
Me'raaj

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Introduction

Me'raaj is one of the greatest incidents that took place in the life of Sayyidina Rasulallah ﷺ. Allah Ta'ala had taken His beloved Rasul ﷺ into the seven heavens and brought him into His divine court. Nabi ﷺ had the great honour of meeting Allah Ta'ala. This was one of the supreme mu'jizaat (miracles) of Rasulallah ﷺ.

Hadhrat Moulana Idrees Kandhlawi (*rahmatullahi alayh*) has very beautifully explained the entire incident in his masterpiece, 'Seeratul Mustafa ﷺ'.

Below is the entire incident of Me'raaj mentioned in detail.

ME'RAAJ

After his return from Taaif, Allah Ta'ala took Rasulullah ﷺ for Me'raaj from Masjidul-Haraam to Masjidul-Aqsa and from there to the seven heavens all in one night with the same physical body and soul in a state of absolute consciousness and wakefulness. This journey is referred to as Me'raaj or Israa.

The scholars of Seerah have differed over the exact month in which the Me'raaj took place. The most accepted view is that it occurred on the 27th night of Rajab. And Allah Ta'ala knows best.

WISDOM BEHIND ME'RAAJ

Ten years of prophethood had gone by. All avenues of trials and tribulations were covered. Not a facet of humiliation was left untouched in the path of Allah Ta'ala. Clearly what better outcome can there be of trials and tribulations suffered in the path of Allah Ta'ala than honour, reverence and Me'raaj (ascension)?

So when Rasulullah ﷺ experienced the extreme levels of distress after his emergence from the valley of Abu Taalib and after his return from Taaif, Allah Ta'ala bestowed him with the privilege of Me'raaj and ascension and Allah Ta'ala elevated him to such a lofty level that even the most revered of the closest

angels were left behind. Allah Ta'ala made him journey to the extremity of the universe. He was taken right up to the divine throne after which there is no further rank.

This is why some Aarifeen (sufis) say that this journey to the divine throne was an indication of Khatm-e-Nubuwwat (the termination of prophethood). The entire creation and universe terminates at the divine throne. The existence of any creation beyond the throne is not established from the Qur-aan and Hadith. Similarly, the merits of prophethood terminate upon the existence of Rasulallah ﷺ.

ME'RAAJ IN DETAIL

Allah Ta'ala says:

سُبْحَانَ الَّذِي أَسْرَى بِعَبْدِهِ لَيْلًا مِّنَ الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ إِلَى
الْمَسْجِدِ الْأَقْصَا الَّذِي بَرَكْنَا حَوْلَهُ لِنُرِيَهُ مِنَ الْآيَاتِ إِنَّهُ
هُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْبَصِيرُ ﴿١٠١﴾

“Glory be to the Being who had taken His (special) servant in (a little part of) the night from Masjidul-Haraam to Masjidul-Aqsa the environs of which We had blessed. (The actual aim of this was) to show him from Our signs (some of which are mentioned in Surah Najm like journeying to Sidratul-Muntahaa, witnessing Jannah and

Jahannam and other divine phenomena). Verily, He (Allah Ta'ala) is all-hearing, all-seeing.” [Surah Israa verse 1]

One night Rasulullah ﷺ was lying down in Umme Haani's house. He just dozed off when the roof of the house suddenly split open. Through this gap, Jibraa'eel alayhis salaam accompanied by other angels descended upon Rasulullah ﷺ. They woke him up and took him to Masjidul-Haraam. As he reached there, he went into the Hateem area and fell asleep. Jibraa'eel alayhis salaam and Mikaa'eel alayhis salaam woke him up again and took him to the well of Zam Zam. There they laid him down and split his chest open. They extracted his blessed heart and rinsed it with the water of Zam Zam. A tray containing Imaan and wisdom was then brought to him. Implanting this Imaan and wisdom into his blessed heart, they restored the heart to its original position and resealed his chest. They then inscribed the seal of prophethood between his shoulder blades. (This was a physical symbol of Rasulullah ﷺ being the seal of all divine messengers.)

The Buraaq was then brought before him. Buraaq is actually the name of a celestial animal that is smaller than a mule but bigger than a donkey. It was white in colour and it was so fast that one step would fall as far as the eye could see. When Rasulullah ﷺ mounted this animal, it fell into a state of energetic

friskiness. Jibraa'eel alayhis salaam reproached: "O Buraaq! Why this friskiness? To this day, not a single servant of Allah more honourable than Muhammad ﷺ has mounted you." Buraaq almost kneeled over in shame. It then set off with Rasulullah ﷺ. Jibraa'eel alayhis salaam and Mikaa'eel alayhis salaam also accompanied Rasulullah ﷺ on this animal.

According to certain narrations, Jibraa'eel Ameen alayhis salaam assisted Rasulullah ﷺ in mounting the Buraaq after which he himself took a seat behind Rasulullah ﷺ.

Shaddaad bin Aws radiyallahu anhu narrates that Rasulullah ﷺ related: "En-route we came across a land with numerous date-palms. Jibraa'eel alayhis salaam asked me to descend and perform Nafil Salaah. I dismounted and performed Salaah. Jibraa'eel alayhis salaam then enquired: 'Do you have any idea where you performed Salaah?' I replied: 'I have absolutely no idea.' Jibraa'eel alayhis salaam said: 'You performed Salaah in Yasrib (Madinah Tayyibah) where you are going to migrate.' We then set off once again when we passed another area. Jibraa'eel alayhis salaam asked me to alight and perform Salaah here as well. I dismounted and performed Salaah. Jibraa'eel alayhis salaam informed me: 'You performed Salaah in the valley of Saynaa near the tree of Musa alayhis salaam where Allah Ta'ala spoke to Musa alayhis salaam.' We then passed another area

where I was again instructed to perform Salaah. I dismounted once again and performed Salaah. Jibraa'eel alayhis salaam informed me that I had just performed Salaah in Madyan (the native land of Shu'aib alayhis salaam). We set off once again until we came to another area where Jibraa'eel alayhis salaam asked me to dismount and perform Salaah. I alighted from the animal and performed Salaah. Jibraa'eel alayhis salaam informed me that this place is called Baitul-Lahm (Bethlehem) where 'Isa alayhis salaam was born."

