

Efforts in Connection with Education in the Era of the Holy

Prophet Muhammad (SAW)

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Abstract

The Prophet Muhammad (SAW) was the most effective orator of all the times. He knew how to address the hearts, and thus he became the beloved one of the hearts. He first made himself loved, and then sought the ways to educate people. He used a style in his speeches that affected people and made them think, so he achieved permanent behavior change in people by means of the best educational methods.

It is fact that in the present times those nations who give priorities to knowledge are ruling over the world in one way or the other way i.e. militarily or economically. A very important questions strikes the minds that what is the importance of Duniavi(world) knowledge in Islam. Objectives of this study were to investigate the importance of duniavi(world) knowledge in the light of Quran and hadith and provide a guide line to our young generation for getting knowledge. There are many hadiths that encourage education and criticizes ignorance. Being a member of the Muslim nation it is our responsibility to train and guide our young generation for better future.

Keywords: knowledge, Wisdom, Teaching of Quran, Hadith

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Introduction

Allah (سبحانهُ تعالى) said: “like (a favor which you have already received) in that we have sent among you a Messenger of your own, rehearsing to you our verses, and purifying you, and instructing you in Scripture and Wisdom, and in new knowledge”¹. Prophet’s status as an educator is described in some verses of the holy Quran as:

Hazrat Abraham said “O Our lord! Rise up in their midst a messenger from among them who shall recite unto them your revelations and shall instruct them in the scripture and in the Hikmah (wisdom) and shall make them grow in purity”². Our prophet ﷺ explained his duty as “Allah sent me as an educator”³. In the above quoted verse, Allah has mentioned the objectives of the mission of the prophet Muhammad ﷺ. One of the objectives was to teach the Book, the Wisdom and unknown things. Thus he was sent among men as a Teacher as well.

These verses and others are examples of the prophet’s role in implementing the dictates in the holy Qur’an, both upon himself and his companions, in order to purify their morals, habits, and lives.

Allah سبحانهُ تعالى said: “It is he who has sent among the unlettered a Messenger from themselves reciting to them his verses and purifying them and teaching them the Book and wisdom although they were before in clear error”⁴. Allah sent Prophet Muhammad ﷺ to do four things:

- 1 Recite the verses of the Qur’an
- 2 Teach the Qur’an
- 3 Teach the Wisdom
- 4 Purify his followers

The Prophet (PBUH) nurtured his companions and taught them in such a way that the whole of Arabia drastically changed in a period of 23 years.

Purpose of Islamic Education

There are three terms which are used for education in Islamic perspective that is ta'līm, Tarbiyah and Ta'dīb. In Arabic language Ta'līm means to be aware, to know, to perceive and to learn which shows that knowledge is imparted through teaching, whereas Tarbiyah is to grow, to increase and to

rear that is the spiritual and ethical upbringing according to the will of Allah. Ta'dīb refers to well-manners, to be cultured emphasizing on development of social behavior⁵. Education in Islam covers all the aspects including physical, intellectual, moral, spiritual as well as social dimensions of the human personality. Knowledge should be imparted in order to actualize and perfect all the dimensions of human being. Acquiring intellectual and spiritual knowledge is not an end but a mean to stimulus leading to faith and right action and for this purpose the highest and most useful model of perfection is our prophet Hazrat Muhammad (ﷺ).

Reading and Writing in the Era of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW)

Muslims believe that the words of the Quran are the literal words of God, and preserving them was always of paramount concern. From the earliest days of Islam, the prophet's companions began to write down the words of the Quran. They were written on back, bone, animal skins, and even stones. There is no doubt that writing has spread in the era of the prophet and its spread was on a large scale than it was in the Jaahiliyyah(dark age). The Holy Quran urged on learning as the Holy Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) also urged on it. The nature of Prophet Hood required a lot of writers for learners and readers. So revelation, matter of state, correspondence, covenants and charters also required writers. Number of writers increased after Islam to fill the needs of the new state. There were round about forty writers of Holy prophet (ﷺ) whom were responsible to write the revelation including Abu Bakr رضى الله عنه, Uthman رضى الله عنه, Ali رضى الله عنه, Mua'wiyah رضى الله عنه, Aban bin Saeed رضى الله عنه, Khalid bin Walid رضى الله عنه, Abi ibn ka'b رضى الله عنه, Zayd ibn Thabit رضى الله عنه, Qays رضى الله عنه. They wrote the Qura'n on whatthey possess like Alas palm of trees, the patches, pieces of mantle and the bones of the shoulders and rids⁶.

During the period of Makkah our prophet (ﷺ) encouraged Sahabha رضى الله عنه (Companions) رضى الله عنه to duplicate and distribute the verses that were revealed on him. Dar al Arqam was used as an education center in the early period of Islam. Muslims learned the Quran and principles of Islam there and practiced what they have learned. Some writers wrote alms and charity matter, some wrote al-madainat and other transactions and some were writing letters in different languages.

