
بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَٰنِ الرَّحِيمِ
In the Name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful.

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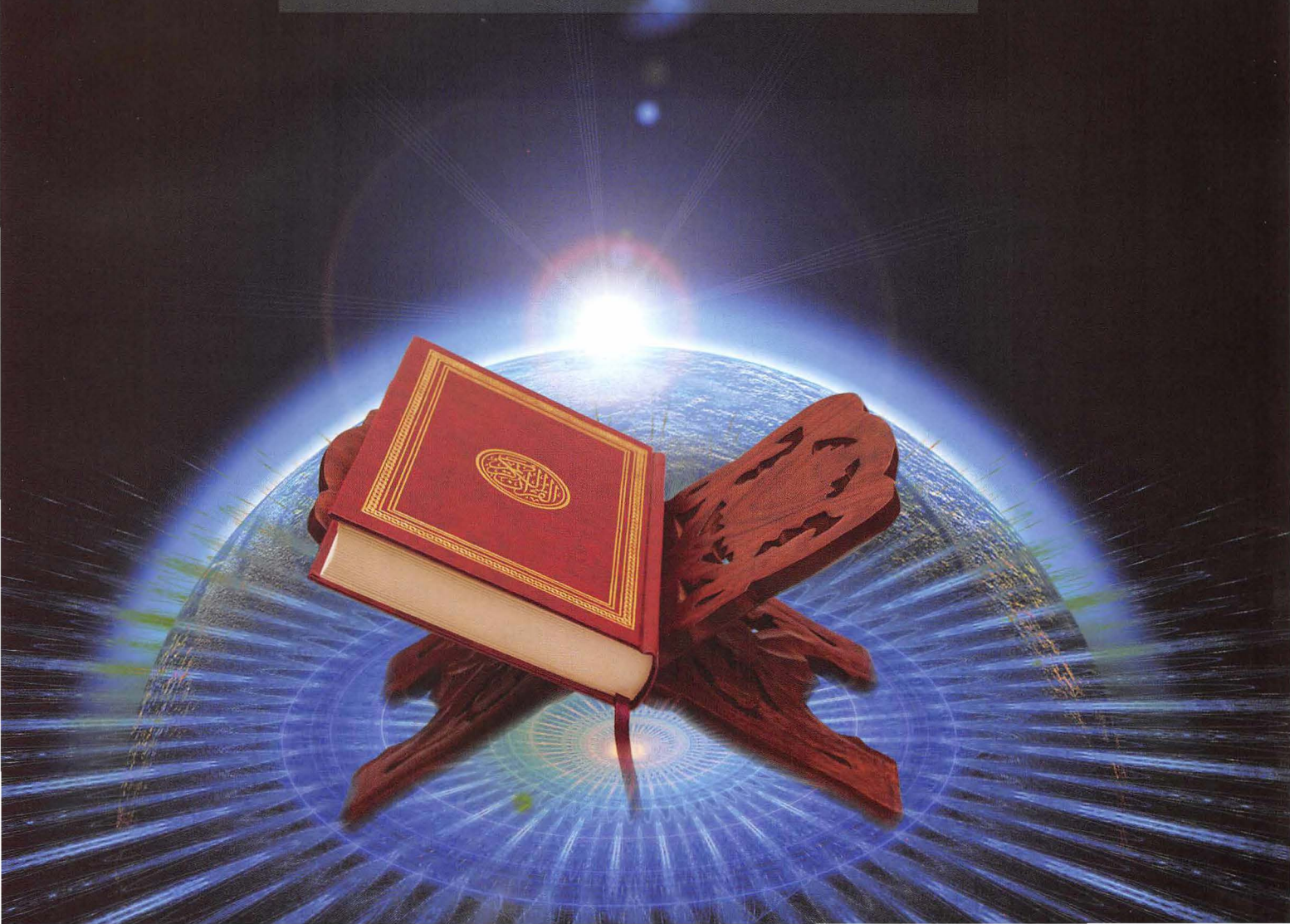
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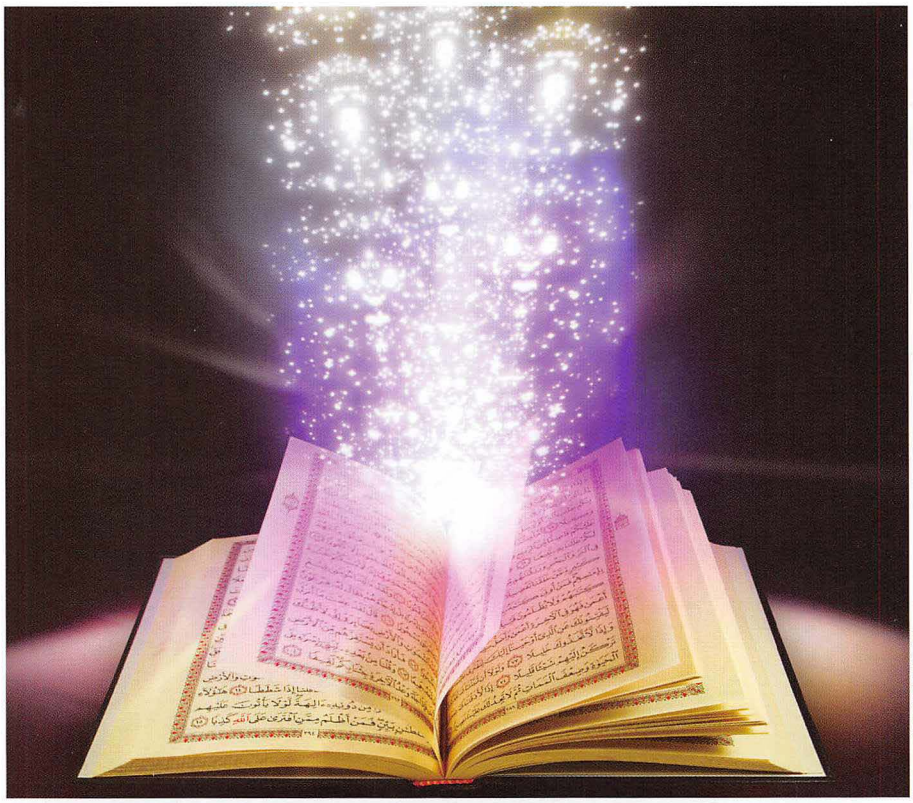
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1 What is the Qur'an?



1.1. Definition of the Qur'an

The Qur'an is the Arabic Speech of Allah which He revealed to Prophet Muhammad ﷺ 47:2) through Angel Jibreel ﷺ in its precise meaning and exact wording. It is the literal, uncreated Word of Allah. The word 'Qur'an' is frequently mentioned in the Glorious Book itself (See for instance 2:185, 10:37, 10:61 and 17:106).

The Qur'an clearly states to whom, when, in what language, how and why it was revealed: It was revealed in the month of *Ramadaan* (2:185) on the Night of Power or Decree '*Laylat-ul-Qadr*' (97:1): **'We revealed it on a blessed Night.'** (44:3)

It was revealed in the Arabic language: **'Surely, We have made it in the Arabic language so that you may be able to understand it.'** (43:3).

It was revealed in portions, each of which was written and committed to memory as soon as it was revealed, and its revelation was spread over twenty-three years of the Prophet's life, during which time he was occupied solely with the spread of its message:

"It is a Qur'an which We have divided [into parts from time to time] so that you may recite it to the people at intervals; and We have revealed it by stages." (17:106)

1.2. The Qur'an is the Highest Form of Revelation

Although the Gracious Qur'an was revealed piecemeal, the entire revelation is one whole. It is the Word of Allah revealed through the Holy Spirit, that is, Angel Jibreel ﷺ. Revelation takes place in three forms: **'It is not fitting for any human being that Allah should speak to him except by revelation, from behind a veil or by sending a messenger that reveals – by His permission – whatever Allah wills.'** (42:51)

The first of these modes is called *wahy*, which is used here in its literal sense of *al-ishaarah as-saree'ah*, that is to say, a quick suggestion into the mind of man.

The Qur'an is unique. It is inimitable and is protected by Allah from all forms of corruption. The word Qur'an is a verbal noun which means 'the reading' or 'recitation'.

1.3. The Qur'an is Protected by Allah from Corruption

Previous revelations had been corrupted intentionally, but the Qur'an's final message to man is exactly the same in its present form as it was revealed to Prophet Muhammad ﷺ more than 1400 years ago.

Islam teaches us that Allah created the entire universe, the angels, the *jinn* and then mankind in the persons of Adam and his wife. The history of humanity began with the disobedience of the first couple and their expulsion from Paradise, but Allah did not abandon them; rather, He promised to guide them by sending them prophets.



Adam ﷺ was the first Prophet. Some of the prophets brought people Sacred Books from Allah: the best known were the Torah (*at-Tawraat*), which was given to Prophet Moosaa ﷺ; the Psalms (az-*Zaboor*), which was given to Prophet Daawood ﷺ; and the Gospel (*al-Injeel*) which was given to Prophet 'Eesaa ﷺ. Many additions and deletions had crept into these books, but the Qur'an has remained intact because Allah the Almighty has taken it upon Himself to protect it, as the Qur'an says, **'We have sent down the Reminder, and We will guard it [from corruption].'** (*Soorat al-Hijr*, 15:9)

Harun Yahya writes,

> The Divine Scriptures that were revealed before Islam lost their original forms over time; they are either incomplete or not fully accurate. In the case of the Qur'an, however, Allah placed the revelations into our Prophet's memory. In addition, after he received each revelation, the Prophet ﷺ told his numerous companions to write them down, thereby ensuring the Qur'an's preservation in its original textual form. Caliph Abu Bakr (632-634) had the Qur'an compiled into a single copy, and Caliph 'Uthmaan (644-656) had copies of it sent to important Islamic cities. The following verses explain how our Prophet ﷺ tried to remember the revelations, and how Allah helped him do so:

Do not move your tongue trying to hasten it. Its collection and recitation are Our affair. So when We recite it, follow its recitation. Then its explanation is Our concern. (*Soorat al-Qiyaamah*, 75:16-19)

As the verses maintain, our Prophet ﷺ remembered the Qur'an in a unique way, for Allah implanted its verses in his mind. As his Companions wrote it all down while he was still alive, in compliance with His promise, each of its letters has remained unaltered since the beginning of its revelation over 1,400 years ago. Therefore, Allah's revelation has survived intact to our day.

The Qur'an's lack of any internal contradiction and discrepancy also shows that it is from Allah and is immune to change. The Qur'an is internally consistent and in full agreement with historical developments and scientific discoveries. This attribute is so certain and explicit that our Lord stated:

Will they not ponder the Qur'an? If it had been from other than Allah, they would have found many inconsistencies in it. (*Soorat an-Nisaa'*, 4: 82)[1]

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1 Harun Yahya, *Allah Promised to Protect the Qur'an*, available at: http://www.nnseek.com/e/aus.religion.islam/allah_promised_to_protect_the_qur_an_24845933t.html

All the teachings contained in the former scriptures that were meant to be of lasting value and importance are included in the Qur'an. The Qur'an gives some specific accounts of what the pre-Qur'anic scriptures contained. The basic message of all the prophets of Allah, and hence all scriptures they brought, was one and the same message from Allah to people:

Indeed, We have sent forth among every community a messenger with the commandment "Worship Allah Alone and shun all false deities and objects of worship!" (16:36)

Thus, the Qur'an not only preserves the essential teachings of the previous revelations but also sets out once and for all the eternal truth in its entirety. Indeed, it is a book that contains the essence of the revelations made to the prophets, preserving them so perfectly that the reader has no need to have recourse to other sacred scriptures, which have undergone all forms of corruption.

All the essential points, in every respect, are given to us in the Qur'an. The Muslims, therefore, regard the Qur'an as the Most Sacred object on earth – Allah's Supreme Gift to mankind. It is an object of veneration and the foundation of human understanding of the universe and man's place in it:

If all men and jinn were to collaborate, they could not produce its like. (17:88)

The Prophet ﷺ was authorized to challenge his critics and opponents to produce something comparable (10:38). The challenge was taken up by more than one stylist in Arabic literature – with a predictable result. The style of the Qur'an is Allah's style – this is basically what forms the miraculous character of the Qur'an.

