

On the Passing of the Prophet

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

May God bestow peace and blessings onto our master Muhammad.

Praise be to the One who included me in the community of the Messenger of God,

He who taught me what is allowed from what is forbidden by God.

Bless Your beloved [Prophet], on my behalf, O Lord,

and grant Your peace by a fold immeasurable by Your creatures.

I will talk about the death of the favorite of God,

Muhammad, the beloved, the best creature of God.

When God brought divine help to His beloved in the form of

access [to His secrets], more people embraced the religion of God.

He soared in popularity as the chosen of God,

and more servants professed their faith in God.

When the time drew near for the favorite of God

to answer the call, to go to the hereafter, the Land of God,

he fell ill for eighteen days of God.

His last will, one Monday, was to obey God.

He said: "It's time for me to witness the Will of God,

that which is inevitable. Strengthen your commitment to this religion of God."

When Bilal arrived to make the call of the morning prayer of God,

he approached and greeted the favorite of God.

At which point, Fatima came out to say that the Messenger of God

is occupied and that something prevents him from leading the prayer to God.

Upon hearing the voice of Bilal, the Messenger of God,

said to those around him: "Open the door for the Muezzin¹ of God."

Upon seeing the Messenger, he said to [Bilal]: "Go and

tell them that I am unable. I am in the hands of God."

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Go tell Abu Bakr al-Siddiq to lead you in prayer.

I cannot today lead the morning prayer of God.

Bilal wept, placed his two hands on his head

and returned to the mosque: "The Messenger of God

says you should lead us today in prayer. Today, Oh Al-Siddiq,

today he can't [lead us in prayer]." And so wailed the servants of God.

When the Messenger heard the wailing from the servants of God,

he followed with: "Fatima, why are the servants of God wailing?"

She said: "Bilal told them you couldn't lead the prayer,

and if they don't see you, they'll miss God's morning prayer."

"Well, then, send for Ali, your husband,

and Abdullah to come and get me to calm the servants of God."

The Messenger leaned on those two, went, and led the prayer.

Those two raka'as² were not prolonged by the Messenger of God.

He faced them and said: "Dear Muslims, listen,

¹ Job title for one who calls Muslims to prayer, as was the case for Bilal, the first Muezzin.

² The unit that measures the number of times one repeats a standard set of moves in a prayer, each consisting of a standing, bowing, and prostration position.

I am headed to the hereafter; I am on my way to answer the call of God.

We'll leave each other committed to fearing God,

complying with His commands and staying clear of His prohibitions.

To the immigrants who defended the religion of God,

be steadfast in your worship. I am returning to God.

To the natives of Medina, the City of God,

I say goodbye once more. Today, I have been called back by God.

Today is the last day, by the decree of God,

that we will be together sharing stories. I am returning to God!

Today, I shall return to the hereafter, the City of God.

I designate Abu Bakr as successor to lead the prayer times of God.

Don't idle! Make a lifelong commitment to the religion of God.

By God, we will meet again in the Plain of The Levant!"³

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When God ordered the Angel of Death to finally visit

the beloved, the favored one above all the servants of God,

he was ordered to look presentable and be gentle

so that no part of him would be terrifying to the Messenger of God.

God told him: "Go, ask for permission, and enter only if permitted by the Messenger of God.

If he tells you to come back, obey the Messenger of God."

The Angel of Death landed with the company of beloved angels, exuding a glow

³ Here the poet used the Arabic word *Sham (Levant)* which encompasses the northwest region of the Arabian Peninsula. Some Muslims think that the place of final gathering on the Day of Resurrection or the Judgment Day will be somewhere in Sham.

and saying: "Peace be upon you, O Messenger of God,
and upon the household of the Messenger, the favorite of God.

I now ask for permission to enter the home of the Messenger of God."

He greeted and asked for permission a second time.

No one answered. But the Messenger of God sensed his presence.

"By the door, there is someone asking for permission to enter
and deliver a message," said the Messenger of God.

"O Fatima, ask who is at the door."

She replied: "The caller, O Messenger of God,
is a man who wished to enter, but I told him that God

had sickened the chosen one among the creatures of God.

I told him you are unable [to see him], O Messenger of God.

He is worried for you. You have been sickened by God.