After hijrah first of all a mosque was setup called Masjid-e-Nabvi, which served as both a place of worship as well as education center. Adjacent to Masjid-e-Nabvi a place called “suffah” where companions as well as the people far away stayed there and remained busy in reading and writing. Our prophet ﷺ also taught there. The sphere of the educational services of our holy prophet ﷺ were not limited only to a specific community or religion in spite of very limited resources. After the establishment of Suffah many other educational spots were opened those ensured educational services to the people of their respective communities⁷. Hazrat obadah bin al-Sa’ami رضى الله عنه said that prophet ﷺ appointed him to train the residential of Suffah in writing and learning Quran⁸. Despite the political and combat engagements holy prophet ﷺ focused on education to eradicate the illiteracy form the society of Madina and Saeed bin al-Aa’ رضى الله عنه were deputed as teacher for reading and writing skills as he was a good calligrapher⁹.

When Islamic state established after migration number of writers increased as there were nine mosques along with the mosque of Holy prophet ﷺ in the city of Madina and these are centers of attention of the Muslims in which they learn the Holy Quran, the teachings of Islam, reading and writing. Muslim who knew reading and writing contributed to teach their brothers. And from these early Muslim ibn al Rabee Saad Kharji رضى الله عنه and Bashir bin Saad bin Tha’labah رضى الله عنه and Aban bin Saeed bin al Aas رضى الله عنه and others. Omar رضى الله عنه was one among the few people in Makah who knew Reading and writing before Islam. Usman رضى الله عنه was one of the few persons of Mecca who knew reading and writing.

Acquiring Knowledge through Non-Muslims

How great important is attached to learning in Islam can be understood from an event in the life of the Prophet ﷺ. At The battle of Badr in which the Prophet gained victory over his opponents, seventy people of the enemy rank were taken prisoner. It was decided that he who teaches ten Muslim how to read and write, this will serve as his ransom and he will be set free¹⁰.

This was the first school in the history of Islam established by the prophet ﷺ himself with all its teachers being non – Muslim. Furthermore, they will

again create problems for Islam and Muslims. This sunnah of the prophet ﷺ shows that education is to be received whatever the risk involved.

Learning other Languages

There were some people among the Companions who speak Persian, Greek, Coptic, Abyssinian, Hebrew and Syria. Once the prophet ﷺ asked Zayd bin Thabit, said, I do not know, the prophet ﷺ said, learn it. There upon, Zayd learned Hebrew and Syrian¹¹.

Importance of Research

On the one hand Islam places great emphasis to education and on the other; all those factors which are necessary to make progress in learning have been provided by Allah. One of these special factors is the freedom of research. One example of it is that in Makkah (the birthplace of the prophet) dates were not grow. Afterworld the Prophet ﷺ migrated to Madinah the city of dates. One day the prophet ﷺ saw that some people were atop the date trees busy in doing something. On being asked what they were engaged in, they replied that they were pollinating. The prophet ﷺ suggested them not to do so the following year date yield was considerably very low. The Prophet ﷺ enquired them of the reason. They told him that the date crop depended on pollination since he suggested them to do otherwise, they had refrained from that, The Prophet ﷺ then told them to go on doing as they used to, and that you know the world matters better than me¹².

Teacher Training by Prophet Muhammad (SAW)

Prophet Muhammad ﷺ immediately set about teaching his people the principles of Islam soon after receiving Divine Revelation in Makah. He disciple them and taught them to invite people to Allah's message in good manner and with Wisdom. Muhammad ﷺ encouraged his followers to attend learning classes, and he sent teachers of Quran to the outlying tribes and far away cities. Teachers of Islam were trained by the prophet ﷺ himself through the Quran which revolutionized their live. Above all, he trained them and taught them to invite people. To Allah's message in a good manner and with wisdom. The First Muslim teacher began to teach new Muslim how to read and recite the verses of the Qur'an it is recorded

that time and most of the teaching took place orally. As their demand grew Muslims teachers began to teach in different localities and tribes in and around Makah.

Ma'sab bin Umair(RA)

Holy prophet Muhammad ﷺ sent Ma'sab bin Umair(RA) to Medina on the demand of Ous and Kazraj to teach the new Muslims the fundamentals of Islam. Ma'sabeb (RA) went to Medina to represent Prophet Muhammad ﷺ with a smiling face, kindness, fine oratory skills and exemplary morals. He extrudes the house of Assad bin Zurara (RA) in to a Quran school. He explained Islam to the people of Medina gently, smiling all the while. He was their imam when they prayed and he was their arbitrator when they found themselves in dispute. He led people in the first ever Friday prayer in the house of Sa'd binul A'asas(RA) imam with the permission of the Prophet ﷺ. And as results, the houses of Medina started to be illuminated, one by one. He was the head of the seventy people who came to the second pledge of allegiance at Aqaba: They were honored with the precious words of the Prophet ﷺ: Your blood is my bloom; your forgiveness is my forgiveness. I am one of you and you are one with me. Ansar prepared Medina for the arrival of her beloved master¹³.