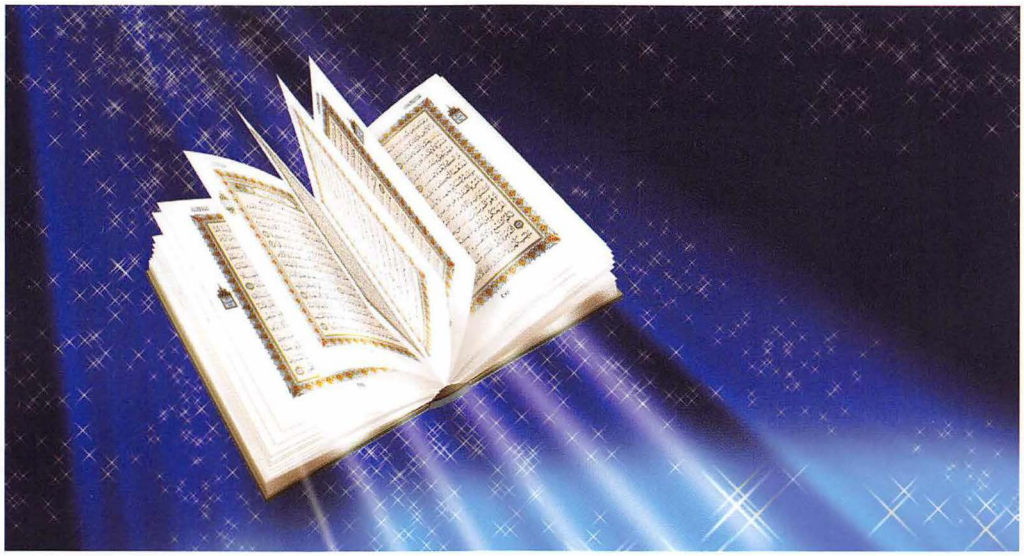
1.4. The Names of the Qur'an

Almighty Allah refers to the Qur'an by a number of names. These include "the Qur'an" (17:88), the Book "*al-Kitaab*" (2:2), the Criterion "*al-Furqaan*" (25:1), the Reminder "*ad-Dhikr*" (15:9) and the Revelation sent down "at-*Tanzeel*" (26:192).

Other references to the Qur'an are by such terms as an-*Noor* (the Light), *Hudaa* (Guidance), *Rahmah* (Mercy), *Majeed* (Glorious), *Mubaarak* (Blessed) and *Nadheer* (Warner), among other names.

1.5. The Qur'an: the Final Revelation

Prophet Muhammad ﷺ was the Last Messenger from Allah to mankind; he brought the final revelation – the Qur'an – from Allah to man. Therefore, the Qur'an is the last of the Holy Scriptures.



1.6. The Beginning of Revelation

The revelation of the Qur'an began in *Laylat-ul-Qadr* (the Night of Power) of *Ramadaan* (the twenty-seventh night or one of the odd nights of its third part) after Prophet Muhammad ﷺ had passed the fortieth year of his life, during his seclusion in the cave of Hiraa', on a mountain near Makkah, in the year 610 CE.

The first revelation he received constitutes the first five verses of *Soorat al-'Alaq* (the Clinging Clot):

Read in the Name of your Lord, who created; created man from a clinging clot. Read! And your Lord is the Most Gracious One; He Who has taught by the pen; He has taught man that which he knew not. (96:1-5)

The remainder part of this *soorah*, which consists of 19 verses, was revealed on some other occasion.

1.7. The Second Revelation

The second portion of the Glorious Qur'an revealed to Prophet Muhammad ﷺ was the beginning of *Soorat Al-Muddath-thir* (74:1-5). The rest of the *soorah* was revealed later. This *soorah* consists of 56 verses.

1.8. The Last Revelation

Many Muslim Scholars are agreed that the last revelation was verse 281 of *Soorat al-Baqarah*:

And fear the day when you shall be brought to Allah. Then each soul shall be paid in full what it has earned and none shall be dealt with unjustly.

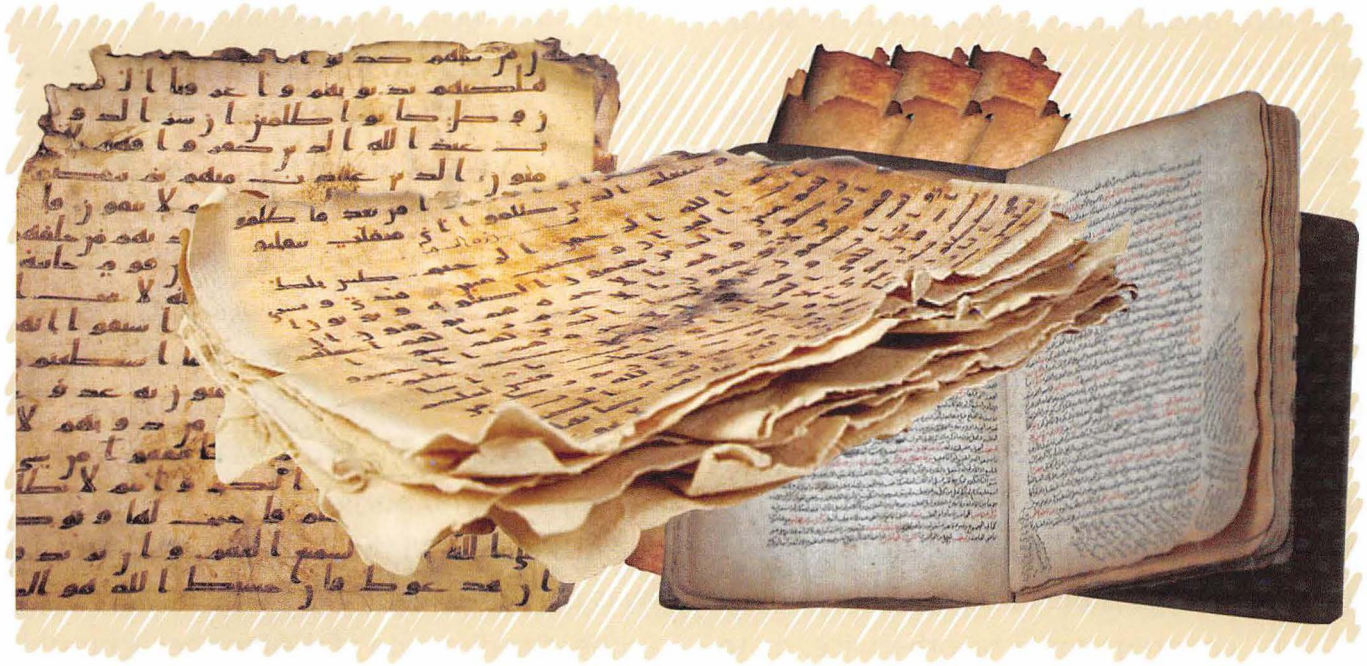
The Prophet ﷺ passed away nine nights after the last revelation. Some scholars, however, hold that the following verse was the last verse to be revealed.

This day I have perfected your religion for you, completed My favour upon you and have chosen for you Islam as your religion. (*Soorat al-Maa'idah*, 5:3)

This opinion, however, is not sound according to many scholars who argue that this verse was actually revealed during the Farewell Pilgrimage.

Review

- Define the word 'Qur'an'.
- What are the different names of the Qur'an?
- Can you explain how the Qur'an is inimitable?
- What are the three forms of revelation? How can the Qur'an be the highest form of revelation?
- The Qur'an is the essence of all former revelations. Discuss.
- How and why has the Qur'an remained unchanged?
- How can you prove that the Qur'an is the final revelation of Allah?
- How did the revelation of the Qur'an begin? What do you know about the final and last revelations?
- What do you think is meant by "Farewell Pilgrimage"?



1.9. Reasons why the Qur'an was Revealed in Stages

- The Gracious Qur'an was sent down in stages over a period of 23 years, and not as a complete book in one single act of revelation. There are several reasons for this, and the following are the most significant:
- To strengthen the heart of Allah's Messenger ﷺ from time to time and whenever the need for guidance arose.
- Out of consideration for the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, since revelation was a very difficult experience for him.
- To gradually implement the commands of Allah.
- To make understanding, translation into action and memorization of the revelation easier for the believers.
- It is established that the Qur'an had been memorized in its entirety by the companions of the Prophet ﷺ during his lifetime. This tradition continued after the Prophet's death and later among all generations of Muslims that have followed, until today.

1.10 How was the Qur'an Collected?

Although the Qur'an was revealed in portions, it did not remain long on that fragmentary condition. As its very name suggests, it was a book from the first; it could not be complete until its last verse was revealed; it was never without some form of arrangement. In fact, every single verse, part of a verse or *soorah* that was revealed had its own definite place in the Gracious Book. The arrangement of the Qur'an was thus a part of divine scheme. It has been established that the Qur'an had been written down in its entirety in the lifetime of the Prophet ﷺ but had not been brought together in one single place. However, the ordering of the Qur'an and the arrangement of the various *soorahs* was fixed by the Prophet ﷺ himself and safeguarded through oral transmission.

Whenever a *soorah* or verses of a *soorah* were revealed to the Prophet ﷺ, he would call one of his scribes[1] and say to him, 'Write such-

1 A scribe is a person who made copies of written documents before printing was invented.

and-such a verse in the *soorah* where such-and-such verses occur.' (Abu Daawood)

In fact, if we keep in mind the use that was made of the Qur'an, we cannot for an instant entertain the idea that the Glorious Qur'an existed without arrangement of its verses and *soorahs* in the lifetime of the Prophet ﷺ. It was not only recited in the daily prayers but also committed to memory and regularly recited to keep it fresh in the mind. Therefore, if the arrangement of the verses and *soorahs* had not existed, it would have been impossible to recite it in the daily prayers, congregational or otherwise, or to commit it to memory. If the prayer leader (*imaam*) happens to make the slightest change in the place of a verse during the congregational prayer, he will immediately be corrected by those behind him!

The Glorious Qur'an thus existed in a complete and ordered form in the memories of the companions of the Prophet ﷺ during his lifetime, but no complete written copy of it existed at the time, nor could such a copy be made while the Prophet ﷺ was still alive and still receiving revelations. However, the entire Qur'an was safely preserved in the memories of his companions who were called *Qurraa',* or reciters.

It so happened, however, that many of the reciters fell in the famous Battle of Yamaamah during in the caliphate of Abu Bakr as-Siddeeq ﷺ, and it was then that 'Umar ibn Al-Khattaab ﷺ pointed out to Abu Bakr the necessity of compiling a standard written copy so that no portion of the Qur'an would be lost even if all the reciters died. This copy was compiled from the manuscripts written under the direction of the Prophet ﷺ himself, and the arrangement followed was that of the oral recitation as followed in the time of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. Thus a standard written copy was prepared and entrusted to the care of Hafsah ﷺ, wife of the Prophet ﷺ and daughter of 'Umar ibn al-Khattaab. Later on, 'Uthmaan ibn 'Affaan, the fourth rightly-guided caliph ordered copies to be made from this standard copy. These copies were then sent to different parts of the Islamic state.

1.11 Divisions of the Glorious Qur'an

The Qur'an is divided into 114 *soorahs*. The term *soorah* (pl. *suwar*, generally written as *soorahs* here) literally means an enclosure or fencing, such as the walls around a city. It is also used to denote an elevated plain. When applied to the Qur'an, it signifies a specific group of verses, arranged in a specific manner. In technical language, *soorah* is the chapter-wise division of the Qur'anic text – a chapter or part set apart from the preceding and following text.

The Qur'an consists of 114 *soorahs* of unequal length, the shortest consisting of three and the longest of 286 verses, or *aayaat*.

The Arabic word *aayah* (pl. *aayaat*) means sign. It is the shortest division of the Qur'anic text, that is to say a phrase or sentence. The Revelation is Guidance from Allah to mankind. It is, therefore, not at all surprising to discover that its small divisions are called Signs (Signs of Guidance). The expression verse is not accurate since the Qur'an is not poetry.

All *soorahs*, with the exception of *Soorah* 9, begin with the words '*Bismillaahir-Rahmaanir-Raheem*'. All 114 *soorahs* in the Qur'an have their names, which serve as a sort of heading. Both the arrangement of the *soorahs* and the order of the *aayaat* within each *soorah* were determined by the Prophet ﷺ under the guidance of Angel Jibreel (Gabriel) عليه السلام.

