



Ramadan Daily Quran Study, by Dr Zahid Aziz, 2023

Adapted and edited from *The Religion of Islam* by Maulana Muhammad Ali  
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## Fast 27: Prophets — Finality of prophethood

- In the Holy Quran, the Prophet Muhammad is described as the last of the prophets:

مَا كَانَ مُحَمَّدٌ أَبَا أَحَدٍ مِّن رِّجَالِكُمْ وَلَكِن رَّسُولَ اللَّهِ وَخَاتَمَ النَّبِيِّينَ ۗ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمًا ﴿٣٤﴾

“Muhammad is not the father of any of your men, but he is the Messenger of Allah and the *Khātam al-nabiyyīn*, and Allah is ever Knower of all things.” — 33:40

Fast 27

1



- The word *khātam* means ‘a seal’ or ‘the last portion’ of anything. When this word is applied to a group of people, it means the last of that group of people. Thus *Khātam al-nabiyyin*, or “*Khatam* of the prophets”, means the Last of the Prophets. Therefore the belief that Muhammad (peace be upon him) was last and final Prophet is based on the clear words of the Holy Quran.
- In Hadith it is even clearer. The meaning of *Khātam al-nabiyyīn* was thus explained by the Holy Prophet himself. He said:
  - “My example and the example of the prophets before me is the example of a man who built a house and he made it very good and very beautiful with the exception of a stone in the corner, ... ..”

Fast 27

2



- ... .. so people began to go round it and to wonder at it and to say, Why has not this stone been placed? He (the Prophet) said: I am this stone and I am *Khātam al-nabiyyīn.*”

This hadith, in which the Holy Prophet speaks of himself as the corner-stone of prophethood and the last of the prophets, is related in the three most authentic books of Hadith: Bukhari (hadith 3535), Muslim and Tirmidhi. Similar reports in which the Holy Prophet made it clear that no prophet would appear after him are found in abundance in all books of Hadith.

- **A Prophet for all peoples and all ages:** The idea that prophethood came to a close in the person of the Holy Prophet Muhammad is not a stray idea, isolated on its own.



- On the other hand, it is the natural conclusion of the universalization of the theory of revelation which is the basic principle of the religion of Islam.
- Revelation, according to the Holy Quran, is not the solitary experience of this or that nation but the spiritual experience of the whole of the human race. Allah is spoken of in the very opening verse of the Quran as the *Rabb* of all the nations of the world, the *Nourisher unto perfection*, physically as well as spiritually, of the whole human race. Starting from that broad basis, the Holy Quran develops the theory that prophets were sent to every nation: “There is not a people but a warner has gone among them” (35:24), and “And for every nation there is a messenger” (10:47).



- At the same time it is stated that every prophet was sent to a single nation and, therefore, though prophethood was in one sense a universal fact, it was more or less a national institution: the scope of the preaching of every prophet was limited to his own nation. The advent of the Holy Prophet Muhammad universalized the institution of prophethood in a real sense. The day of the national prophet was over, and one Prophet was raised for the whole world, for all nations and for all ages. The Quran says:

تَبْرَكَ الَّذِي نَزَّلَ الْفُرْقَانَ عَلَى عَبْدِهِ لِيَكُونَ لِلْعَالَمِينَ نَذِيرًا ﴿٢٥﴾

“Blessed is He Who sent down the *Furqān* (i.e. the Quran) upon His servant that he might be a warner to the nations.” — 25:1



We have already quoted the following verses in earlier studies:

- “Say: O mankind, surely I am the Messenger of Allah to you all, of Him Whose is the kingdom of the heavens and the earth.” — 7:158
- “And We have not sent you (O Muhammad) but as a bearer of good news and as a warner to all mankind, but most people do not know.” — 34:28
- The World-Prophet therefore took the place of the national prophets, and the grand idea of unifying the whole human race, and gathering it together under one banner, was thus brought to perfection. The basis of the unity of the human race was laid upon the grand principle that the whole human race was one, and that all people, wherever they may be found, were a single nation (the Quran, 2:213).



- Such unity could not be accomplished unless the finality of prophethood was established. If prophets continued to appear after the World-Prophet, some people would accept them and others would reject them. This would shatter the foundations of the unity at which Islam aimed by giving a single Prophet to the whole world.
- By bringing prophethood to a close, Islam has not deprived the world of a blessing which was available to previous generations. The object of sending a prophet to a people was to make known the Divine will, and point out the ways by walking in which human beings could find closeness to God. That object was also brought to perfection through the great World-Prophet, the Holy Prophet Muhammad.



- The Holy Prophet's message was so complete that it met the requirements not only of all nations of his time but of all future generations as well. This is plainly claimed by the Holy Quran:  

الْيَوْمَ أَكْمَلْتُ لَكُمْ دِينَكُمْ وَأَتْمَمْتُ عَلَيْكُمْ نِعْمَتِي وَرَضِيتُ لَكُمُ الْإِسْلَامَ دِينًا<sup>ط</sup>

“This day have I perfected for you your religion and completed My favour to you and chosen for you Islam as a religion.” — 5:3
- The perfection of religion and the completion of the blessing of prophethood thus go hand in hand. As religion was made perfect, and prophethood was made complete, there remained no need for another religion after Islam or for another prophet after Prophet Muhammad.