THE MARVELS OF THIS CELESTIAL JOURNEY

Whilst Rasulullah صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ was on this celestial voyage, he came across an old woman who called out to him. Jibraa'eel alayhis salaam advised Rasulullah صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ to proceed ahead without taking any heed of her in the least. As he proceeded, he came across an old man who also called out to him. Hadhrat Jibraa'eel alayhis salaam again advised Rasulullah صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ to move on.

As he proceeded further, Rasulullah صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ came across a group of people who greeted him thus:

السَّلَامُ عَلَيْكَ يَا أَوَّلَ السَّلَامِ عَلَيْكَ يَا آخِرَ السَّلَامِ عَلَيْكَ
يَا حَاشِرُ

*“Assalaamu ‘Alayka Yaa Awwal, Assalaamu ‘Alayka Yaa Aakhir,
Assalaamu ‘Alayka Yaa Haashir.”*

Jibraa’eel alayhis salaam asked Rasulullah ﷺ to respond to their Salaam. He then explained to him, “The old woman you caught sight of at the roadside is actually the dunya (the world). The remaining age of this world is now limited to the remaining life span of this old woman. The old man you noticed was actually shaytaan. Both of them aspire to incline you towards them. The group that greeted you with Salaam comprised of Hadhrat Ibraaheem alayhis salaam, Hadhrat Musa alayhis salaam and Hadhrat ‘Isa alayhis salaam.”

Rasulullah ﷺ said: “On the night of my ascension (to the heavens) I passed Musa alayhis salaam who was standing engaged in Salaah in his grave.”

According to the narration of Ibn ‘Abbaas radiyallahu anhumaa, Rasulullah ﷺ said: “On the night of Me’raaj, I caught sight of Musa alayhis salaam, Dajjaal and the superintendent of Jahannam whose name is Maalik.”

En route, Rasulullah ﷺ also came across a group of people with copper fingernails. They were busy scraping the skin of their faces and chests with these copper fingernails. When asked about these people, Jibraa’eel alayhis salaam replied: “These are the

people who consume the flesh of others.” In other words, they backbite and vilify others.

Rasulullah ﷺ also witnessed a person swimming in a river. He was busy consuming morsels of stones. When Rasulallah ﷺ asked about this man, Jibraa'eel alayhis salaam replied: “This man is a consumer of interest.”

Rasulullah ﷺ also came across a group of people who, during the course of just one day, could sow their land and harvest the crop. The field would then revert to its original condition. When Rasulallah ﷺ asked about this, Jibraa'eel alayhis salaam replied: “These are people who wage Jihaad in the path of Allah. Their good deeds are multiplied seven hundred fold. Whatever they spend, Allah Ta'ala recompenses them with a far better substitute.”

Rasulullah ﷺ then passed a group of people whose heads were being crushed by boulders. Each time the heads were crushed, they would revert to their normal condition. This cycle continued ceaselessly. When Rasulallah ﷺ enquired about these people, Jibraa'eel alayhis salaam replied: “These are people who are unconcerned towards their Fardh Salaah.”

He then came across a group of people whose anterior and posterior private parts were wrapped in rags and they were

grazing like camels and oxen. Rasulallah ﷺ asked who they were. Jibraa'eel alayhis salaam replied: "These are people who do not pay Zakaat on their wealth."

Rasulallah ﷺ then came across a group of people in front of whom were two cauldrons. One contained cooked flesh and the other cauldron contained raw and decomposing flesh. These people were consuming the decomposing flesh without partaking of any of the wholesome cooked flesh. Rasulallah ﷺ asked: "Who are these people?" Jibraa'eel alayhis salaam replied: "These people are made up of men of your Ummah who, in spite of having Halaal and decent women available to them, spend the entire night with adulteresses and women of loose morals, and this group is made up of women who leave their Halaal and decent husbands to pass the night with adulterers and unchaste men."

Rasulallah ﷺ then came across a pole positioned on a main road. It slashed or hacked up clothing or anything else that happened to come close to it. When Rasulallah ﷺ asked Jibraa'eel alayhis salaam about this, he replied: "This is the image of people who lie in wait at the roadsides and plunder the property of passers-by."

Then Rasulallah ﷺ happened to pass a man who had amassed a huge pile of sticks. Although he was unable to bear this

huge burden, he was nonetheless fetching more and more sticks and adding to the burden. When Rasulullah ﷺ asked what this signified, Jibraa'eel alayhis salaam replied: "This is a man of your Ummah who is burdened by numerous rights and responsibilities which he is unable to execute but notwithstanding this, he continues saddling himself with even more obligations."

He then came across a group of people whose tongues and lips were being sheared by iron scissors. As soon as their lips and tongues were sheared off, they reverted intact to their original condition. This cycle continued relentlessly without any sign of termination. When Rasulullah ﷺ asked about this, Jibraa'eel alayhis salaam said: "These are the preachers of your Ummah (who befit the verse 'they preach what they do not do')," in other words, they preach to others but fail to practise themselves.

Thereafter Rasulullah ﷺ passed an area with appealing fragrances and cool breezes. Jibraa'eel alayhis salaam informed him that this was the fragrance of Jannah (paradise). They then passed an area reeking of repulsive odours. Jibraa'eel alayhis salaam said that this was the stench of Jahannam (hell).

BAITUL-MUQADDAS

Rasulullah ﷺ arrived at Baitul-Muqaddas in this splendour and dismounted from the Buraaq. Rasulallah ﷺ tied the animal to the iron loop on which all the previous Ambiyaa alayhimus salaam fastened their animals.

Thereafter, Rasulallah ﷺ entered Masjidul-Aqsa and offered two Rakaat (of Tahiyatul-Masjid).

On this auspicious occasion of Rasulallah's ﷺ advent, the other Ambiyaa alayhimus salaam were already awaiting his arrival in the Masjid. Hadhrat Ibraaheem alayhis salaam and Hadhrat Musa alayhis salaam were also amongst the luminaries awaiting Rasulallah ﷺ.