Other Divisions of the Qur'anic Text

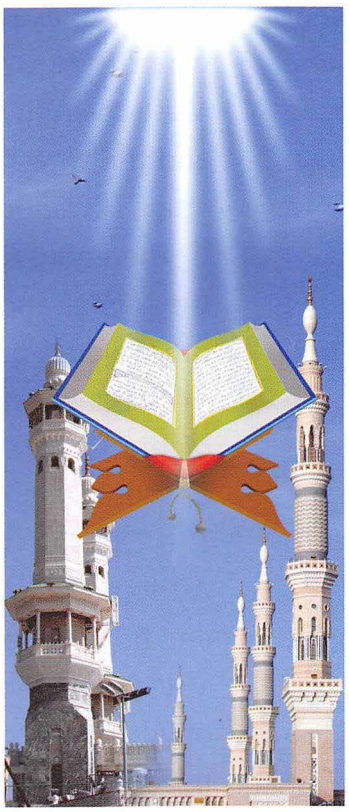
The Qur'an is divided into 30 portions of approximately equal length for easy recitation during the thirty days of a month. Each of these portions is called a *juz'* (pl. *ajzaa'*). *Juz'* literally means 'part' or 'portion'. Some copies of the Qur'an have the *soorahs* divided into *ruku'* (sections or paragraphs). The *ruku'* is usually accompanied by three numbers. The top number denotes the number of the *ruku'* with respect to that particular *soorah*, the middle number indicates the number of verses in that *ruku'* and the bottom number indicates the number of the *ruku'* with respect to the *juz'* in which it occurs.

Copies of the Qur'an printed in Arab countries in particular have each *juz'* subdivided into four *ahzaab* (singular, *hizb*) indicated by the word *hizb*, printed in Arabic. Each *hizb* is subdivided into four quarters called *rub'*.

The Qur'anic text is also divided into seven parts of approximately equal lengths, each of which is called *manzil*, so that if a person wishes to complete the recitation of the Qur'an in one week, he may do so by reciting one *manzil* a day.

1.12. Makkan and Madinan *Soorahs*

An important division of the Gracious Qur'an relates to the Makkan and Madinan *soorahs*. After having received the first revelation, the Prophet ﷺ spent thirteen years in Makkah and then was forced to emigrate to Madeenah, where he spent the last ten years of his life. Hence, the *soorahs* of the Qur'an have also been classified, according to their origin, into Makkan and Madinan *soorahs*.



A *soorah* is said to be of Makkan origin when its beginning was revealed in the Makkan period even if it contains verses from Madeenah. Likewise, a *soorah* is said to be of Madinan origin when its beginning was revealed in the Madinan phase even if it has verses from the Makkan period in its text.

Out of the total of 114 *soorahs* into which the Glorious Qur'an is divided, 85 *soorahs* are, according to scholars, of Makkan origin. The Madinan *soorahs* are longer than the makkan ones and, therefore, comprise a much larger part of the Qur'an.

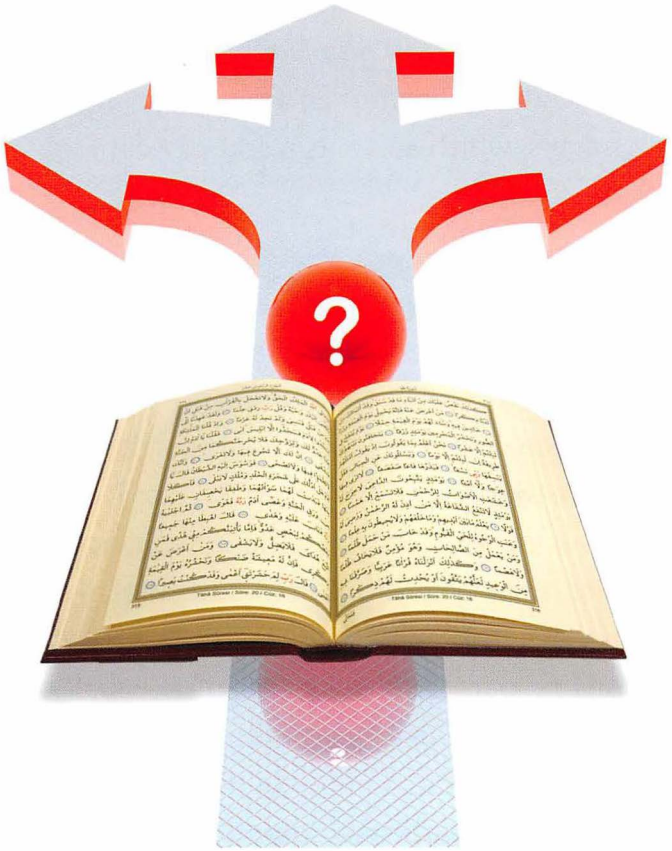
1.13. Coherence in the Qur'an: *Nadhm*

Coherence (*nadhm*) denotes clear logical connection of ideas, arguments and sentences, among other things, so that together they make a whole. Every *soorah* in the Qur'an is a perfect unit with a central theme around which it revolves. The central theme is the unifying 'thread' in the *soorah*.

It is true that every *soorah* is a unit, but there also exists a logical link between all the *soorahs* as they follow one another. Between different *soorahs* there is also a logical unity and coherence.

With the exception of a few, all *soorahs* are found in the Qur'an in pairs that complement each other.

The concept of the pairing of the *soorahs* is original to Amin Ahsan Islahi (1904-1997). According to Islahi, the Qur'anic *soorahs* in their arrangement are, as a rule, paired. That is, just as, on one level, each *soorah* is an integrated whole and it is distinct from all the others, so on another level, all *soorahs* exist in the form of pairs, each of which is composed of two closely matched *soorahs* and distinct from other pairs. For a detailed and interesting discussion of this approach which is based and evolved around the concept of order and coherence in the contents of the Qur'an, you may refer to *Coherence in the Qur'an* by Mustansir Mir, American Trust Publications, Indianapolis, USA, and also to *Pondering over the Qur'an* by Muhammad Saleem Kayani, al-Kitab Publications, London, UK.



1.14. What is the Qur'an about?

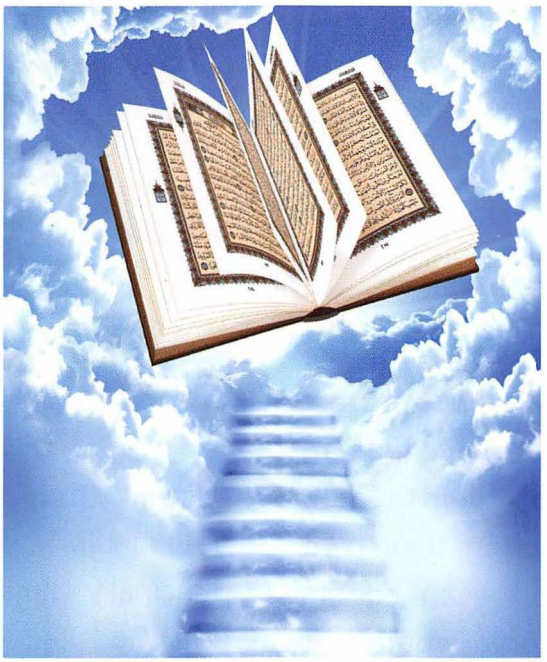
The Qur'an is the word of Allah and a book of guidance. A question may arise here: Guidance to what? The answer is simply guidance to Allah, to His Most Beautiful Names and Lofty Attributes, His Will and the way in which one may conduct oneself to attain His Good Pleasure.

The entire Qur'an, so to say, is the exposition of the Names and Attributes of Allah the Almighty. In other words, guiding the creation to understanding Allah's Oneness (*tawheed*) is the overriding objective of the Qur'an. Thus, one of the major objectives of the Qur'an is to teach the creation about Allah. The Qur'anic teachings about Allah's Names and Attributes are extremely essential for the strength and health of one's faith.

If one has knowledge and correct understanding of Allah's Names and Attributes, then one would never turn to anyone else or direct any form of

worship to anyone other than to Allah. It is worth mentioning here that all that is in the *Sunnah* of the Prophet ﷺ is also the exposition of the Qur'an. This guidance to Allah, knowledge of His Names of Attributes and His Will and guidance to right conduct, cannot be obtained by any means other than the Qur'an and its complementary, the *Sunnah*: the sayings and the excellent practices of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ.

The Qur'an guides to the straight path that leads to Allah's pleasure and Paradise. It gives truth-seekers the proper concept of the truth as well as the willpower and the moral courage to produce a living model of that concept in real life. It helps them overcome the obstacles they might encounter from within or without. Thus the Qur'an is a book that is squarely aimed at man. Indeed, it is 'guidance for mankind' (2:185), as Almighty Allah says about it.



It is in fact guidance for all the needs and benefits of the life of this world and that of the hereafter. It is first and foremost a Book of Guidance.

Allah also describes the Qur'an as light '*noor*' (42:52). Light shows us the path in front of us. In fact, it is through light that we can avoid the harmful things in our way and follow the safe path. However, this light is different from the light one senses in the physical world. It is a spiritual light whereby we recognize and understand what is of real benefit to us in this world and in the world to come. This light leads to the Straight Path and to Allah's Grace and Mercy. Nevertheless, this light is only beneficial for those who follow it.

The Qur'an speaks about the past, the present and the future. It also speaks about the unseen. The verses of the Qur'an may be classified into three categories:

those related to the stories of the prophets and earlier communities, those related to commands and prohibitions, and those related to Allah and His Beautiful Names and Lofty Attributes.

The Qur'an is Allah's speech. It is directly related to His noble attributes of greatness, mercy, forgiveness and knowledge. When we live our life according to the teachings of the Qur'an, we actually live it in a way that is pleasing to Allah – our Creator. Life in the shade of the Qur'an is, in reality, a life that brings one closer to Almighty Allah. Thus, there can be no doubt then that one of the major objectives of the Qur'an is to teach people about Allah – their Creator.

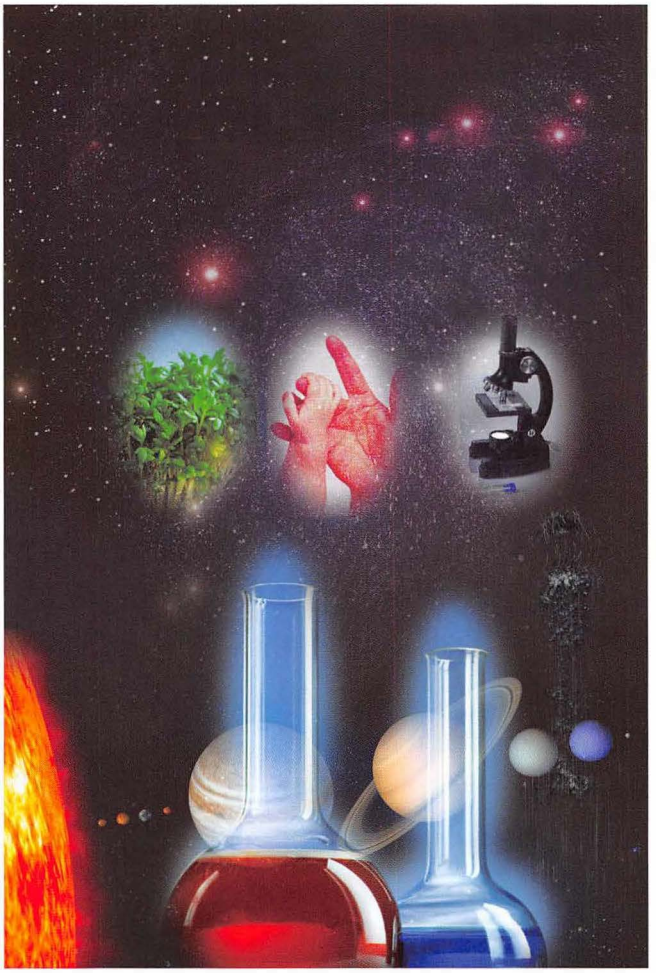
The Qur'an guides us in every aspect of our lives. It is undoubtedly one of the greatest blessings that Allah has given us. Among the most significant aspects to which the Qur'an guides mankind is good character and proper conduct. Speaking about the purpose for which he has been sent, Allah's Messenger ﷺ once said, 'I have only been sent to perfect good morals.' (al-Haakim, graded *saheeh* by *Sheikh* al-Albaanee)

When 'Aai'shah رضي الله عنها was asked about the character of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, she replied, 'His character was the Qur'an.' (Muslim)

Thus, the Qur'an is not simply a book that makes people grow morally and spiritually. It is not just about imparting human knowledge of what is right and correct. It also instils in people's hearts and minds the feeling of heedfulness, fear, love and accountability to Allah that will make them do what is proper and correct. The Qur'an, therefore, vividly describes what will happen on the Day of Judgment to both those who are righteous and heedful of Allah and those who are evil.