A'yesha Siddiqa' (RA)

Hazrat A'yesha (رضى الله عنها) one of Prophet Muhammad's (SAW) wives, not only narrated so many of his Sayings, and taught so many Muslim many laws about Islam during the life of Prophet ﷺ and after his death. Hazrat A'yesha (رضى الله عنها) lived long after the death of prophet ﷺ and provided great guidance to the Muslim community, even to the renowned Shaba and the Khulfah e Rashideen (four Caliphs). Her student Urwah ibn Zubair (رضى الله عنه) said ' I did not see a great scholar than Hazrat A'yesha (رضى الله عنها) in the learning of Quran, obligatory duties, lawful and unlawful manners, poetry, literature, Arab history and genealogy'¹⁴. Her recognition in many fields of learning's was praised highly by many others. Ibe Abi bi Malik said we should not be surprised by her authority in the matter of poetry since she was the daughter of Abu baker who was a very eloquent and a great literary figure. These includes Amr ibn al-as, Abu Musa al-Ashari and Abdullah ibne Zubair great jurist and scholars of hadith like Abu Hurayrah, Abdullah Ibn Abbas(RA), Abdullah ibn Umar and great

scholars among the Tabi'ĕn like Saad ibn Musa'yab and Alqamah ibn Qays¹⁵.

Her reputation as a scholar reached many wherein people come from different places to ask about hadith of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ. She was among the great hafiz of hadiths and narrated 2210 hadith in all. No other Sahabi (companion) narrate so many hadith except Abdullah ibn Umar (رضى الله عنه).

The great Sahaba (companions) of prophet ﷺ usually referred to Aisha (رضى الله عنها) whenever they had any difficulty in understanding any juristic problems. Knowledge gained from Aisha (رضى الله عنها) was so authentic that the famous jurist of Madina Urwah Ibne Zubair and the famous Muhaddith, Qasim ibn Muhammad always gave juristic opinions on the authorities of the narration of Aisha (رضى الله عنها).

Ma'az bi Jabl (RA)

He was a handsome and imposing character with black eyes and curly hair and immediately impressed whomever he met. Ma'az bin Jabal (رضى الله عنه) distinguished for the sharpness of his intelligence among young men of his own age. When he Nobel Prophet Muhammad ﷺ reached Madinah Ma'zz bin Jabl (رضى الله عنه) stayed in his company as much as possible. He studied the Quran and the laws of Islam until he became one of the best versed of all the companions in the religion of Islam. Whenever Muaz went, people would refer to him for legal judgments on matters over which they differed.

Sometime after the prophet had returned to Madinah, messenger of the kings of Yemen came to him announcing that they and the people of Yemen had becomes Muslim. They requested that some teachers should be sent with them to teach Islam to the people. For this task Prophet commissioned a Group Du'at (missionaries) and made Ma'az bin Jabl their Amir. He put them the following question to Ma'az:

According to what will you judge?

According to the book of Allah. Replied Ma'az

And if you find nothing there in?

According to Sunnah of the Prophet ﷺ of Allah

And if you find nothing there in?

Then I will exert myself (exercise ijthad) to from own judgment. The prophet ﷺ was pleased with this reply and said: Praise is to Allah who has guided the messenger of the Prophet to that which pleases the Prophet.

The Prophet ﷺ personally farewell to this mission of guidance and light and walked for some distance alongside Ma'az as he rode out of the city.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW) had all the love and attention for education and the means of spreading it to every person of the Muslim society. As a result of great educational efforts of Hazrat Muhammad ﷺ such a community that lived in customs and traditions of ignorance has changed into a respectable community. It was because of his constant struggle for education.

References:

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² Al Quran, Al-Baqarah:129

³Ibn Hanbal, III, 328; Ibn Majah, I, 17

⁴Al Quran, Al Jumma'h:2

⁵<http://education.stateuniversity.com/pages/2133/Islam.html#ixzz4P6RuwpTf>

⁶Uloomul Quran Mufti Taqi usmani, Page 179, Maktba Dara ululoom Karachi.

⁷ Ubaid urRehman, Zafar Hussain, Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) and social welfare activities: A research based study, Tahdhīb al Afkār Prophet Muhammad and.....July-December, 2014.

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⁹Istiaab ibn Abdul bur, P 393.

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¹³Muhammad bin Saad, Translated by Allama Abdullah Al Hamadi, Tabaqat ibn saad, Vol 1. Page 229, Nafees Academy, Lahore.

¹⁴TazkiratulHuffaz, abu Abdullah Shamsuddin Al Zahbi, Vol 1, page 28.

¹⁵Fathul Bari, Ibn Hajr al Askalni, vol 7, page 82.