Barely a few moments passed when a number of people happened to assemble in Masjidul-Aqsa. A Muazzin called out the Azaan followed by the Iqaamah. Now the entire congregation was waiting to see who would lead them in salaah? Jibraa'eel alayhis salaam held Rasulallah ﷺ by the hand and led him forward. Rasulallah ﷺ says: "I led all of them in Salaah. When I completed the Salaah, Jibraa'eel alayhis salaam asked me if I knew whom I led in Salaah. When I replied in the negative, he said: 'All the prophets who were commissioned before you, every single one of them offered Salaah behind you.'"

According to another narration, even the angels descended from the skies upon this momentous advent of Rasulullah ﷺ. Rasulullah ﷺ then led all the Ambiyaa alayhimus salaam and the angels in Salaah.

Upon the termination of the Salaah, the angels asked Jibraa'eel alayhis salaam: "Who is this companion with you?" Jibraa'eel alayhis salaam replied: "This is Muhammad ﷺ, the seal of all divine messengers." The angels asked: "Is he already commissioned as a messenger?" When Jibraa'eel alayhis salaam replied in the affirmative, the angels commented: "May Allah keep him alive and well. He is a wonderful brother and vicegerent." In other words, he is our brother and the vicegerent of Allah Ta'ala.

Thereafter Rasulullah ﷺ met with the souls of the Ambiyaa alayhimus salaam. Each one of them praised and glorified Allah Ta'ala in his distinctive manner.

Glorification of Ibraaheem alayhis salaam:

Ibraaheem alayhis salaam praised Allah Ta'ala in the following words:

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي اتَّخَذَنِي خَلِيلًا وَأَعْطَانِي مُلْكًا عَظِيمًا
وَجَعَلَنِي أُمَّةً قَانِتًا يُؤْتَمُّ بِي وَأَنْقَذَنِي مِنَ النَّارِ وَجَعَلَهَا عَلَيَّ
بَرْدًا وَسَلَامًا

“All praises are due to Allah Who had adopted me as His Khalil (bosom friend) and granted me great authority, and Who has rendered me an obedient leader who is adhered to and has saved me from the fire by making it cool and safe for me.”

Glorification of Musa alayhis salaam:

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي كَلَّمَنِي تَكَلِيمًا وَجَعَلَ هَلَاكَ آلِ فِرْعَوْنَ
وَنَجَاةَ بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ عَلَى يَدَيَّ وَجَعَلَ مِنْ أُمَّتِي قَوْمًا يَهْدُونَ
بِالْحَقِّ وَبِهِ يَعْدِلُونَ

“All praises are due to Allah Who had spoken to me directly without an intermediary, Who had destroyed Fir‘awn and rescued the Bani Israa‘eel at my hands and Who had made such people from my Ummah who guide towards the truth and with the truth do they mete out justice.”

Gloration of Dawood alayhis salaam:

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي جَعَلَ لِي مُلْكًا عَظِيمًا وَعَلَّمَنِي الزَّبُورَ وَأَلَانَ
لِي الْحَدِيدَ وَسَخَّرَ لِي الْجِبَالَ يُسَبِّحُنَ وَالطَّيْرَ وَأَعْطَانِي
الْحِكْمَةَ وَفَصَلَ الْخِطَابِ

“All praises are due to Allah Who had granted me great authority, taught me the Psalms, made iron easily flexible for me, made the mountains and birds subservient to me in that they chant His praises, and had granted me wisdom and a sound faculty of judgement.”

Gloration of Sulaymaan alayhis salaam:

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي سَخَّرَ لِي الرِّيحَ وَسَخَّرَ لِي الشَّيَاطِينَ يَعْمَلُونَ
مَا شِئْتُ مِنْ مَّحَارِبَ وَ تَمَائِيلَ وَجِفَانٍ كَالْجَوَابِ وَقُدُورٍ
رَأْسِيَّاتٍ وَعَلَّمَنِي مَنَاطِقَ الطَّيْرِ وَأَتَانِي مِنْ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ فَضْلًا
وَسَخَّرَ لِي جُنُودَ الشَّيَاطِينِ وَالْإِنْسِ وَالطَّيْرِ وَفَضَّلَنِي عَلَى
كَثِيرٍ مِنْ عِبَادِهِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَأَتَانِي مُلْكًا عَظِيمًا لَا يَنْبَغِي لِأَحَدٍ
مِنْ بَعْدِي وَجَعَلَ مُلْكِي مُلْكًا طَيِّبًا لَيْسَ فِيهِ حِسَابٌ

“All praises are due to Allah Who had rendered the winds subservient to me, He made the shayaateen submissive to my commandments; they did work as I wished by making high rooms, images, basins as large as reservoirs and cauldrons fixed (in their

places), who has taught me the language of the birds, who has blessed me with every grace, who has rendered the armies of the Shayaateen, humankind and birds all submissive to me, who had favoured me over a number of His faithful servants, who had granted me a grand supremacy, which is inappropriate for anyone after me and who has made this supremacy an admirable one for which there is no reckoning.”

Glorification of ‘Isa alayhis salaam:

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي جَعَلَنِي كَلِمَةً وَجَعَلَ مَثَلِي مَثَلِ أَدَمَ خَلَقَهُ مِنْ
تُرَابٍ ثُمَّ قَالَ لَهُ كُنْ فَيَكُونُ وَعَلَّمَنِي الْكِتَابَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ
وَالتَّوْرَةَ وَالْإِنْجِيلَ أَخْلَقَ مِنَ الطِّينِ كَهَيْئَةِ الطَّيْرِ فَاَنْفَخُ فِيهِ
فَيَكُونُ طَيْرًا بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ وَجَعَلَنِي أُبْرِيءُ الْأَكْمَةَ وَالْأَبْرَصَ
وَأُحْيِي الْمَوْتَى بِإِذْنِ اللَّهِ وَرَفَعَنِي وَظَهَّرَنِي وَاعَادَنِي وَأُمَّيَّ مِنْ
الشَّيْطَانِ الرَّجِيمِ فَلَمْ يَكُنْ لِلشَّيْطَانِ عَلَيْنَا سَبِيلٌ

“All praises are due to Allah Who had made me (His) word, who had created me like Aadam alayhis salaam (without a father), He created him from sand and commanded the mould: ‘be’ and it came into existence, who taught me the book, wisdom, the Taurah and Injeel, who bestowed me with the ability to form the figures of birds in which I breathe and they turn into birds by the will of Allah, who had also bestowed on me the miracle to heal the one born blind and the lepers

and the miracle to bring the dead to life with the command of Allah, who had elevated me and protected my mother and I from the accursed shaytaan so that he (shaytaan) has no hold over us.”