Thus, once we realize this Qur'anic objective and sincerely strive hard to achieve it through reading and studying the Qur'an, Allah will certainly grant us knowledge and fill our hearts with heedfulness (*taqwaa*). In this way, we will become useful in our society as well as in the world at large. Our conduct and actions will change for the better, and we will call people to the way of Allah – the way of peace in the world.

Certainly, one of the objectives of the Qur'an is to show the believers how to protect themselves from all the forces of evil that are trying to distance them from their Creator. Allah cautions them concerning their own lower self (*an-nafs*, or soul) – an enemy concerning which most people would not be aware were not for the revelation of Allah and His guidance in this regard. Perhaps the clearest example of this class of teachings in the Qur'an deals with the devil, or Satan. The Qur'an vividly describes the ways and means of the devil. One such way is his appearing as a sincere advisor and well-wisher, as was the case in which he approached Adam and Eve although Allah had warned them about him, as He warns the believers about in the Gracious Qur'an. (7: 20-22)



1.15. Scientific Miracles in the Qur'an

In fact, the Qur'an is not a book of science or technology. It is a book of guidance which principally aims at guiding people to the true God — Allah, helps them establish righteousness and create a virtuous society.

The Qur'an is the Word of Allah. Its matchless style and profound wisdom constitute some of its definite proofs. Furthermore, its miraculous attributes further prove that it is a revelation from Allah. One of these attributes is the fact that a number of scientific facts that have been discovered in recent years with the help of modern technology were stated in the Qur'an over 1400 years ago. These facts could not have been known at the time of the Qur'an's

revelation. This conclusively provides further evidence that the Qur'an is the Word of Allah and categorically points to Islam's genuineness. In fact, many Western scientists have embraced Islam once they found out about some of these scientific facts in the Qur'an.



The Prophet ﷺ was not familiar with such scientific facts which were discovered only in recent decades. In fact, he was illiterate, which proves beyond doubt that only God must have revealed them to him. These scientific miracles relate to a number of matters including the following:

- Embryology and human creation
- Sensation of pain in the skin
- Recent scientific discoveries concerning the intestines
- The significance of the sense of hearing as compared with that of sight
- The origin of creation
- The miraculous nature of fingerprints
- The miraculous healing honey provides
- The detrimental effects of carrion, blood and pork
- Health benefits of ablution, prayer and fasting
- The Qur'an, a healing and mercy

Dr. Sharif Kaf al-Ghazal discusses these and many other scientific miracles in his brilliantly written book *Medical Miracles of the Qur'an*, which has been published by the Islamic Foundation, Leicester, UK.

Review

- The Qur'an was revealed in stages. What, do you think, is Allah's wisdom in revealing it in this way?
- The Qur'an had some form of arrangement in the lifetime of the Prophet ﷺ. Explain.
- Why did 'Umar رضي الله عنه feel the need to compile a standard written copy?
- There is no English equivalent for the terms '*Sunnah*' and '*aayah*'. Discuss.
- Discuss, preferably with the help of a diagram, the various divisions in the Qur'an. Also note the wisdom behind these divisions.
- Explain the term '*nadhm*'.
- Discuss in detail the purpose of the Qur'an.
- Mention something about Allah's wisdom in including medical and other scientific miracles in the Qur'an although it is primarily a book of guidance.



For Further Reading

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2 Readings from the Glorious Qur'an

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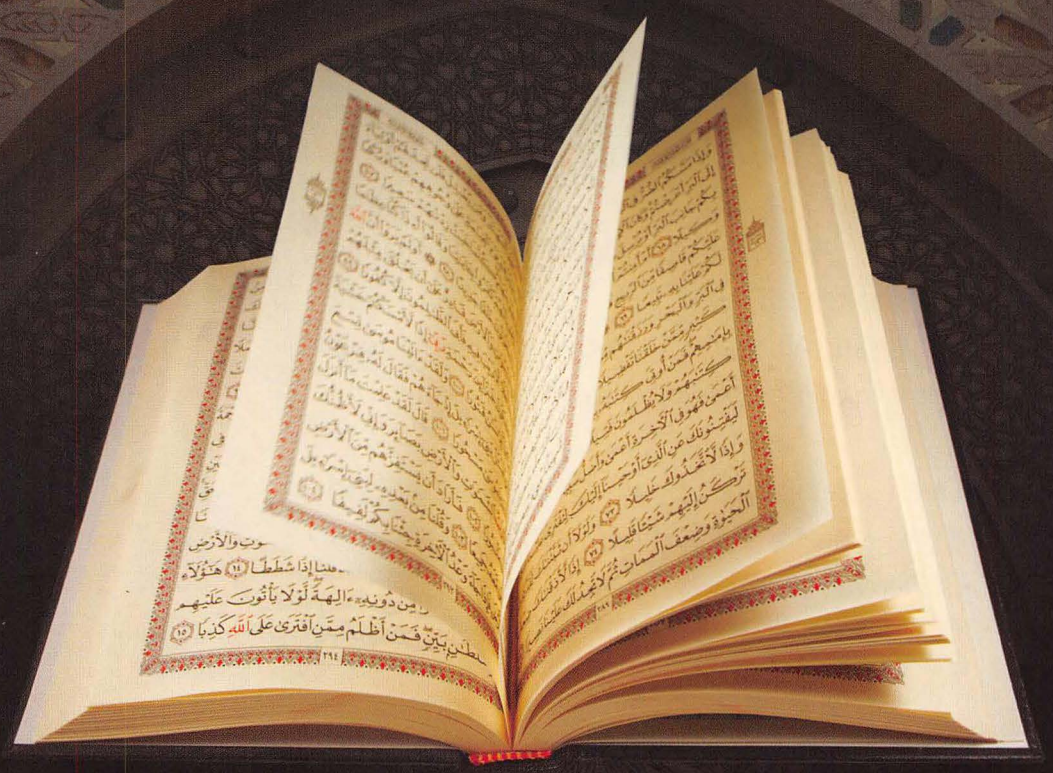
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2 Readings from the Glorious Qur'an[1]

Section 1 Attributes of Allah

2.1. *Aayat-ul Kursee (Soorat al-Baqarah, 2:255)*

ٱللَّهُ لَآ إِلَٰهَ إِلَّا هُوَ ٱلْحَىُّ ٱلْقَيُّومُ ۚ لَا تَأْخُذُهُۥ سِنَةٌ وَلَا نَوْمٌ ۚ لَّهُۥ مَا فِى ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَمَا
فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ ۗ مَن ذَا ٱلَّذِى يَشْفَعُ عِندَهُۥٓ إِلَّا بِإِذْنِهِۦ ۚ يَعْلَمُ مَا بَيْنَ أَيْدِيهِمْ وَمَا خَلْفَهُمْ ۖ
وَلَا يُحِيطُونَ بِشَىْءٍ مِّنْ عِلْمِهِۦٓ إِلَّا بِمَا شَآءَ ۚ وَسِعَ كُرْسِيُّهُ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضَ
وَلَا يَـُٔودُهُۥ حِفْظُهُمَا ۚ وَهُوَ ٱلْعَلِىُّ ٱلْعَظِيمُ ﴿٢٥٥﴾ البقرة: ٢٥٥

Translation of the Meanings of this Verse

Allah, there is no god except Him, the Ever-Living, the Ever-Lasting Sustainer. Neither slumber, nor sleep overtakes Him. To Him belongs whatever is in the heavens and whatever is in the earth. Who is he that can intercede with Him except with His permission? He knows what happens to them (i.e. creatures) [in this world] and what will happen to them [in the hereafter]; and they will never encompass anything of His knowledge except that which He wills. His Throne extends over the heavens and the earth, and He feels no fatigue in guarding and preserving them. And He is the Most High, the Most Great.

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1 We have named this unit Readings from the Glorious Qur'an because we believe it would not be appropriate to call it 'Selections from the Glorious Qur'an', as the expression 'selections' gives the impression that what has not been chosen is in some way or the other not adequate, while the Qur'an is wholly beautiful, complete and sublime.



Explanatory Notes

This verse is known as the Throne Verse, and there are a number of *ahaadeeth* (sing. *hadeeth*) which prove that it is the most excellent verse in the Qur'an. Ubayy ibn Ka'b ﷺ narrated that the Prophet ﷺ asked him about the greatest *aayah* in the Book of Allah and he replied, 'Allah and His Messenger know best.' When the Prophet ﷺ repeated the question several times, Ubayy ﷺ said, 'It is *Aayat-ul-Kursee*.' The Prophet ﷺ exclaimed, 'Congratulations! You possess true knowledge. By Him in whose Hand my soul is, this verse has a tongue and two lips with which it praises the King (i.e. Allah) at the foot of the Throne.' (Ahmad: quoted in *Tafseer Ibn Katheer*, English Translation, vol. 2, p. 21)

The Word *Al-Qayyoom*

Al-Qayyoom is an intensive form which means the One Who exists by Himself and supports, sustains and provides means of subsistence for all His creations. *Al-Hayy* or the Ever- Living' is one of the Most Beautiful Names of Allah. Allah, the Ever-Living, is the source of all life. His Life is not derived from anywhere else, while everyone else's life is from Him and is dependent upon Him. It is He Who made others live, and they are alive only as long as He wants them to live. Allah was and will always be living. His Life, His being *al-Hayy*, is of very different High Order – not comparable with the life of His creatures. What is true of *al-Hayy* is true of other similar Beautiful Names of Allah.

The Phrase *Sinatun wa Laa Nawm*

Sinatun means a doze or nap, while *nawm* means sleep. The negation of these two negates both the initial and full-fledged state of sleep. This means that Allah is absolutely free of any trace or effect of negligence or heedlessness.

The General Structure of *Aayah* 2: 255

It is not difficult to see how various themes are organized within this *aayah*.

The first sentence states the basic theme, which is elaborated in the following statements. Allah, the Only God, is the source of all life. It is He Who controls the whole universe – everything depends upon Him and every event follows from Him.

He is not unmindful of His creation, even for a single moment. He never sleeps or slumbers.

He is the Master of all beings. Each and everyone belong to Him.

In reality, no one would even dare to speak as an intercessor for anyone on the Day of Judgment unless He Himself permits it. He knows everything; therefore, He does not need any recommendation of any sort, which is usually required in human affairs. He alone is the Ruler. Everything else is responsible to Him. If any person fails to do his or her duty, and thereby deserves His punishment, no intercession can help that person.

He knows everything, and no one else knows anything without His giving him the knowledge of it.

He rules the whole universe, and everything is under His control at all times.

It is He Who takes constant care of the whole universe and this is not a burden upon Him at all.

To Him belongs all supremacy and all majesty.

In the end, we quote a *hadeeth* about the Prophet's intercession. Allah's Messenger ﷺ is reported as having said, '[on the Day of Judgment] I will stand under the Throne and fall in prostration, and Allah will allow me to remain in that position as much as He wills. I will thereafter be told, "Raise your head, speak and you will be heard, intercede and your intercession will be accepted."' The Prophet ﷺ then said, 'He will allow me a proportion whom I will enter into Paradise.' (Muslim)

Review

- What is the wisdom of using the term 'readings' as compared to 'selections' as a title to this chapter?
- What do the attributes *al-Hayy* and *al-Qayyoom* mean?
- What is the meaning of the term *Aayat-ul-Kursee*? Mention the excellence of the *aayah* according to a *hadeeth*?



2.2. A Clear Concept of the Creator: *Soorat al-An'aam*, 6:101-103

بَدِيعُ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ ۖ أَنَّىٰ يَكُونُ لَهُۥ وَلَدٌ وَلَمْ تَكُن لَّهُۥ صَٰحِبَةٌ ۖ وَخَلَقَ كُلَّ شَىْءٍ ۖ وَهُوَ بِكُلِّ شَىْءٍ عَلِيمٌ ﴿١٠١﴾
ذَٰلِكُمُ ٱللَّهُ رَبُّكُمْ ۖ لَآ إِلَٰهَ إِلَّا هُوَ ۖ خَٰلِقُ كُلِّ شَىْءٍ فَٱعْبُدُوهُ ۚ وَهُوَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَىْءٍ وَكِيلٌ ﴿١٠٢﴾
لَّا تُدْرِكُهُ ٱلْأَبْصَٰرُ وَهُوَ يُدْرِكُ ٱلْأَبْصَٰرَ ۖ وَهُوَ ٱللَّطِيفُ ٱلْخَبِيرُ ﴿١٠٣﴾ الأنعام: ١٠١ - ١٠٣

Translation of the Meanings of these Verses

101. [He is] the Originator of the heavens and the earth. How could He have a son when He does not have a female companion? Rather, He created everything and has full knowledge of all things.

