the superiority of Ahmad.⁵

No one can estimate the divine favors of Muhammad!

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After all, who could count the stones of earth and its grains of sand,

or count the drops of rain from the Lord of Muhammad?

How can one who is unable to count what is in front of him

be able to count the divine privileges of Muhammad?

If you pondered over his privileges, you would realize that they come

from his closeness to the Lord of Muhammad.

No prophet who preceded him has ever received such privileges,

and no one else can receive them, except Prophet Muhammad.

The Lord purified him so much that He named him the Chosen One [Mustafaa].

Don't be surprised about anything that God gives Muhammad.

A dry tree trunk once wept for its love for Muhammad,

⁵ One of the most common names of Muhammad.

just as a spider once wove its web to protect Muhammad.

A pigeon once laid eggs and a tree dangled its branches

in order to protect Muhammad.

The first gift offered to Muhammad was the revelation of

“Read!,” the first Quranic verse revealed to Muhammad.⁶

An udder once lactated when touched by Muhammad,

and songs were heard the day Muhammad’s prophethood was revealed.

Water sprung from a fountain when Muhammad was born,

and flames went out in honor of Muhammad.

A light appeared the night of the Prophet’s birth

and the horizon was illuminated by the white light of Muhammad.

A cooked goat with poison

spoke to the chosen one, Muhammad, telling him not to touch it.

Many have been healed by the blessed spit of Muhammad,

and mud turned into a river by the touch of Muhammad.

His predecessors wished to be part of Muhammad’s community

in vain; yet, we are fortunate to belong to it.

Glory be to the One who chose our prophet among all prophets

and chose us among all communities for the sake of Muhammad.

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I will praise you, O Lord, an eternal praise

that is limitless in favor of Muhammad.

You whose power is everlasting,

⁶ See Quran, Chapter 6.

offer Your everlasting love to Muhammad.

Were it not for God's love for the Messenger, Muhammad,

neither the sun nor the moon would have been created by the Lord of Muhammad.

If you imagine the shade-bearing cloud following Muhammad,⁷

you would appreciate the raincloud-like generosity upon Muhammad.

If you imagine the sun and then the moon increasing their blessings [due to Muhammad]

and the brightness of God's Throne, you would realize that Muhammad is unrivaled.

Never has there been and never will there be anyone like Muhammad.

There will never be anyone comparable to Muhammad.

At six years old, he resembled someone who was fourteen. He was adored

for his good manners and his physical appearance.

When he ascended [to the heavens], he was greeted by a crowd of angels

and the messengers of God who sought his blessings.

They were saying: "You are most welcome, O Muhammad,

the Elected in name and form! Keep climbing,⁸ O Muhammad."

"But first, lead us in two *raka'as*⁹ before you move on

so that we may be illuminated by your bright light, O Muhammad."

The heavens took pride in the ascension of Muhammad,

and other messengers were proud of praying behind Muhammad.¹⁰

Gabriel was proud to have accompanied Muhammad.

⁷ This refers a cloud that some Muslims believe followed Prophet Muhammad in multiple occasions during his life.

⁸ By "keep climbing," the poet means keep climbing to the higher levels of the heavens.

⁹ Muslim prayers are made up of 1-4 sets called *raka'as*. Each *raka'a* is made up of standing, bowing, and prostrating. Two *raka'as* are customary non-obligatory prayers that a guest makes upon arriving at a mosque. The poet suggests here that other prophets asked Muhammad, their special guest of honor, to lead them in this optional form of prayer.

¹⁰ The suggestion here is that Muhammad led the prayer (as Imam), and therefore the other messengers (prophets) prayed behind him.

the messengers rejoiced to have seen Muhammad in person.

This world is proud to be the birthplace of Muhammad,

and this land prided itself for being the burial place of Muhammad.

The hereafter awaits eagerly Muhammad,

along with the blessings that God has reserved for him.

The sun saw pride in the return of Muhammad,

the moon prided itself on splitting apart in honor of Muhammad.¹¹

Once a tree called by the Prophet Muhammad

uprooted itself to greet Prophet Muhammad.

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Its roots seemed to write letters as it swayed along the road,

showing off, beaming with joy for a handshake with Muhammad.

Think about the exceptionality of this Prophet, Muhammad.