Glorification of Rasulallah ﷺ:

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي أَرْسَلَنِي رَحْمَةً لِّلْعَالَمِينَ وَكَافَّةً لِّلنَّاسِ بَشِيرًا
وَنَذِيرًا وَأَنْزَلَ عَلَيَّ الْفُرْقَانَ فِيهِ بَيَانٌ لِّكُلِّ شَيْءٍ وَجَعَلَ أُمَّتِي
خَيْرَ أُمَّةٍ أُخْرِجَتْ لِّلنَّاسِ وَجَعَلَ أُمَّتِي هُمُ الْأَوْلُونَ وَالْآخِرُونَ
وَشَرَحَ لِي صَدْرِي وَوَضَعَ عَنِّي وِزْرِي وَرَفَعَ لِي ذِكْرِي
وَجَعَلَنِي فَاتِحًا وَخَاتِمًا

“All praises are due to Allah who has sent me as a source of mercy unto the world and to all the people as a warner and a herald (of glad tidings), who has revealed upon me the Furqaan in which there is an explanation of everything, who has made my Ummah the best of nations, my Ummah is the first (as far as its status) and the last (in terms of its emergence in this world), who has opened my chest and purged me of my burdens, who has elevated my status and who has made me an opener (by creating me spiritually before everyone else) and a seal (by creating my physical form and making me the seal of all the prophets).”

When Rasulullah ﷺ completed his address on the glorification of Allah Ta'ala, Ibraaheem alayhis salaam rose and addressed the other Ambiyaa alayhimus salaam saying:

بِهَذَا أَفْضَلَكُمْ مُحَمَّدٌ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ

“Due to these virtues and merits, Muhammad has surpassed you.”

When Rasulullah ﷺ emerged from the Masjid, three cups were presented before him. One contained water, the other milk and the third contained wine. Rasulullah ﷺ chose the cup of milk. Upon this Jibraa'eel alayhis salaam commented: “You have chosen Deenul-Fitrah (the natural Deen). Had you chosen wine, your Ummah would have gone astray and had you chosen the cup with the water, your Ummah would have drowned.”

According to some narrations, a cup of honey was also presented to him. He partook a bit of this as well.

ASCENSION TO THE HEAVENS

Subsequent to this, Rasulullah ﷺ, in the company of Jibraa'eel alayhis salaam and other honourable angels embarked on their ascension to the heavens. According to some narrations, Rasulullah ﷺ ascended the skies mounted upon the Buraaq animal similar to the preceding leg of the journey.

However, according to some narrations, after his emergence from Masjidul-Aqsa, Rasulullah ﷺ ascended the skies with the aid of a ladder studded with gems and emeralds with the entourage of angels on either side of him.

Abu Sa'eed Khudri radiyallahu anhu said that he heard Rasulullah ﷺ saying: “When I concluded my rituals at Masjidul-Aqsa, a ladder was brought before me. I have never set eyes on a ladder more beautiful than this ladder. This is the same ladder that enables the souls of people to climb to the heavens and it is the same ladder that a dying person casts his gaze upon when he is about to breathe his last. My travelling companion Jibraa'eel hoisted me upon this ladder (and I continued ascending) until I reached one of the doors of heaven, which is referred to as ‘the door of the Hafazah.’”

MEETING THE AMBIYAA ALAYHIMUS SALAAM

In this majestic manner, Rasulullah ﷺ reached the first heaven. Jibraa'eel alayhis salaam requested to be let in. The overseer of the first heaven enquired: “Who is with you?”

“Muhammad Rasulullah ﷺ is with me,” he replied. “Was he invited over here?” he asked.

When Jibraa'eel alayhis salaam replied in the affirmative, the angels warmly welcomed him and opened the door for him. Rasulullah ﷺ entered the porch of the first heaven where he came across a rather elderly man. Jibraa'eel alayhis salaam revealed: "This is your father Aadam alayhis salaam. Go ahead! Make Salaam to him." Rasulullah ﷺ made Salaam to him. He affectionately responded to the Salaam and added: "Marhabaa! Welcome to a pious son and a pious Prophet." He then went on to make dua for Rasulullah ﷺ.

Whilst meeting him, Rasulullah's ﷺ glance fell on some figures on Hadhrat Aadam's alayhis salaam right and some on his left. When Aadam alayhis salaam glanced to the figures on his right, he would smile in delight and when he cast his gaze to the figures on his left, he would weep in sorrow. Jibraa'eel alayhis salaam revealed: "The figures on his right represent his pious children, those destined for Jannah. When he casts his eyes towards them he is pleased. The figures on his left represent his evil children, those who are doomed to Jahannam. He weeps in anguish when he casts his eyes upon them."

Then Rasulullah ﷺ ascended the second heaven. In the same manner, Jibraa'eel alayhis salaam requested to be let in. When the overseer asked who was with him, Jibraa'eel alayhis salaam replied: "Muhammad Rasulullah ﷺ is with me." "Was he invited?" he asked.

When Jibraa'eel alayhis salaam replied in the affirmative, the overseer commented: "Welcome! Welcome to such a majestic guest." Here on this level, Rasulullah ﷺ saw Hadhrat Yahya alayhis salaam and Hadhrat 'Isa alayhis salaam.

Jibraa'eel alayhis salaam ushered him into their company saying: "Here, this is Yahya alayhis salaam and 'Isa alayhis salaam. Go on, make Salaam to them." Rasulullah ﷺ went up to them and offered his Salaam to both of them. They replied to his Salaam and remarked: "Welcome to a pious brother and a pious Prophet."