102. Such is Allah, Your Lord; there is no god other than Him, the Creator of everything. So worship Him alone, and he is Disposer of all things.

103. No vision can grasp Him, but His grasp is over all vision. He is above all comprehension, yet is acquainted with all things.

Explanatory Notes

Verse 101

The word *Badee'*, as applied to Almighty Allah, means the one who produces something without an earlier example; hence, the word *bid'ah* which means a new practice that is introduced in religion.

He is the Originator of the heavens and the earth. In fact, the One who originates the whole universe out of nothing is in no need of a son. Offspring are needed by mortals. They are needed by the weak who want help. Moreover, anyone who desires offspring must have a mate or a female consort from his own species. How, then, can Allah have a son when He has never had a mate, and when He is One and unique and nothing and no one is comparable to Him? How can any offspring be born without a mate?

Verse 102
Allah is the Creator of all

Allah is the Creator of everything. As He is the Creator of all, He also provides sustenance to all using resources in which He has no partners. Whatever all creatures eat and whatever they enjoy in this life is part of what is the sole property of Allah. He is the Lord of the universe. He controls everything. His is the authority to which everything submits, and He operates the system by which He takes care of His creation. So He is the only one who deserves to be worshipped in the full sense of the word, which denotes total obedience and submission. He controls not only human beings but also everything else, since He is the sole Creator of everything.

Verse 103

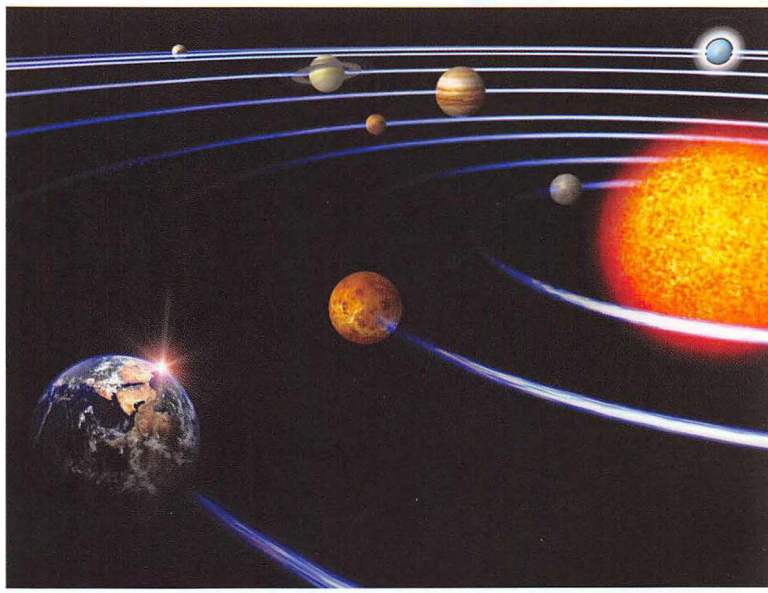
Visions cannot sight Him in this world. In the hereafter, the true believers will see Him, but they will not be able to encompass Him fully. Allah has spoken of His vision being granted to the believers in several other parts of the Qur'an. (For instance, 75:22-3; 83:15)

Allah's Messenger ﷺ once said, 'Indeed, Allah does not sleep and it does not befit His Majesty that He should sleep. He lowers the scale and raises it. The deeds of the day are ascended to Him before the night, and the deeds of the night before the day. His Veil is Light, and if He removes it the Light of His Face will burn every created thing that His Sight reaches.' (Muslim)

The term *Lateef* denotes something that is extremely subtle in quality and, therefore, intangible and unfathomable. It implies that He is unique and absolute.

Review

- What does the term *Badee'* and *Lateef* mean?
- Why is it insane to say or assume that Allah has a son?



2.3. Allah's Signs which the Eyes Cannot Miss Seeing: *Soorat Fussilat*, 41: 37-39

وَمِنْ ءَايَـٰتِهِ ٱلَّيْلُ وَٱلنَّهَارُ وَٱلشَّمْسُ وَٱلْقَمَرُ ۚ لَا تَسْجُدُوا۟ لِلشَّمْسِ وَلَا لِلْقَمَرِ وَٱسْجُدُوا۟ لِلَّهِ ٱلَّذِى خَلَقَهُنَّ إِن كُنتُمْ إِيَّاهُ تَعْبُدُونَ ﴿٣٧﴾ فَإِنِ ٱسْتَكْبَرُوا۟ فَٱلَّذِينَ عِندَ رَبِّكَ يُسَبِّحُونَ لَهُۥ بِٱلَّيْلِ وَٱلنَّهَارِ وَهُمْ لَا يَسْـَٔمُونَ ﴿٣٨﴾ وَمِنْ ءَايَـٰتِهِۦٓ أَنَّكَ تَرَى ٱلْأَرْضَ خَـٰشِعَةً فَإِذَآ أَنزَلْنَا عَلَيْهَا ٱلْمَآءَ ٱهْتَزَّتْ وَرَبَتْ ۚ إِنَّ ٱلَّذِىٓ أَحْيَاهَا لَمُحْىِ ٱلْمَوْتَىٰٓ ۚ إِنَّهُۥ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَىْءٍ قَدِيرٌ ﴿٣٩﴾ فصلت: ٣٧ - ٣٩

Translation of the Meanings of these Verses

37. And of His signs are the night and the day and the sun and the moon. Do not prostrate yourselves to the sun or to the moon, but

prostrate yourselves to Allah who created them if it is Him whom you worship.

38. But if they are too proud, then those who are near your Lord glorify Him night and day, and they never feel tired.

39. And of His signs is that you see the land still and lifeless. Then, when We send down upon it water, it stirs and swells with life. Indeed, the One who gives it life can most surely give life to the dead. Indeed, He is Powerful over all things.

Explanatory Notes

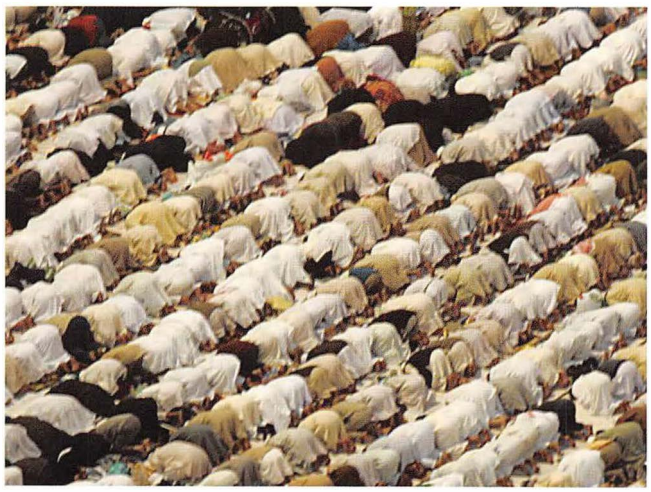


Verse 37

Here Allah reminds His creation of His power and states that He is the One who has no equal and that He is able to do all things. 'And of His signs are the night and the day and the sun and the moon.' This means He created the night with its darkness and the day with its light, and they alternate without stopping. He created the sun with its bright light and the moon with its reflected light. He allotted them their stages and gave them separate orbits in the heavens so that by the variations in their movements people may know the stages of night and day, of weeks, months, years and time periods related to acts of worship.

It is unfortunate that as one of the most prominent and powerful objects in the physical world, the sun has attracted the attention and obtained the homage of many races and nations who have personified and worshipped it as a god.

The Gracious Qur'an categorically rejects this. Allah is the sole cause and source of all that exists and whatever exists is but a wondrous sign of His creative power. Hence, it is blasphemy to ascribe real power to anything created, whether it is a concrete phenomenon or an abstract force of nature, or even an idea.



It is not Permissible to Prostrate before Anyone except Allah

'Do not prostrate yourselves to the sun or to the moon.'

This view makes it clear that prostration or *sujdood* is the right of the Creator of the universe. It is strictly forbidden (*haraam*) to prostrate before the sun, the moon or any other person or thing, for that matter.

Prostration of worship for any other than Allah has never been lawful for any community in any law of any prophet.

It is interesting to note that the prayer times in Islam have all been separated from the hours when the sun was or is worshipped. The *Fajr* prayer is offered before sunrise, *Dhuhr* only after it has begun to decline, *'Asr* when it begins to lose its shine, *Maghrib* when it has set, and *'Ishaa'* only when its light has completely vanished.

Verse 38

'But if they are too proud' means to worship Allah Alone, and if they insist on associating others with Him in worship, then there are angels who are with your Lord. They constantly glorify Him night and day and are never tired.

Sujood at-Tilaawah

There are fourteen (or fifteen) *aayaat* in the Qur'an which require us to perform a prostration when we read or hear these verses. In them it is mentioned that Allah's servants and creation bow before their Lord. *Aayah* 38 is one of them.

Verse 39

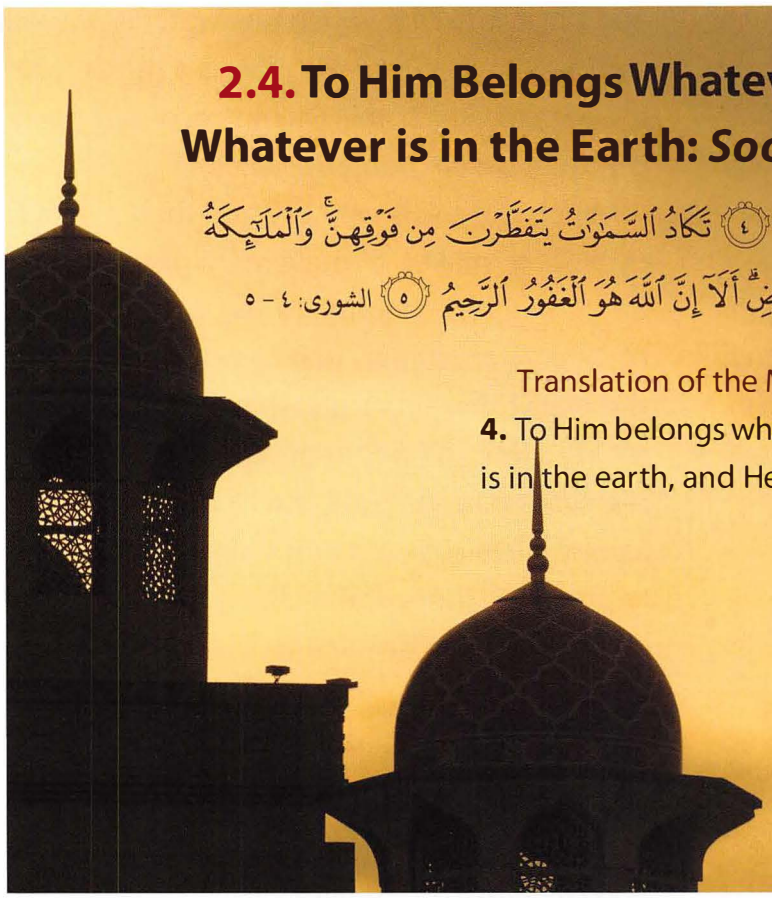
The verse now moves on to portray other scenes of creation and living creatures on earth and in the world of plants. The state of being still and lifeless, which is expressed in the Arabic text with the word *khaashi'atan* is a state between life and death. This is how the earth is when it is starved of water, the basic ingredient for life and the living. Thus, when rain water is poured over it, 'it stirs and swells'. This is a remarkable movement which the Qur'an recorded many centuries before human science.

When the soil is very dry and then rain falls over it, it makes a movement like shaking or stirring. It is then full of life, bringing forth blooming vegetation that radiates pleasure. Is there anything more pleasing to the eye than seeing life in bloom in an area that has long remained barren? Here, the Qur'an cites these as one of Allah's numerous signs. The Qur'an reminds us: 'Indeed, the One who gives it life can most surely give life to the dead. Indeed, He is Powerful over all things.'

Although the allusion to the reviving earth often occurs in the Qur'an as a parable of man's ultimate resurrection after death, in the present context, it implies a call to the believer never to abandon the hope that 'those who deny the truth' may one day grasp the truth of the Qur'anic message.

Review

- What does Allah expect from us instead of worshipping the sun and why?
- How does prayer timing aid us in avoiding sun worship?
- Define the Arabic word *khaashi'atan*. How will you relate it to the earth?
- What does Allah want us to know from the parable of reviving the earth?



