

Ramadan Daily Quran Studies, by Dr Zahid Aziz, 2025

Produced by:

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Study 12:

Prophet Muhammad ﷺ
reached the highest position of nearness to
God, yet was closest to humanity

- The Quran tells us about the Holy Prophet Muhammad:

وَالنَّجْمِ إِذَا هَوَىٰ ﴿١﴾ مَا ضَلَّ صَاحِبُكُمْ وَمَا غَوَىٰ ﴿٢﴾ وَمَا يَنْطِقُ عَنِ الْهَوَىٰ ﴿٣﴾

إِنْ هُوَ إِلَّا وَحْيٌ يُوحَىٰ ﴿٤﴾ عَلَّمَهُ شَدِيدُ الْقُوَىٰ ﴿٥﴾ ذُو مِرَّةٍ ﴿٦﴾ فَاسْتَوَىٰ ﴿٧﴾

وَهُوَ بِالْأُفُقِ الْأَعْلَىٰ ﴿٨﴾ ثُمَّ دَنَا فَتَدَلَّىٰ ﴿٩﴾

فَكَانَ قَابَ قَوْسَيْنِ أَوْ أَدْنَىٰ ﴿١٠﴾ فَأَوْحَىٰ إِلَىٰ عَبْدِهِ مَّا أَوْحَىٰ ﴿١١﴾

1. By the star when it sets!
2. Your companion (the Prophet) is not in error, nor does he deviate.
3. Nor does he speak out of desire.
4. It is nothing but revelation that is revealed —
5. One Mighty in power has taught him,
6. the Lord of strength. So he attained to perfection,
7. and he is in the highest part of the horizon.
8. Then he drew near, drew nearer yet,
9. so he was the measure of two bows or closer still.
10. So He revealed to His servant what He revealed.

—53:1–10

Verse 1: “By the star when it sets!”

- In the **setting of the star** the opponents of the Holy Prophet are warned of the calamities which would soon overtake them; their star of fortune was about to set.
- But the words may also be translated as: “By portions of the Quran that are revealed!” From this point of view, the meaning is that every portion of the Quran when it is revealed is an evidence that the Prophet is not in error but in the right.
- Every portion of the Quran by itself gives evidence that it is the Truth.

Verse 2: “Your companion (the Prophet) is not in error, nor does he deviate.”

- By your companion is meant the Holy Prophet, who had led among these very people a life of unblemished purity.
- There are two statements made here. In the first it is denied that he is in error, and this means that he had true knowledge or that he was not mistaken in his teachings.
- In the second, any deviation by him from the right course is denied, and this shows that he acted according to that knowledge and that his practice was according to the principles that he was teaching.

- This verse is a conclusive proof that according to the Quran the Holy Prophet was perfectly sinless.

Verse 3–4: “Nor does he speak out of desire. It is nothing but revelation that is revealed”

- The Quran was not his word, for he spoke not out of his own desire; it was the word of God, all of it, entirely. There are numerous reasons which prove that the revelation to the Holy Prophet was not the outcome of his desires as a human being.

- For example, the revelation:

“Say: I ask of you no reward for it except that whoever wishes may take a way to his Lord” (25:57)

could not be the outcome of his own desire.

Verse 5: “One Mighty in power has taught him”

- “One Mighty in power” is God Who taught him the Quran. It is clearly stated at another place in the Quran that:
“The Beneficent taught the Quran” (55:1–2).

Verse 6: “the Lord of strength. So he attained to perfection”

- The Holy Prophet attained to perfection because God Himself was his Teacher.
- The word used for “perfection” here is *astawā*. It also means being upright, stable, balanced, in the middle, and not inclining to either extreme.
- The Holy Prophet in his behaviour never went away from the middle, neither doing something too much nor doing it too little.

- Verse 2 stated that he was “not in error”. That is the negative aspect of the matter. It is not enough to be merely “not in error”. Here the positive aspect is mentioned, that he had perfect morals.

Verse 7: “and he is in the highest part of the horizon.”

- The Prophet’s being in the highest part of the horizon refers to the brilliance of his light which was to illuminate all corners of the world. This is a prophecy that he will shine out in the full brilliance of his light like the midday sun. This chapter was revealed only around five years after he was made Prophet and Messenger by God.

Verse 8: “Then he drew near, drew nearer yet”

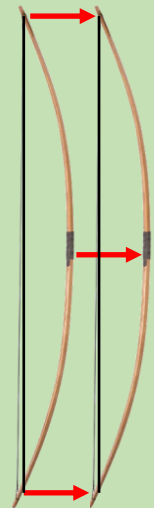
- It is usually thought that “he” refers to the angel Jibreel and that this mentions that Jibreel drew nearer and nearer to the Holy Prophet.
- But in our opinion “he” refers to the Holy Prophet and these words mean that he drew nearer and nearer to God.
- The verse points out that the Prophet attained the utmost nearness to God which it is possible for a human being to attain.

Verse 9: “so he was the measure of two bows or closer still.”

- The expression “measure of two bows” indicates close union.
- Some people take it to mean a length which is two bows long, then this means that the Holy Prophet was closer to God than the length of two arrows.
- A better meaning is derived from a pre-Islamic Arab custom. This custom was that, when two men wanted to indicate a strong bond of friendship between them, one would place his bow directly over the other’s bow, so that the bows became one, with their pull-chords together, next to each other.

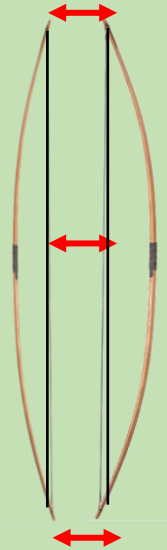
- Under this meaning, one bow represents God and the other bow represents the Holy Prophet. They both work in the same direction.
- The Holy Prophet carries out the will and commands of God, and God provides help and support to the Holy Prophet in doing so.

In the figure shown, two bows are facing in the same direction, side by side, and they are brought closer till they become like one bow.



- There is also another meaning: one bow is God and the other bow is humanity, and the Holy Prophet is the common chord of two bows. The chord of the two bows is the same.

In the figure shown, two bows are facing away from each other, and they are brought closer till their chords join.



- On the one hand the Holy Prophet is close to God in serving Him. On the other hand, he is close to humanity in doing good to all people.
- So the two bows indicate the Holy Prophet's twofold perfection:
 - his nearness to God and his humility in his relations with people,
 - his love and service of God and his love and service of humanity.

Verse 10: “So He revealed to His servant what He revealed.”

- The wording “*what He revealed*” means “*what a great thing He revealed*”. This indicates the greatness of the revelation which came to the Holy Prophet.
- He is also called here the servant of God.

END OF STUDY 12