Thereafter Rasulullah ﷺ ascended the third heaven and here again Jibraa'eel alayhis salaam asked to be let in as mentioned previously. Here Rasulullah ﷺ met Yusuf alayhis salaam and as per the previous occasions, Rasulullah ﷺ made Salaam etc. with him. Rasulullah ﷺ, (whilst relating this event) commented: "Yusuf alayhis salaam was bestowed with immense handsomeness."

Thereafter Rasulullah ﷺ visited the fourth heaven where he met Hadhrat Idrees alayhis salaam. He then proceeded to the fifth heaven where he met Hadhrat Haroon alayhis salaam. From there, he ascended to the sixth heaven where he met Hadhrat Musa alayhis salaam, then to the seventh heaven where he met Hadhrat Ibraaheem alayhis salaam. He spotted him resting his

back against the Baitul-Ma'mur. The Baitul-Ma'mur is the Qiblah of the angels and falls directly in line with the Ka'bah. If, hypothetically speaking, the Baitul-Ma'mur had to come crashing down; it would fall directly onto the Ka'bah. Seventy thousand angels make Tawaaf of this Baitul-Ma'mur every single day never to get another chance again.

Jibraa'eel alayhis salaam informed Rasulullah ﷺ that this is his father and he should make Salaam with him. Rasulullah ﷺ went ahead and made Salaam with him. Ibraaheem alayhis salaam replied to the Salaam and remarked: "Welcome to a pious son and to a pious Prophet."

SIDRATUL-MUNTAHA

Following this meeting with Ibraaheem alayhis salaam, Rasulullah ﷺ was raised to the Sidratul-Muntaha. This is a lotus tree towering above the seventh heaven. Whatever rises from the earth stops at Sidratul-Muntaha (the lotus-tree of the outer extremity), and from this point onwards, it is raised further into the heavens. On the other hand, whatever descends from the Malaul-A'laa first descends upon Sidratul-Muntaha and from there it descends further to the other heavens and beyond, thus the name Sidratul-Muntaha.

At this very location, Rasulullah ﷺ beheld Jibraa'eel alayhis salaam in his original form. He also witnessed some strange and amazing celestial radiances of Allah Ta'ala. He also saw innumerable angels and golden moths hovering about the Sidratul-Muntaha.

OBSERVATION OF JANNAH AND JAHANNAM

Jannah is in close proximity to Sidratul-Muntaha. The Qur-aan Shareef depicts:

عِنْدَ سِدْرَةِ الْمُنْتَهَىٰ عِنْدَهَا جَنَّةُ الْمَأْوَىٰ

“At Sidratul-Muntaha, near it is the abode of Jannah.”

This is why Abu Sa'eed Khudri's alayhis salaam narration mentions that after his performance of Salaah in Baitul-M'amur, Rasulullah ﷺ was elevated to Sidratul-Muntaha. From Sidratul-Muntaha, Rasulullah ﷺ was raised to Jannah. After his visit to Jannah, Jahannam was presented before him. In other words, the horrors of Jahannam were laid bare to him.

Rasulullah ﷺ says: “I reached Sidratul-Muntaha where I beheld astounding colours and incredible embellishments. I have no idea what they were. I was then admitted into Jannah where

the domes were constructed from (mammoth-sized) pearls and the soil was of musk.”

SAREEFUL-AQLAAM

THE SITE OF THE MOVEMENT OF THE PENS

Thereafter Rasulallah ﷺ ascended even further where he was able to perceive the sounds made by the pens (recording predestination). The sound produced by the scratching of these pens of predestination is referred to as Sareeful-Aqlaam. This is the location where the pens of fate are engaged in recording everything that is to transpire in the future. The angels were busy transcribing the divine edicts and religious commandments from the Lawh-e-Mahfooz (the preserved tablet).

Divine Proximity - (Celestial vision, divine conversation and the conferral of sacred edicts)

IN THE PRESENCE OF ALLAH TA'ALA

From Sareeful-Aqlaam, Rasulallah ﷺ traversed through a number of concealed realms until he finally arrived in the sacred presence of Allah Ta'ala. It is said that a Rafrat (a green silken carriage) was provided for his conveyance. Rasulallah ﷺ mounted this carriage and was thus conveyed to the closest of the celestial realms before the majesty of Allah Ta'ala.

When Rasulullah ﷺ reached this area of 'close proximity', he fell into Sajdah. Here he caught sight of the magnificence of the radiance of Allah Ta'ala from beyond the divine screen and without any intermediary he was honoured to converse directly with Allah Ta'ala.

Rasulullah ﷺ said: "I caught sight of the greatest of (divine radiances). Thereafter Allah Ta'ala communicated whatever He wished to communicate to me."

Rasulullah ﷺ was blessed with setting eyes on Allah Ta'ala and communicating with Him directly without any intermediary between them. Allah Ta'ala conversed with Rasulullah ﷺ and endowed him with three gifts on this great occasion; the first gift was made up of the five daily Salaah; the second gift was the closing verses of Surah Baqarah, which includes the mercy, affection, ease and forgiveness of Allah Ta'ala upon this Ummah and it focuses upon victory and assistance to the Muslims against the disbelievers. Although these verses are in the form of duas, the verses are more of an educative and enlightening nature. It is as though Allah Ta'ala is enlightening this Ummah in these closing verses that they should make a point of imploring Allah Ta'ala and He will respond to their duas.

وَلَوْ لَمْ تُرِدْ نَيْلَ مَا نَرَجُوْ وَ نَظْلُبُهُ

مِنْ فَيْضِ جُودِكَ مَا عَلَّمْتَنَا الظَّلْبَا

*If You had no intention to bestow upon us from Your oceans of grace,
You wouldn't have enlightened us on the method of begging from You.*

In other words, You wouldn't have even informed us of what to beg of You.

The third gift awarded to Rasulallah ﷺ on this night was that Allah Ta'ala would pardon the major sins of any Ummati who does not ascribe partners unto Him. In other words, Allah Ta'ala will not condemn a perpetrator of major sins to eternal hellfire, as He would do to the disbelievers. Some of them will be pardoned through the intercession of the Ambiyaa alayhimus salaam. Others will be forgiven due to the intercession of the noble angels whilst others will be forgiven solely by the mercy and grace of Almighty Allah. Any person whose heart embraces even an iota of faith (Imaan) will, in due course, be released from Jahannam.