2.4. To Him Belongs Whatever is in the Heavens and Whatever is in the Earth: *Soorat Ash-Shooraa*, 4-5

لَهُۥ مَا فِى ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَمَا فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ ۖ وَهُوَ ٱلْعَلِىُّ ٱلْعَظِيمُ ﴿٤﴾ تَكَادُ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتُ يَتَفَطَّرْنَ مِن فَوْقِهِنَّ ۚ وَٱلْمَلَٰٓئِكَةُ يُسَبِّحُونَ بِحَمْدِ رَبِّهِمْ وَيَسْتَغْفِرُونَ لِمَن فِى ٱلْأَرْضِ ۗ أَلَآ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ هُوَ ٱلْغَفُورُ ٱلرَّحِيمُ ﴿٥﴾ الشورى: ٤ - ٥

Translation of the Meanings of these Verses

4. To Him belongs whatever is in the heavens and whatever is in the earth, and He is the Most High, the Most Great.

5. The heavens almost break from above them, and the angels glorify the praises of their Lord and ask forgiveness for all who are on earth. Unquestionably, it is Allah who is the Forgiving, the Merciful.

Explanatory Notes

Verse 4

'To Him belongs whatever is in the heavens and whatever is in the earth' means everything is subject to His dominion and control. He is the Most High, the Most Great. Some people, deceived by the fact that they find things in their hands subjected to them, benefiting from them, and which they can use as they wish, are led to believe that they own those things. Of course, they do not. Allah is the real Owner. It is He who creates and destroys, who gives life and causes death. He has the power to let people own whatever He wills or take away from their possession whatever He wishes in order to place them in the hands of whomever He wills. True ownership remains His at all times, and He dispenses with evertything in a manner that suits His Grand Plan.

Verse 5

'From above them' means owing to the greatness and majesty of the Lord of the worlds. According to another opinion, it may refer to the earth, meaning the heavens above the strata of the earth and all its inhabitants. It should be borne in mind that according to the Qur'an, the heavens and the earth, that is, the physical universe in its entirety, are not only conscious of their Creator but also unfailingly function in accordance with His Will.

This verse reflects the total submission of the natural order to almighty Allah. It may also refer to the massive physical presence of the angels throughout the universe. Allah's Messenger ﷺ is reported as having said, 'Indeed, I see what you do not see, and I hear what you do not hear. The heavens groan – and rightfully so!

There is no space in the heavens the measure of a hand-span or the measure of four fingers, but that there is an angel there, placing his forehead in it prostrating to Allah. By Allah! If you knew what I know, you would laugh little and you would weep much, and you would not enjoy your wives in bed, and you would come out beseeching Allah.' (at-Tirmidhee, *hadeeth* no. 2312, and it is classified as *hasan*)

The scope of the sources of knowledge, hidden and apparent, such as the ears, the eyes, the intellect, among other tools, given by Allah to us, extends as far as the seen world. The unseen world is beyond its capacity or domain. The way to acquire authentic and dependable knowledge about the unseen is to get it from what the prophets and the messengers of Allah inform us on the basis of what Allah causes them to see, hear and observe.

According to another opinion, the heavens might nearly be rent asunder because of ascribing a son to Allah, Most High. The following verse supports this:

> The heavens are almost about to be rent asunder, and the earth cloven and the mountains to collapse, razed, that they attribute to the All-Merciful a son! (*Soorat Maryam*, 19:90-91)

Commenting on these verse, Sayyid Qutb writes,

> The very sound of these verses and their rhythm add to the air of anger at this false claim. In fact, the whole universe rejects this claim most vehemently. It shudders and quivers with abhorrence as it hears this falsehood against God Almighty. It is a reaction similar to that of a person who feels that his very integrity is attacked, or that the honesty of someone he loves is assailed. In their beat, the words here show the movement of a violent attack.
>
> Everything that is settled and stable is thus shaken. The whole universe is in anger at this false allegation against God, the Creator. The statement is shocking to everything in nature.' (Sayyid Qutb, *In the Shade of the Qur'an*, vol. 11, p. 376, Eng. Tr. 'Adil Salahi)

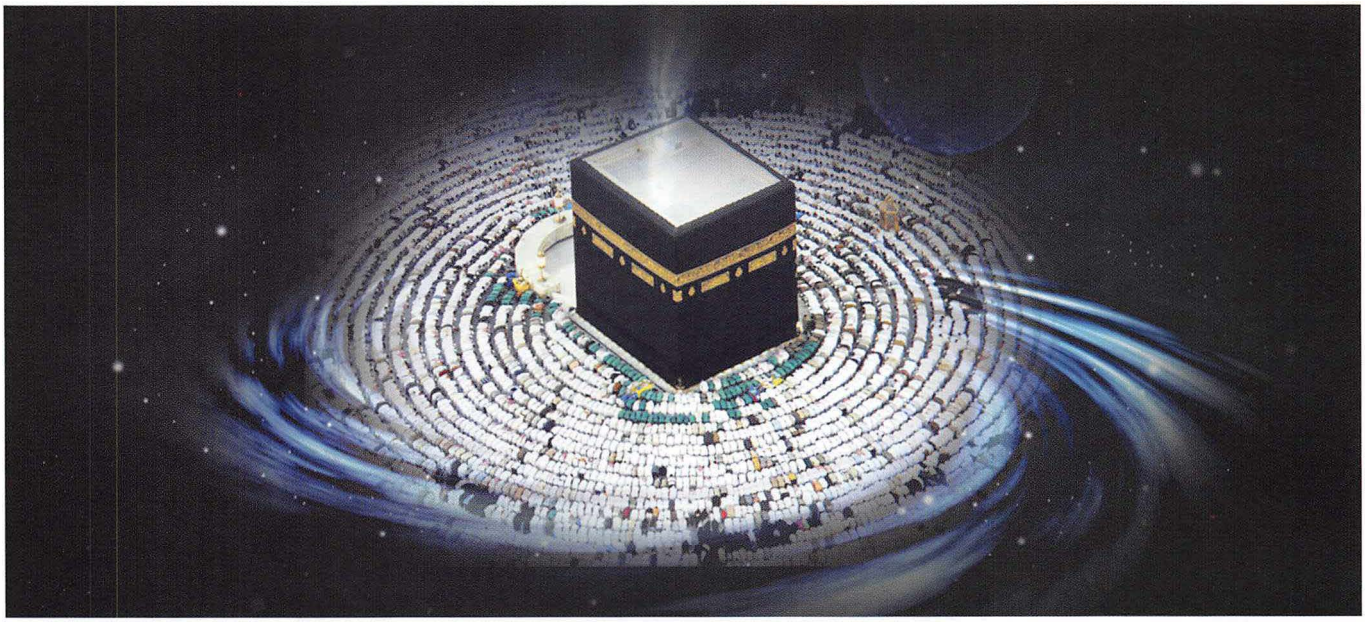


In fact the idea that Allah might have a 'son' – either in the real or in the metaphorical sense of this term – would presuppose a degree of innate likeness between 'the father' and 'the son': but Allah is in every respect unique, so that 'there is nothing like Him (*Soorat ash-Shooraa*, 42: 11) and 'there is none comparable to Him'. (*Soorat al-Ikhlaas*, 112: 4)

The idea of God having a son goes against the teachings of Islam and is described in the Qur'an as blasphemous, and it is for this reason that the Qur'an criticises the Christians for erroneously believing that 'Eesaa عليه السلام is the son of God.

Review

- Explain the verse 'To Him belongs whatever is in the heavens and whatever is in the earth.'
- 'The heavens almost break from above them'. What does this verse refer to?



2.5. The One, the Everlasting Refuge: *Soorat Al-Ikhlaas*, 112: 1-4

بِسْمِ ٱللَّهِ ٱلرَّحْمَٰنِ ٱلرَّحِيمِ

قُلْ هُوَ ٱللَّهُ أَحَدٌ ﴿١﴾ ٱللَّهُ ٱلصَّمَدُ ﴿٢﴾ لَمْ يَلِدْ وَلَمْ
يُولَدْ ﴿٣﴾ وَلَمْ يَكُن لَّهُۥ كُفُوًا أَحَدٌۢ ﴿٤﴾ الإخلاص: ١ - ٤

Translation of the Meanings of this *Soorah*

In the name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful

1. Say: He is Allah, the One,

2. Allah, the Everlasting Refuge.

3. He does not beget, Nor is He begotten,

4. And there is none comparable to Him.

Explanatory Notes

Allah Most High is the sole subject of this *soorah*. Some scholars have pointed out that this is the only *soorah* in the Qur'an in which two attributes of Allah – *al-Ahad* and *as-Samad* have come together and could be the reason, according to al-Qurtubee, why it has been said to be equal to one-third of the Qur'an.

Hadeeth on the Virtues of this *Soorah*

'Ai'shah ﵂ said, 'The Prophet ﷺ appointed a man as the commander of a military campaign and he used to lead his companions in prayer and recite a *soorah* of the Qur'an and would then follow it up with 'Say: He is Allah, the One', that is *Soorat al-Ikhlaas*. When they returned from the campaign, they asked him

why he had done so and he replied, "Because [*Soorat al-Ikhlaas*] provides a description of *ar-Rahmah*, and I love to recite it." The Prophet ﷺ said, "Inform him that Allah the Most High loves him." (al-Bukhaaree)

Allah's Messenger ﷺ also said, 'By Him in whose Hand my soul is, it is truly equivalent to one third of the Qur'an.' (al-Bukhaaree)

The Word *al-Ahad*

The word *al-Ahad*, which is different from the word *Waahid*, has added the signification of absolute and continuous unity and the absence of equals.



The Term *as-Samad*

According to some scholars, the word *as-Samad* is applied to one who has no stomach and therefore does not eat or drink; in other words, he is not dependent on anything. Yet, some other scholars explain the term as meaning one whose attributes have reached the highest point of their development, so that they cannot be bettered. 'Eternal – One without a beginning and without an end' is another interpretation provided by the pious predecessors (*salaf*).

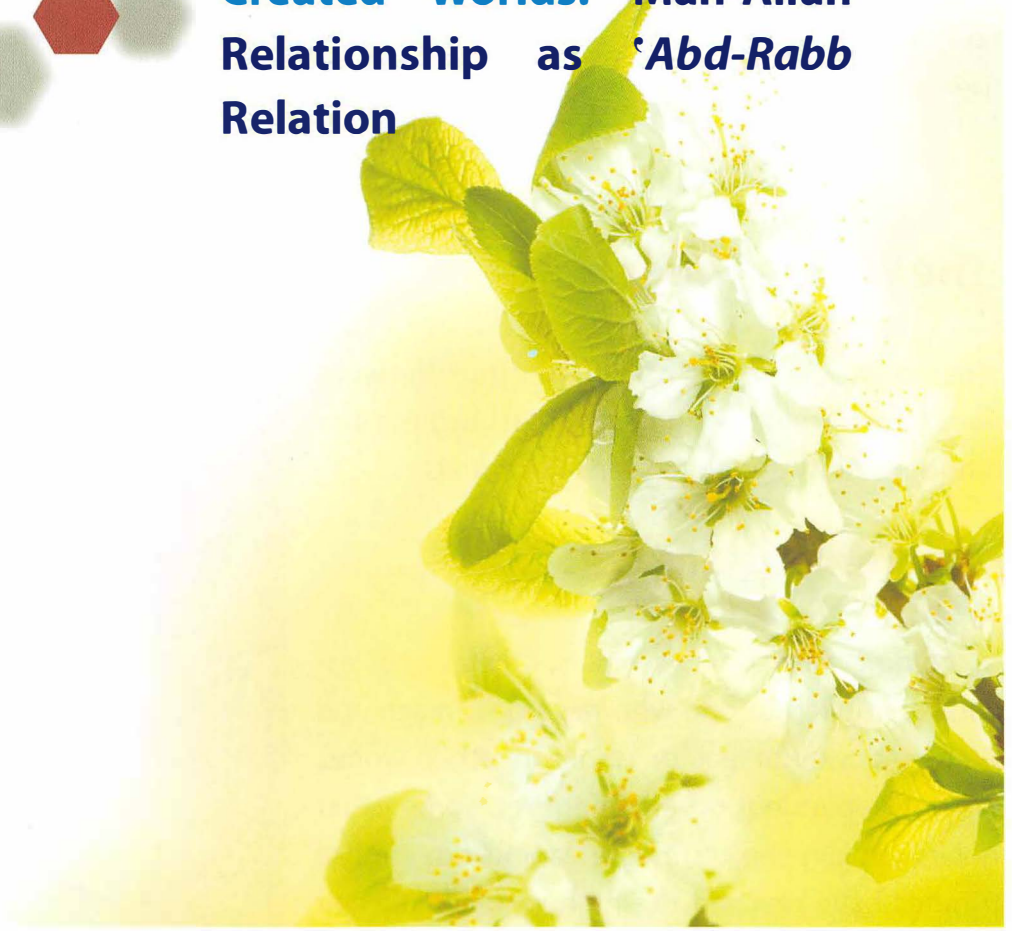
Literally, *as-Samad* would also imply one who stands in need of no one, while everyone stands in need of him; in other words, one before whom people put forward their needs.