Even the dead have spoken to Muhammad.

He has the privilege of intercession on the Judgment Day

when everybody will be terrified, O Prophet Muhammad.

When the fire of hell roars, it will overwhelm everyone with fear,

even the Prophets, except Muhammad.

It will roar with layers of flame upon flame,

as hasten in anger for those who did not believe in Muhammad.

With its putrid, dark, and smoky features, it would disorient all creatures,

but it will keep its distance from Muhammad due to its fear of him.

God has decreed that it will take five hundred years [to stop the fire],

¹¹ Muslims believe that one of Prophet Muhammad's miracles was the splitting of the moon.

before He makes it clear to the beloved, Muhammad.

He [Muhammad] will stand and say, let the fire come no further.

"Don't anger him anymore," will say the Lord of Muhammad.

"O, you fire, obey the words of Muhammad!

Don't annihilate those who prayed and blessed Muhammad."

Still, it would crinkle with sputter upon sputter, overwhelming us all,

even the messengers, except Prophet Muhammad.

Then, it would retreat farther the distance of five hundred years,

realizing it had been rude towards Prophet Muhammad.

It would apologize, show remorse and fear to the Lord of Muhammad

for raising its voice and exploding around Muhammad.

It would say "My Lord, offer me a meal, from here on out,

for I am ashamed to consume someone who praised Muhammad.

Give me those who stood for injustice and denied Muhammad.

All of whom I would destroy, even those from the community of Muhammad."

Then, it would put up a barrier, putting an end to salvation.

There would be no safe path for anyone, except for those who blessed Muhammad.

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The masses would arrive searching for an intercessor,

starting with Adam, father of the community of Muhammad.

He would say: "go to the favorite Prophets,

starting with Noah, all the way to Muhammad.

Noah and Abraham would say they are not granted [the privilege of being intercessors]

as would Moses and Jesus seeking assistance from Muhammad."

They would all seem sad, withdrawn, not saying a word

about their chance of interceding with the Lord of Muhammad.

They would wait for the appointed leader of all the Prophets,

he whose intercession is guaranteed without lifting a finger, Muhammad.

The favored [Muhammad] would say: "I'm the one granted

the privilege of intercession since the beginning, by the Lord of Muhammad."

Thus, the bows and prostrations to God by Muhammad

would prompt God to say: "Don't prostrate, just intercede, O Muhammad!"

"Ask and I shall grant your request, O Muhammad."

The beloved Muhammad would respond to God "Your wish!"

"O Lord, the Judgment Day has been protracted for Your creation,

they are choking!¹² Please show mercy to those who love Muhammad."

"Manifest Your promise and Your will,

Your knowledge and other attributes, and preserve the community of Muhammad."

"Offer them shelter, prosperity, and the chance

to intercede, O Commander of the Brigade of Muhammad."

At which point every Prophet would intercede for his community,

trickling down until it reaches the saints and followers of Muhammad.

Then follows the fortunate ones, as if spring has sprung,

with the gift from the Lord saying, "Bless him, Muhammad."

God shall save all those who followed Muhammad

as David sings praises of our Prophet Muhammad.

¹² Here the author used the Pular word *billi* which refers to choking, tightening, being impoverished, uncomfortable, and clustering.

In the audience would be those who prayed to God and praised Muhammad.

How sad I would be if I did not praise Muhammad,

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and I did not hear the voice of Muhammad with my own ears!

I wish I had witnessed the time of Muhammad,

or to have seen the traces of Muhammad.

O God, fulfill the wishes of all believers.

Please grant me the favor of seeing

your beloved Muhammad,

for those who saw the face of Muhammad are all gone.

Please don't leave me yearning to see Muhammad!

O God, shower your endless peace and blessings upon our master, Muhammad.

The poem was completed by the grace of God, the Exalted.

By the Grace of God and His great assistance.

Praise be to God, the Lord of the universe.

The poem belongs to Ahmad Julde, son of Alhaajji Muhammad Ramadan.

There is no strength or power, except the one derived from God, the Most High, the Sublime.

Written by Ahmad Julde.

O God, forgive me and forgive my father,

and make heaven his home.

O God, shower your endless peace and blessings upon Muhammad.

O God, grant us privileges in this world and the hereafter.

O God, shower your endless peace and blessings upon Muhammad.