According to a lengthy Hadith of Abu Hurayrah radiyallahu anhu, during the course of his conversation with Allah Ta'ala, Rasulallah ﷺ was addressed by Allah Ta'ala thus:

فَقَالَ لَهُ رَبُّهُ قَدِ اتَّخَذْتُكَ خَلِيلًا وَحَبِيبًا وَأَرْسَلْتُكَ إِلَى النَّاسِ
كَافَّةً بَشِيرًا وَنَذِيرًا وَشَرَحْتُ لَكَ صَدْرَكَ وَوَضَعْتُ عِنْدَكَ
وَزْرَكَ وَرَفَعْتُ لَكَ ذِكْرَكَ فَلَا أُذْكَرُ إِلَّا ذُكِرْتَ مَعِيَ وَجَعَلْتُ
أُمَّتَكَ خَيْرَ أُمَّةٍ أُخْرِجَتْ لِلنَّاسِ وَجَعَلْتُ أُمَّتَكَ وَسَطًا
وَجَعَلْتُ أُمَّتَكَ هُمْ الْأَوْلَىٰ وَالْآخِرِينَ وَجَعَلْتُ مِنْ أُمَّتِكَ
أَقْوَامًا قُلُوبُهُمْ أَنَا جِيلُهُمْ وَجَعَلْتُكَ أَوَّلَ النَّبِيِّينَ خَلْقًا وَآخِرَهُمْ
بَعَثًا وَأَعْطَيْتُكَ سَبْعًا مِنَ الْمَثَانِي لَمْ أُعْطِهَا نَبِيًّا قَبْلَكَ
وَأَعْطَيْتُكَ خَوَاتِيمَ سُورَةِ الْبَقَرَةِ مِنْ كَنْزٍ تَحْتَ الْعَرْشِ لَمْ
أُعْطِهَا نَبِيًّا قَبْلَكَ وَأَعْطَيْتُكَ الْكَوْثَرَ وَأَعْطَيْتُكَ ثَمَانِيَةَ
أَسْهُمِ الْإِسْلَامِ وَالْهَجْرَةَ وَالْجِهَادَ وَالصَّلَاةَ وَالصَّدَقَةَ وَصَوْمَ
رَمَضَانَ وَالْأَمْرَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَالنَّهْيَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ وَجَعَلْتُكَ
فَاتِحًا وَخَاتِمًا إِلَىٰ آخِرِ الْحَدِيثِ (أَخْرَجَهُ ابْنُ جَرِيرٍ فِي
تَفْسِيرِ سُورَةِ الْأَسْرَاءِ عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ بِطَوِيلِهِ
كَذَا فِي الْخُصَائِصِ الْكُبْرَى

“I have adopted you as my Khalil (bosom friend) and Habib (beloved). I have sent you to all the peoples of the world as a Basheer (presenter of glad tidings) and as a Nazeer (warner). I have opened your breast for you, I have relieved you of your burden and I have

elevated your mention. My oneness is not mentioned but with you as My slave. I have made your Ummah the best of Ummahs that was ever raised from the people. I have declared your Ummah as the most just and moderate Ummah. I have rendered your Ummah as the first (in terms of its virtue) and last (in terms of its appearance in this world).

I have made from your Ummah a group of people whose hearts contain the Injeel. (In other words, the divine words of the Qur-aan will be etched onto their hearts.) I have made you the first Prophet in terms of the creation of your Nur and the last Prophet in terms of your commission. I have awarded you the Sab'ul-Mathaani (Surah Fatihah), which I had not given to any messenger prior to you. I have bestowed upon you the closing verses of Surah Baqarah from the treasures beneath the divine throne, which I had not bestowed to any messenger prior to you. I have granted you the Kauthar (the pond), and I have bestowed your Ummah with eight distinctive merits; Islam, Hijrah, Salaah, Sadaqah (charity), Saum of Ramadhaan, Amr bil M'aroorof (enjoining good) and Nahy 'anil-Munkar (forbidding evil). I made you a Faatih (opener or forerunner to the Ambiyaa) and Khaatam (seal of all the Prophets)....”

THE GIFT OF SALAAH

Allah Ta'ala bestowed Rasulallah ﷺ with many bounties and blessed him with many glad tidings and awarded him with distinctive injunctions and directives. One of the most significant directives issued to Rasulallah ﷺ was the obligation to

observe fifty daily Salaahs. Accepting all these directives and injunctions with delight, Rasulallah ﷺ turned back to return to this earth. On his return journey, he met Hadhrat Ibraaheem alayhis salaam. He made no comment about these injunctions of Salaah, etc.,.

“Thereafter I passed Musa alayhis salaam who asked me what I was commanded with. I replied: ‘During the day and night, fifty Salaahs have been prescribed for us.’ Musa alayhis salaam remarked: ‘I have a great deal of experience with the Bani Israa’eel. Your Ummah is far weaker; they will be unable to cope with this commandment. So return to your Lord and request him to reduce this obligation.’” Rasulallah ﷺ returned to Allah and requested Him to reduce the number of Salaahs. Allah Ta’ala reduced it by five. When Rasulallah ﷺ passed Musa alayhis salaam again, he posed the same question. Once more he requested Rasulallah ﷺ to beg for a reduction in this obligation. This going back and forth ensued a number of times until just five daily Salaah remained. Even then, Musa alayhis salaam pleaded with Rasulallah ﷺ to return to Allah and get yet another reduction. Rasulallah ﷺ replied: “I have requested a reduction a number of times already. Now I am embarrassed to approach Him for a further reduction.” Saying this Rasulallah ﷺ continued ahead. A voice from the unseen then called out: “These are five but equivalent to fifty.”

That is, these are just five Salaah but the reward of these five Salaah is equal to fifty Salaah. “And My verdict will not be altered. This obligation of just five Salaah was predetermined within My knowledge.”