Review

- What is the subject of *Soorat al-Ikhlaas*?
- Why is it considered as one third of the Qur'an?
- Define the terms *al-Ahad* and *as-Samad*.

Section 2

Allah's Relationship with the Created Worlds: Man-Allah Relationship as *'Abd-Rabb* Relation



2.6. *Soorat Al-Faatihah*

بِسْمِ ٱللَّهِ ٱلرَّحْمَٰنِ ٱلرَّحِيمِ ﴿١﴾ ٱلْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ ٱلْعَٰلَمِينَ ﴿٢﴾ ٱلرَّحْمَٰنِ ٱلرَّحِيمِ ﴿٣﴾ مَٰلِكِ يَوْمِ
ٱلدِّينِ ﴿٤﴾ إِيَّاكَ نَعْبُدُ وَإِيَّاكَ نَسْتَعِينُ ﴿٥﴾ ٱهْدِنَا ٱلصِّرَٰطَ ٱلْمُسْتَقِيمَ ﴿٦﴾ صِرَٰطَ ٱلَّذِينَ أَنْعَمْتَ
عَلَيْهِمْ غَيْرِ ٱلْمَغْضُوبِ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا ٱلضَّآلِّينَ ﴿٧﴾ الفاتحة: ١ - ٧

Translation of the Meanings of this *Soorah*

1. In the Name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful
2. All praise is for Allah, Lord of the Worlds,
3. The Most Gracious, the Ever-Merciful,
4. Master of the Day of Judgment.
5. You Alone we worship and You Alone we ask for help.
6. Guide us to the Straight Path,
7. The Path of those whom You have bestowed favours, not of those who have earned [Your] anger, nor of those who have gone astray.

Explanatory Notes

Al-Faatiḥah has seven verses (*aayaat* or signs). But which is the first verse of *al-Faatiḥah*? Every *soorah* of the Qur'an, with the exception of *Soorat at-Tawbah*, the ninth *soorah*, starts with the *basmalah*, namely, *bismillaahir-Raḥmaanir-Raḥeem*. Still, this *aayah* is not treated as part of the following *soorah*, with the exception of the first *soorah* of the Qur'an, where the *basmalah* is treated by some scholars as being part of it. All agree that this *soorah* has seven *aayaat* (plural of *aayah*), but according to those who do not regard the *basmalah* as part of this *soorah*, the first *aayah* of this *soorah* is what is numbered 2 in the above, and then in order to complete the number of the *aayaat* as seven, the seventh *aayah* is broken into *aayah* 6 and *aayah* 7. (See if you can find any such difference in the numbering of *aayaat* in different copies of the Noble Qur'an)

There is, however, another place where the *basmalah* is according to everyone, part of a Qur'anic *soorah*, that is *Soorah* number 27, or *Soorat an-Naml*, where it is part of *Aayah* 30.

We would also draw our students' attention to 16:98, according to which seeking Allah's refuge from Satan is required before we read or recite the Qur'an. That is why whenever a Muslim wants to recite the Qur'an, he must first say: *Aʿoodhu billaahi minash-Shaytaan-ir-Rajeem* (I seek refuge with Allah from Satan, the one who has been deprived of Allah's mercy), then say the *basmalah* if what he recites is the beginning of a *soorah*, otherwise seeking Allah's refuge from Satan would be sufficient.

The Word *ar-Raḥmaan*

The expression *Bismilllaahir-Raḥmaanir-Raḥeem* is composed of four Arabic words, the first two of which mean 'In the Name of Allah', the other two words add two of Allah's attributes derived from the same root '*raḥima*', which signifies grace and mercy. While the second of these two attributes, *ar-Raḥeem*, is commonly used as a superlative form of granting mercy, the first *ar-Raḥmaan* is used only to refer to Allah. In fact, it was never used in Arabic before Islam.

The structure of the word *ar-Raḥmaan* suggests emphasis upon the aspect of intensity. Thus the Good Name '*ar-Raḥmaan*' signifies His over-flowing love and mercy for all of His creatures, even if someone turns away from Him thanklessly. He does not immediately withdraw His mercy from such a person. He gives sustenance to the believers as well as to disbelievers. His sun shines for all of them. His rain falls benefits everyone.

Commenting on these words, 'Adil Salaḥi writes,

'The term *ar-Raḥmaan* bears connotations of power, might and dominion alongside those of grace and mercy. Therefore, an accurate translation of the term should bring out these additional connotations...Therefore, we can say that *ar-Raḥmaan* connotes 'the exercise of mercy on the basis of free choice by one who is able to inflict severe punishment without fear of any consequence.' '

He also says,

"By contrast *ar-Raḥeem* stresses the availability of Allah's Mercy in all situations and to all creatures. People only need to appeal for it and it is certain to be granted. Indeed, it is given at all times without such appeals...After a long reflection and consideration of all these aspects, I have now settled on a new form of translating these two attributes of God: In the Name of God (Allah), the Lord of Grace, the Ever Merciful." (Sayyid Quṭb, *In the Shade of the Qur'an*, vol. 14, Eng. Tr. ʿAdil Salaḥi)



The Word *Hamd*

The Arabic word *hamd* signifies a servant's praise for Allah by way of thanks. In fact, the Arabic word *hamd* means both 'praise' and 'thanks'. Hence, it would be apt to say: All praises and thanks are for Allah.'

The Word *Rabb*: Man-Allah Relationship

Rabb has often been translated as Lord. It is a good translation in so far as it combines 'love and concern' with 'authority'. Some translators have used 'Sustainer', 'Cherisher' or similar words for *Rabb*. They try to be true to the root meaning. Of course, our *Rabb* is One who takes care of our nourishment and development. It should, however, be borne in mind that *Rabb* is a Qur'anic term, and as such it has a uniquely comprehensive meaning. Therefore, it is not possible to find an equivalent in languages other than Arabic.

Al-ʿAalameen: What are the Worlds?

The word *al-ʿaalameen* is the kind of plural, which is used for beings like men, jinn and angels. So in thanking the *Rabb* of all the worlds, we are thanking the *Rabb* of all human beings, or even the *Rabb* of all persons, that is to say, of all humans, jinn and angels. When you look into the past of humanity as well as its possible future, there are many such human worlds, and Allah is the *Rabb* of all such human worlds. According to some scholars *al-ʿaalameen* refers to everything in existence besides Allah. All praises and thanks are due to Allah, to whom belongs the creation in its entirety, the heavens and the earth and whatever is in them, and whatever is between them – that which is known and unknown.

Master of the Day of Judgment: The Word *ad-Deen*

The word *ad-deen* as used in the Qur'an has several meanings. It is used in the sense of:

- Religion and divine law (3:83)
- The law of the land (12:76)
- Obedience (16:52; 61:9)
- Recompense or reward (51:5-6)

The term *ad-deen* in the sense of reward and punishment causes both its positive and negative aspects – **(a)** a reward for good, and **(b)** a punishment for evil and wrongdoing.



The message contained in these words: *maaliki yawm-id-deen* is clear – a day of reckoning is inevitable: it will definitely come to pass. A day when all human beings will return to their Forgiving, Merciful and Just Lord to receive their share of His reward or punishment. Those who followed the divine law will be rewarded, but those who refused to submit to Him and did not seek His forgiveness will be punished. On that day all powers will belong to Allah alone; no one that day will challenge His will or authority.

'Ibaadah is what a *'Abd* Does for His *Rabb*

The Arabic word *'ibaadah* is often translated as worship. *'Ibaadah* is what a *'abd* does for his *Rabb*. Allah-man relation is unique. It is altogether different from any man-man or man-thing relation. We call it the *Rabb-'Abd* relation. Man is *'abd* or servant of Allah, and Allah is *Rabb* or the Lord of man. But there are *'ibaad* (plural of *'abd*) of Allah other than human beings. Angels and jinn are also *'ibaad* or servants of Allah. Thus all people are *'ibaad* or servants of Allah. "We are servants of Allah and Allah Alone" is the most basic principle of Islam.

The expression *'ibaadah* (worship) denotes the submissiveness and humility that a person ought to show towards his Creator. A sense of obedience is also implied in the word *'ibaadah*.

Worship and Asking for His Help: Its Meaning and Significance

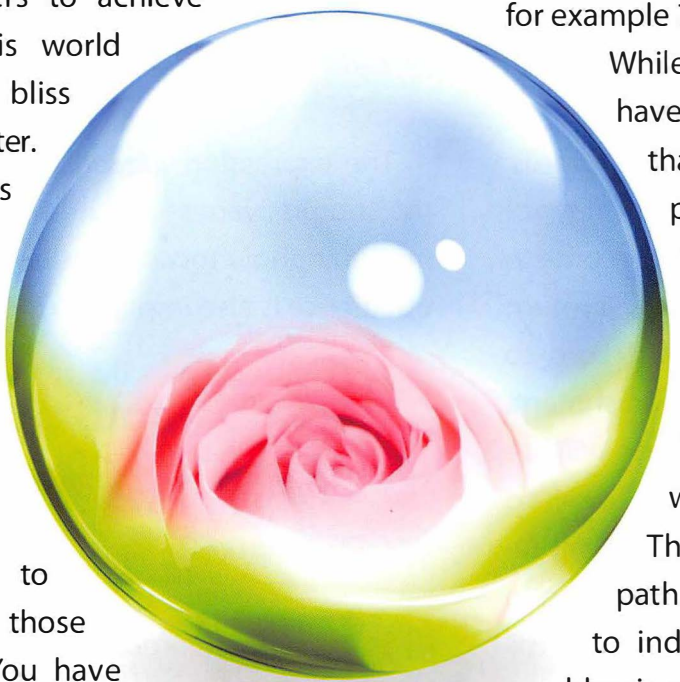
Supplication (*du'aa'*) is a part of worship, or *'ibaadah*. The fact that we are the servants of Allah implies that we must worship Him alone, follow His commands and pray or supplicate to Him alone.

Guide us to the Straight Path

Guiding is more than showing. Thus we are not asking for light only; we are also asking for strength. Life is a continuous journey. We need Allah's guidance all the time. Every day we face a new situation in life. Life is a journey towards Allah, which we have to travel stage by stage. We actually need light, strength and support from Him in every step we take on this journey. By making *du'aa'* (supplication) for guidance, we are, in fact, asking Him to be with us throughout the journey of our life.

As-Siraat al-Mustaqeem – the Straight Path

This refers to the Straight Path Allah has shown to human beings through His prophets and messengers to achieve success in this world and eternal bliss in the hereafter. This path is the shortest path and the easiest to follow.



Verse 7

Guide us to the path of those upon whom You have bestowed favours: these are the people who walked on the Straight path, worshipping Allah alone, seeking His help in every step. Allah guided them at every stage of their journey and helped them to acquire a better understanding of religion and in living a pious life; in the hereafter, too, they will receive Allah's special mercies. It is important to note that by making this supplication, we express our belonging to the circle of all the faithful servants of Allah. But here we also observe that some members of the human family went off the right path. They barred themselves from the special mercy of Allah since they did not mend their ways in spite of His clear guidance and warnings. Therefore, we express our separation from them. Of course, the real punishment will follow in the hereafter. But some people were punished by Allah in this very life. The Qur'an again and again tells us the stories of such people so that we learn lessons from them. See for example 7:59-167; 10:71-92; 11:25-102.

While making *du'aa'* that we do not have the same fate, it is also required that we try to understand why these people deserved Allah's wrath and then seriously try not to follow in their footsteps.

Three groups of people are mentioned in this verse: **(1)** Those blessed by Allah, **(2)** Those who incurred His wrath, and **(3)** Those who strayed from the right path. Reference is to groups and not to individual persons who had divine blessings, divine wrath or who were misguided. We, with all the righteous people of the past and present, dissociate ourselves from the group of wrongdoers. The Qur'an discusses the rise and fall of some civilizations and explains how victory and support of Allah came to the followers of the prophets, and how the unjust were ultimately punished.