He called the second time, I answered. By the third time

my whole body shivered as it was moved by God."

The favored one said: "Don't you know who it is, my daughter?

He could demolish homes and fill the graveyards of God.

He is the one who cuts short wishes and separates all unions of the world.

He could ruin the world and turn it to the tombs of God.

He could orphan children, make widows out of wives, distancing them

from their wealth as the providers go to the grave of God.

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He is the one who separates a mother from her child, siblings

from stepsiblings and sends them all to God."

The favored one received the Angel of Death, welcoming him.

Once greetings had been exchanged, the favored creature of God said:

“Is this a visit or do you have an order from God
to take my soul and return it to God?”

[The Angel of Death replied]: “If you don’t allow it, I’ll return to God.

I can’t risk disapproval in matters between you and God.”

[The Prophet said]: “And where did you leave Gabriel,

my friend who became so dear to me,

the friend who would bring me prophetic messages from our Lord,

so we could bid each other farewell?” Then Azrael⁴ said to him:

“He is on his way, along the horizon of the heavens of God,

being consoled by kind angels of God.

They tell him to accept your fate and that you are returning to God!”

Not long thereafter, Gabriel arrives by the Messenger of God.

The favored one said: “O Gabriel, my dear friend,

have you been told it is time that I returned to God?”

[Gabriel replied]: “I know very well, O beloved of God.

I am just saddened by your departure from this world of God.”

[The Prophet said]: “So, then make me happy before I depart this world,

since you will be my successor for this religion of God.”

[Gabriel said]: “All the souls of the hereafter are waiting for you,

to greet you, welcome you, and show respect to the beloved of God.

⁴ *Azrael* is the name of the Angel of Death in Islam.

Heaven has been opened and the angels are standing
in formation, ready to welcome you, Messenger of God.

All [the other angels in heaven] are ready, awaiting your soul,
for your soul is above all other souls of God.”

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[The Prophet said]: “I am pleased to hear that. Come closer and please me more.
I will never get bored of hearing the blessings from God.”

[Gabriel added]: “Adorned women of paradise [houris], landscapes of flowing
rivers,⁵ mansions of heaven are all gifts to the Messenger of God.

The fruits of paradise have been strung together
everywhere and are ready to be served to the Messenger of God.”

[The Prophet said]: “I am pleased to hear that. Come closer and please me more.
I will never be tired of hearing my gifts stowed away by God.”

[Gabriel] said to him: “You will be the first to intercede
on Judgment Day, the moment when all creatures are resurrected by God.”

[The Prophet said]: “I am pleased to hear that, please relieve me of my worries.
As for my community, what is in store for them?”⁶

[Gabriel said]: “Just ask for whatever you desire, and the Lord will grant it
as He grants every request you make.”

“At the start,” says Gabriel: “Heaven will be forbidden to every other
prophet and saint of God.

Until you bring in your community,

⁵ What is implied here is flowing rivers of water, milk, and honey, among other drinkable liquids.

⁶ This line was first omitted but added in the margin by the scribe.

no messenger would be granted access to the paradise of God.”

[The Prophet said]: “My heart is joyful! Permission is now granted

to the one who came to take me. Let him come. I will now answer the call of God.”

As Azrael entered the room Gabriel wept,

turning his face away from the Messenger of God.

[The Prophet said]: “Why would you now turn away your face

from your familiar dear friend, just as he answers the call of God?”

[Gabriel replied]: “Who is capable of looking at

someone like you now when he is in the hands of God’s Death Angel?

Who could manage to stare at you, the beloved of God,

when you are leaving this world for the tomb of God?”

When the Messenger of God felt his soul reaching his navel,

he said: “What could be more bitter than death, O God!”

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Gabriel and the beloved angels of God

all wailed as the soul exited the body of the Messenger of God.

All the wives cried along with humans and jinns,

as did the beasts, the seas, the rivers and the lands of God!

This poem was completed on a Wednesday.

It was written by Ahmad Julde, son of Alhaajji Muhammad

Ramadan, son of Cerno Ahmad Fula Madiyanke.

Forgive me, O God,

and forgive my parents, our teachers,

our wives, our children, our siblings

and forgive as all Muslims,

those alive and those deceased.

Forgive all of them in their entirety.

Praise be to God, the Lord of the universe.