MOCKERY OF THE QURAYSH

In the same order, Rasulullah ﷺ returned from the heavens and landed first at Baitul-Muqaddas. From here he mounted the Buraaq and reached Makkah before the break of dawn. The same morning, he recounted this incident to the Quraysh. They, as expected, were left flabbergasted in disbelief. Some of them held their hands over their heads in exasperation whilst others scornfully started clapping their hands. They scoffed at him and exclaimed: “How can he possibly go to Baitul-Muqaddas and return in just one night!” In order to test him, those who had been to Baitul-Muqaddas started throwing questions at him about the distinguishing features of Baitul-Muqaddas. The instant they started interrogating him, Allah Ta’ala brought Baitul-Muqaddas right before his very eyes and he continued responding to their questions. Now when all their questions pertaining to Baitul-Muqaddas were exhausted, they asked: “Okay, tell us some incident about the road leading to Baitul-Muqaddas.” Rasulullah ﷺ replied: “On my way I came across a trade caravan at a certain place that was returning

to Makkah from Syria. They lost one camel and later retrieved it. Insha Allah, this trade caravan should reach Makkah within three days. Leading the way would be a khaki-coloured camel laden with two sacks of goods.”

Accordingly, on the third day, this caravan entered Makkah in precisely the same manner as foretold by Rasulullah ﷺ and they also narrated the incident of the lost camel. On seeing and hearing this, Waleed bin Mughirah dismissed the whole incident by declaring: “This is nothing but sorcery.” The people also concurred with him saying: “Yes, Waleed is speaking the truth.”

STALLING THE SUN

Rasulullah ﷺ informed the Quraysh that the trade caravan that was returning from Syria would be in Makkah by Wednesday evening before sunset. However, by Wednesday evening the caravan failed to make an appearance and the sun was about to set. Rasulullah ﷺ made dua unto Allah Ta'ala. Allah Ta'ala delayed the setting of the sun for a little while until the caravan entered Makkah the same evening before sunset, in accordance with Rasulullah's ﷺ prophesy.

According to the scholars of Seerat, this miracle is referred to as the miracle of Habsush-Shams (the stalling of the sun).

Shaikh Taqiyyud-Deen Subki rahmatullahi alayh says:

وَشَمْسُ الضُّحَى طَاعَتْكَ عِنْدَ مَغِيْبِهَا

فَمَا غَرَبَتْ بَلْ وَاَفَقْتِكَ بِوَقْفِهِ

“The setting sun complied with you, it did not set but it submitted to you by you stalling it.”

In this manner Allah Ta'ala confirmed the truthfulness of Rasulallah ﷺ. The Quraysh witnessed his honesty with their very own eyes. They heard the truth with their very own ears but they remained committed to their obstinacy and refutation of the truth. They were bent on rebelling against the truth. Some of them went to Abu Bakr radiyallahu anhu and said: “Your friend, Muhammad (Rasulallah ﷺ) says that he went to Baitul-Muqaddas last night and returned before dawn. Do you believe him?” Abu Bakr radiyallahu anhu asked: “Did Muhammad ﷺ say that?” When they replied in the affirmative, Abu Bakr radiyallahu anhu declared: “Then it has to be the truth. I wholeheartedly believe in whatever he says. In fact, day and night I believe in the heavenly news he conveys to us which is even beyond that.” From that moment on, he was conferred with the title of Siddeeq.

Meeting with the Ambiyaa عَلَيْهِمُ السَّلَامُ

THE 2ND HEAVEN

On the second heaven, Rasulallah صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ met Hadhrat 'Isa alayhis salaam and Hadhrat Yahya alayhis salaam.

It appears in the Hadith:

أَنَا أَقْرَبُ النَّاسِ بِعَيْسَى بْنِ مَرْيَمَ لَيْسَ بَيْنِي وَبَيْنَهُ نَبِيٌّ

“From all the Ambiyaa, I am closest to ‘Isa bin Maryam; there is no prophet between him and me.”

Furthermore, towards the latter times, Hadhrat 'Isa alayhis salaam will descend from the skies to kill Dajjaal. Within Ummat-e-Muhammadiyah he will implement the Shari'ah of Muhammad Rasulallah صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ as a revivalist. On the day of Qiyaamah, Hadhrat 'Isa alayhis salaam will appear before Rasulallah صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ with the entire creation, from beginning to end, and he

will request Rasulallah ﷺ to initiate the process of intercession before Allah Ta'ala. For this reason, Rasulallah ﷺ was made to meet Hadhrat 'Isa alayhis salaam. Hadhrat Yahya alayhis salaam accompanying Hadhrat 'Isa alayhis salaam on this occasion was merely due to their close family relationship. They were maternal cousins. (Their mothers were sisters.) This meeting denoted the relentless harassment of the Jews. The Jews would leave no stone unturned in frustrating him and they would devise a range of plans to assassinate him. However, just as Allah Ta'ala protected Hadhrat 'Isa alayhis salaam from their wicked schemes, similarly Allah Ta'ala would protect Rasulallah ﷺ also from their evils.

THE 3RD HEAVEN

On the third heaven he met Hadhrat Yusuf alayhis salaam. This meeting implied that like Yusuf alayhis salaam, Rasulallah ﷺ will also suffer at the hands of his brothers but he will ultimately prevail over them and forgive them their wrongs. On the day of the conquest of Makkah, Rasulallah ﷺ addressed the Quraysh in the same manner as Yusuf alayhis salaam addressed his brothers when he said:

لَا تَثْرِيْبَ عَلَيْكُمْ الْيَوْمَ يَغْفِرُ اللهُ لَكُمْ وَهُوَ اَرْحَمُ
الرَّاحِمِيْنَ اِذْهَبُوا فَاَنْتُمْ الطُّلَقَاءُ اَيَّ الْعَتَقَاءُ

“Today there is no blame upon you. May Allah forgive you. He is the most affectionate of all the merciful. Go on! You are free.”

Furthermore, when the Ummah of Rasulallah ﷺ will enter Jannah, they will all be as handsome as Hadhrat Yusuf alayhis salaam.

