

As per the teachings of the Qur-aan, when Allaah SWT decided to create the universe, His plan was that:

- The universe will be pre-programmed to function exactly as Allaah wants it to function (laws of nature).
- On one tiny little planet, human beings will be created and mercifully, Allaah will appoint them as His vicegerents on earth and grant them the freedom to make decisions as well as the means and resources to execute those decisions. This will give them a chance to demonstrate their preferences and the choices they make -- if they choose to indulge in wrong behaviour, do good or excel in goodness.
- Because people will not have full knowledge or complete wisdom, they will be prone to making the wrong decisions.
- To help them make the right decisions, from His infinite mercy, Allaah will provide them with the guidance of Islam.
- Under the influence of their lusts and temptations of Shaytaan, they will also be going astray and making wrong decisions.
- As a further act of mercy, He will send prophets and messengers to bring the misguided people back to Islam, revive the Islamic teachings and to demonstrate to them how Islam should be practised.
- This series of excellent people sent as prophets and messengers will end with the most excellent and perfect person who will bring to mankind the most complete and eternal package of guidance and present the most perfect model of living according to that guidance.

All thinking human beings can see that this plan is a plan of mercy of Allaah SWT. That is why the revelation of the Qur-aan is the greatest mercy of Allaah SWT and that is why the Qur-aan has been called by Allaah “the mercy” more than 20 times in the Qur-aan itself. For the same reason, the advent of the Prophet Muhammad $\text{\u00e9}ll\text{-}Allaahu\ \text{\u2018}alayhi\ wa\ sallam$ ($\hat{S}A'WS$) is the greatest mercy of Allaah to the world. In fact, Muhammad $\hat{S}A'WS$ was told that he was the mercy to all the worlds, because he was sent for all people of the world, not for any particular nation, and he was sent for all times and ages from his advent to the end of the world.

Coming back to the decision of Allaah SWT to create the universe, as we know, when Allaah intends to do something, it just happens as soon as He intends. Therefore, as soon as Allaah SWT intended this plan, it started happening with a “big bang”.

Thus, it can be said that Allaah SWT created the universe so that the Prophet Mu \hat{h} ammad $\text{\u00e9}ll\text{-}Allaahu\ \text{\u2018}alayhi\ wa\ sallam$ could come to guide us. Starting from that point, the advent of the Prophet had been an important factor in many events. For example, when earth was ready for human habitation, Allaah SWT created Adam and taught him names including the name of the last Messenger of Allaah.

When Ibraheem offered his only son Isma'eel for sacrifice, Allaah SWT saved him by replacing him with a ram, because it was from Isma'eel's progeny that the Prophet's advent was going to

happen. Once again, when 'Abdul Muttalib offered his son 'Abdullah for sacrifice, Allaah saved him for the ransom of 100 camels because he was going to be the father of the Prophet. Once Aaminah conceived the Prophet, 'Abdullaah could not survive even to see the birth of his son.

Then, finally when the Prophet was 40 years old, he was informed of his role as the last prophet and messenger of Allaah through the first revelation on the most blessed night of the blessed month of Ramadhaan. It was on Laylatul-Qadr that Allaah's plan of sending the Prophet was completed.

These examples indicate that the advent of the Prophet was very specially arranged from the creation of the universe to his official appointment as the Messenger of Allaah on Laylatul-Qadr. So, what is the best occasion to celebrate his advent? Allaah SWT has helped us in this respect as well by making the month of Ramadhaan as the month of celebrating the Prophet's receipt of the first revelation and declaring Laylatul-Qadr as better than 1000 months. In reality then, we celebrate the advent of the Prophet and revelation of guidance to him and thank Allaah SWT for this greatest of His mercies by fasting in the month of Ramadhaan and by standing up in worship of Allaah SWT and reciting the guidance that He sent through the Prophet all night on Laylatul-Qadr.

This answers the question of why and when to celebrate, and also leads us into "how to celebrate?" The best way of celebrating is by thanking Allaah SWT for His greatest mercy, then living by the guidance that Allaah SWT sent through Him, dedicating ourselves to achieve the objectives of Deen that he was sent to achieve. Those objectives have been elaborated in other articles on this website.