THE 4TH HEAVEN

Rasulallah's ﷺ meeting with Hadhrat Idrees alayhis salaam signified that Rasulallah ﷺ will dispatch letters of invitation to Islam to the rulers of the world because Hadhrat Idrees alayhis salaam was the pioneer of letter writing. Also, in regards to Hadhrat Idrees alayhis salaam, Allah Ta'ala declares: “And We raised him up to an elevated rank.” Meeting him was an indication that Allah Ta'ala will bestow Rasulallah ﷺ also with an elevated rank and majestic position. As a consequence, even the emperor of Rome was left awestruck when he received the letter of Rasulallah ﷺ. As mentioned in Sahih Bukhaari, when Abu Sufyaan left the emperor's court, in amazement he remarked:

لَقَدْ أَمَرَ ابْنُ أَبِي كَبْشَةَ حَتَّى يَخَافَ مَلِكُ بَنِي الْأَصْفَرِ

“The affair of the son of Abu Kabshah has developed into something so enormous that even the king of the children of Asfar is alarmed by him.”

THE 5TH HEAVEN

His meeting with Hadhrat Haroon alayhis salaam was an indication that just as Saamiri and the calf-worshippers utterly defied Hadhrat Haroon alayhis salaam and they were subsequently executed due to this apostasy, in the same way, on the day of Badr, seventy Qurayshi leaders were slain and another seventy taken as prisoners. Also, some members of the ‘Uraynah tribe were executed due to their apostasy.

THE 6TH HEAVEN

Rasulullah’s ﷺ meeting with Hadhrat Musa alayhis salaam implied that just as Hadhrat Musa alayhis salaam waged Jihaad against the Jabbaarin in Syria and Allah Ta’ala granted him victory over them, similarly, Rasulallah ﷺ will enter the regions of Syria to wage Jihaad. Rasulallah ﷺ went towards Syria for the expedition to Tabuk. There the leader of Dawmatul-Jundul begged Rasulallah ﷺ for a truce on a promise of paying

Jizyah (security tax levied on non-Muslims living under Muslim rule). Rasulallah ﷺ consented to the truce.

And just as Syria was conquered after Hadhrat Musa ﷺ at the hands of his successor Hadhrat Yush'a alayhis salaam, similarly, after the demise of Rasulallah ﷺ, Syria fell into Muslims hands during the Khilaafat of Hadhrat 'Umar radiyallahu anhu.

THE 7TH HEAVEN

On the seventh heaven, Rasulallah ﷺ met Hadhrat Ibraaheem alayhis salaam. He saw him sitting with his back leaning on the Baitul-M'amur. The Baitul-M'amur is actually a Masjid on the seventh heaven directly parallel to the K'abah. Seventy thousand angels make Tawaaf of this structure every day (and they do not ever get a second chance to do so). Since Ibraaheem alayhis salaam is the builder of the K'abah, he was honoured with this distinction. This final meeting indicated to Hajatul-Wadaa (the farewell Haj). It implied that Rasulallah ﷺ would perform Haj before his demise from this world. According to the interpreters of dreams, a vision of Hadhrat Ibraaheem alayhis salaam in one's dream is a glad tiding of an imminent Hajj.

MEETING WITH ALLAH TA'ALA

Ibn Muneer says: “Up to this point, seven Me’raajs (ascensions) took place. The eighth ascension was up to Sidratul-Muntaha. This ascension was symbolic of the forthcoming conquest of Makkah that occurred in the eighth year of Hijrah. The ninth ascension took place from Sidratul-Muntaha to Sareeful-Aqlaam (the site of the moving of the pens). This ascension was a sign of the expedition of Tabuk that occurred in the ninth year of Hijrah. The tenth ascension was the ascension on the silken carriage towards the location of the utmost divine proximity to Allah Ta’ala where Rasulullah ﷺ heard the words of Allah Ta’ala. Since Rasulullah ﷺ acquired Baqaa (spiritual continuity) in this tenth ascension, this was an indication that in the tenth year of Hijrah Rasulullah ﷺ would leave this world for the Liqaa (reunion) with Allah Ta’ala. He would depart from this world to meet his Rafeeql A’laa (the greatest of companions).”

MEETING WITH THE MALAAIKAH

During his journey to the heavens, Rasulullah ﷺ found the divine angels engaged in various positions of worship. Some of them with their hands clasped together in the Qiyaam position. Some of them were in perpetual Ruk’u without raising their heads up. Some of them were in eternal Sajdah whilst others were in

perpetual Qu'ood position. Allah Ta'ala drew all these positions into one Rakaat for this Ummah so that the 'Ibaadah of this Ummah is a consolidation of all the various positions of Ibaadat of the angels. Furthermore, the Qur-aan Shareef reveals that everything sings the praise and glory of Allah Ta'ala. Allah Ta'ala says:

وَإِنْ مِنْ شَيْءٍ إِلَّا يُسَبِّحُ بِحَمْدِهِ وَلَكِنْ لَا تَفْقَهُونَ
تَسْبِيحَهُمْ ط

“And there is nothing but it glorifies Him (Allah Ta'ala) with His praise but you do not understand their glorification (Tasbeeh).

[Surah Israa verse 44]

Every single thing in this universe is engaged in the Tasbeeh (glorification) of Allah Ta'ala. Not a moment passes without them being engaged in his Tasbeeh. Obviously, this Tasbeeh of the universe would not be all of the same nature. They differ in their methods of Tasbeeh. The Tasbeeh of the trees and plants is in the state of Qiyaam (standing posture). The Tasbeeh of the animals is in the state of Ruk'u and the Tasbeeh of the insects is in perpetual Sujood. Their heads are always bowed to the earth in submission. The Tasbeeh of stones and other inanimate objects is the position of Qu'ood. In our Salaah, Allah Ta'ala has assembled all the various types of Tasbeeh and Tahmeed.

Furthermore, man is created from the four basic elements. This is why his Ibaadat also constitutes four basic postures of Qiyaam, Qu'ood, Ruk'u and Sujood. Since there are five sources that initiate the ghaflat (negligence) of Allah Ta'ala – i.e. the five senses – the five Salaah have been prescribed for every single day of the year.

Seerat-e-Mustafa ﷺ

Hadhrat Moulana Idrees Kandhlawi (RA)