It is important to note that before the punishment of Allah comes, Allah warns and reminds His servants first. In fact, Allah gives the unjust people a

fixed period of time to mend their ways. The wrath of Allah does not descend before its appointed time.

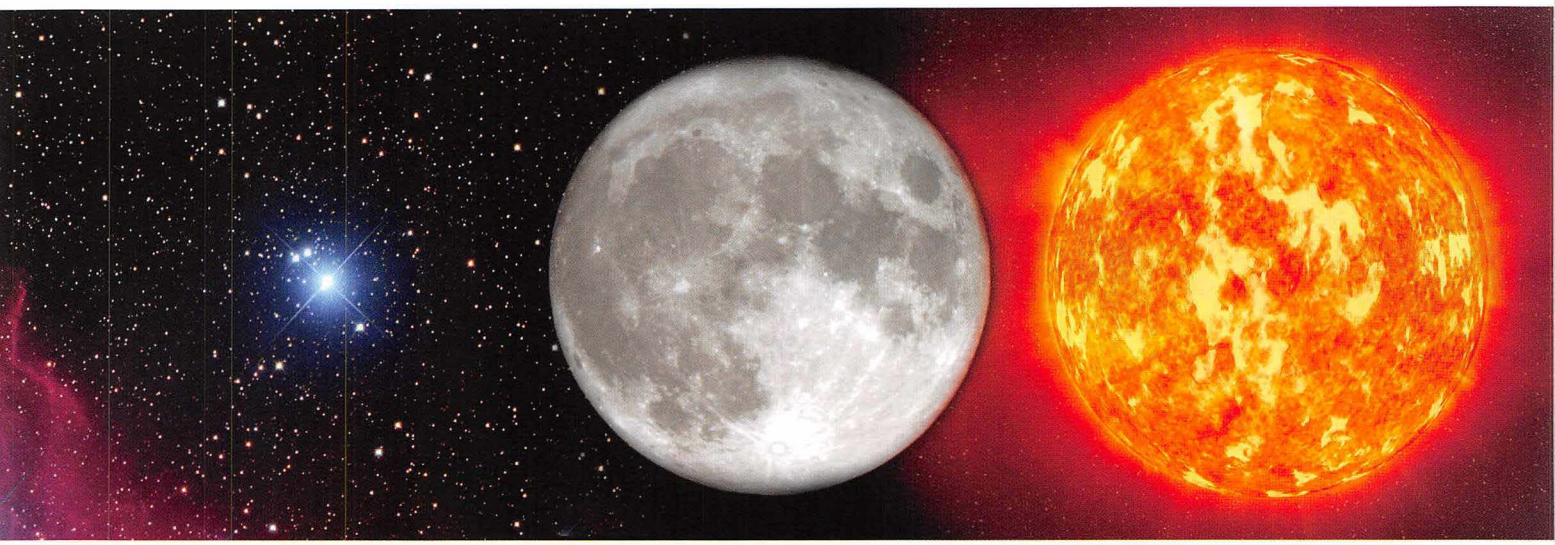
Therefore, if some people were not punished in this life, it is not a sign of their being correct. Some people may act as rebels and still prosper in this life because the time of their being punished has not yet come. (Irfaan Ahmad Khan, *Reflections on the Qur'an*, the Islamic Foundation)

It should be borne in mind that this *soorah* is in the form of a supplication. Its style is not didactic. It does not teach us how to supplicate. Rather, the supplication itself is made to flow off our tongue as a spontaneous hymn springing from the very core of our being. The words of the hymn are revealed by Allah, the Creator of human beings. So there can hardly be a more authentic expression of human nature. *Soorat al-Faatihah* is the greatest *soorah* of the Qur'an. There is no other *soorah* like it in the rest of the Gracious Book or in the previous revealed scriptures. It is a light that was granted to Allah's Messenger ﷺ, which He had not granted to any prophet or messenger before him. It holds a central position in daily prayers, and hence the daily life of a Muslim.

Review

- Explain the two attributes of *ar-Rahmaan* and *ar-Raheem*. How are these two related?
- How does the term *rabb* signify Allah-man relationship?
- Explain the term *ad-deen* as used in the Qur'an.
- What is the 'Straight Path'? What is the significance of the word 'guide' in Verse 6?
- This *soorah* is in the form of a supplication. Discuss.

Section 3 Allah's Messengers



2.7. *Soorat Al-An'aam*, (The Cattle): 75-79

وَكَذَٰلِكَ نُرِىٓ إِبْرَٰهِيمَ مَلَكُوتَ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضِ وَلِيَكُونَ مِنَ ٱلْمُوقِنِينَ ﴿٧٥﴾ فَلَمَّا جَنَّ عَلَيْهِ ٱلَّيْلُ رَءَا كَوْكَبًا ۖ قَالَ هَٰذَا رَبِّى ۖ فَلَمَّآ أَفَلَ قَالَ لَآ أُحِبُّ ٱلْءَافِلِينَ ﴿٧٦﴾ فَلَمَّا رَءَا ٱلْقَمَرَ بَازِغًا قَالَ هَٰذَا رَبِّى ۖ فَلَمَّآ أَفَلَ قَالَ لَئِن لَّمْ يَهْدِنِى رَبِّى لَأَكُونَنَّ مِنَ ٱلْقَوْمِ ٱلضَّآلِّينَ ﴿٧٧﴾ فَلَمَّا رَءَا ٱلشَّمْسَ بَازِغَةً قَالَ هَٰذَا رَبِّى هَٰذَآ أَكْبَرُ ۖ فَلَمَّآ أَفَلَتْ قَالَ يَٰقَوْمِ إِنِّى بَرِىٓءٌ مِّمَّا تُشْرِكُونَ ﴿٧٨﴾ إِنِّى وَجَّهْتُ وَجْهِىَ لِلَّذِى فَطَرَ ٱلسَّمَٰوَٰتِ وَٱلْأَرْضَ حَنِيفًا ۖ وَمَآ أَنَا۠ مِنَ ٱلْمُشْرِكِينَ ﴿٧٩﴾ الأنعام: ٧٥ - ٧٩

Translation of the Meaning of this Verse:

75. Thus did We show Ibraaheem the kingdom of the heavens and the earth that he be one of those who have faith with certainty.

76. So when the night spread over him, he saw a star. He said, 'This is my Lord!' But when it set, he said, 'I do not like those which set.'

77. Then when he saw the moon rising up, he said, 'This is my Lord!' But when it set, he said, 'Unless my Lord guides me, I shall surely be among the misguided people.'

78. When he saw the sun rising up, he said, 'This is my Lord! This is greater than both of them.' But when it set, he said, 'O my people! I am free from all that you join as partners in worship with Allah.

79. I have indeed turned my face with pure and complete devotion to Him Who brought the heavens and the earth into being, and I am not of the idolaters.'

Prophet Ibraaheem ﷺ Debates with His People

It is significant to note here that Prophet Ibraaheem ﷺ was debating with his people, explaining to them the error of their ways in worshipping idols and images.

Allah showed Ibraaheem ﷺ the proofs of His Oneness over His kingdom and His creation, which clearly indicate that there is no god except Allah. Ibraaheem ﷺ explained to his people the error and uselessness of worshipping the various planets, which they said were the Moon, Mercury, Venus, the Sun, Mars, Jupiter, and Saturn. The brightest of these objects and the most honoured to them was the Sun, the Moon and then Venus.

Ibraaheem ﷺ first proved that Venus (the word used in the text is *kawkab*) is not worthy of being worshipped. It is subject to a term and course appointed that it does not resist. It does not swerve right or left. Venus does not have any say in its affairs. It is only a heavenly object that Allah created and made bright out of His wisdom. Venus rises from the east and sets in the west where it disappears from sight. The rotation is repeated the next night, and so forth. Such an object is not worthy of being worshipped.

Ibraaheem ﷺ then went on to mention the Moon in the same manner in which he mentioned Venus, and then the Sun. When he proved that these three objects were not worthy of worship he declared: 'O my people! I am free from all that you join as partners in worship with Allah.' These *aayaat* indicate that Ibraaheem ﷺ was debating with his people about the *shirk* or polytheism they practised.

The word *yaqeen* used in the text denotes that state of certitude of the heart, which is experienced when all doubts have been removed with the help of evidence.

The Qur'an uses the word *kawkab*, which literally means anything that shines brilliantly. It is applicable to both stars and planets.

It is not necessary that the sighting of the star and the moon should have happened on the same night, with the sun sighted on the following morning. The episode could have well run through several nights. It is important to note the words: 'I am free from all that you join as partners

in worship with Allah' demonstrates that Ibraaheem ﷺ never committed that sin.

Differences of opinion seem to have surfaced among Muslim scholars as to the nature of the episode enumerated here, whether it was loud thinking on the part of Ibraaheem ﷺ, trying to figure out who his Lord was, or was it an inductive method devised to convince the idolaters of their folly. The majority of Qur'an exegetes (*mufassiroon*) argue that Prophet Ibraaheem's statements should be seen as premises (statements or ideas that form the basis for a reasonable line of argument) of his arguments against idolaters, rather than as stages in his enlightenment. It was, in reality, a novel method in argumentation and not a mental exercise to discover the truth.

Hence, according to *Imaam* ar-Raazee, the words, 'This is my Lord' were satirical. When he uttered these words, he meant to say: 'So, this according to your opinion is my Lord. Let us see if it proves to be so.' Prophet Ibraaheem ﷺ had to take this indirect route because his people were in no mood to listen to any direct criticism. It should be remembered that the prophets and messengers of Allah have never even thought of worshipping false gods at any time in their lives. In fact, Prophet Ibraaheem's reasoning was divinely inspired.

The Word *Haneef*

The word used in the text is *haneef*. The word *haneef*, in its original sense, means 'turning away from sin'. It implies turning away from idol-worship and being a worshipper of the One true God — Allah.

Review

- What are the virtues of *Soorat al-An'aam*?
- 'I am free from all that you join as partners in worship with Allah.' Comment on how Ibraaheem ﷺ tried to convince his people to worship Allah Alone.



2.8. Reminding ʿEesaa ﷺ of the Favours that Allah Bestowed on Him (*Soorat al-Maa'idah*, 5:110)

إِذْ قَالَ ٱللَّهُ يَٰعِيسَى ٱبْنَ مَرْيَمَ ٱذْكُرْ نِعْمَتِى عَلَيْكَ وَعَلَىٰ وَٰلِدَتِكَ إِذْ أَيَّدتُّكَ بِرُوحِ ٱلْقُدُسِ تُكَلِّمُ ٱلنَّاسَ فِى ٱلْمَهْدِ وَكَهْلًا ۖ وَإِذْ عَلَّمْتُكَ ٱلْكِتَٰبَ وَٱلْحِكْمَةَ وَٱلتَّوْرَىٰةَ وَٱلْإِنجِيلَ ۖ وَإِذْ تَخْلُقُ مِنَ ٱلطِّينِ كَهَيْـَٔةِ ٱلطَّيْرِ بِإِذْنِى فَتَنفُخُ فِيهَا فَتَكُونُ طَيْرًۢا بِإِذْنِى ۖ وَتُبْرِئُ ٱلْأَكْمَهَ وَٱلْأَبْرَصَ بِإِذْنِى ۖ وَإِذْ تُخْرِجُ ٱلْمَوْتَىٰ بِإِذْنِى ۖ وَإِذْ كَفَفْتُ بَنِىٓ إِسْرَٰٓءِيلَ عَنكَ إِذْ جِئْتَهُم بِٱلْبَيِّنَٰتِ فَقَالَ ٱلَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا۟ مِنْهُمْ إِنْ هَٰذَآ إِلَّا سِحْرٌ مُّبِينٌ ﴿١١٠﴾ المائدة: ١١٠

Translation of the Meaning of this Verse

'When Allah will say: "O ʿEesaa, son of Maryam! Remember My favour to you and to your mother: how I aided you with the Holy Spirit so that you could speak to people in your cradle and in maturity; how I taught you the Book and wisdom, the *Tawraah* and the *Injeel*; how, by My leave, you formed out of clay a bird-like figure, and breathed into it and, by My leave, it became a living bird; how, by My leave, you healed those born blind and the lepers, and by My leave, you restored the dead to life; how I prevented the Children of Israa'eel from harming you when you came to them with clear proofs and those who disbelieved among them, said: This is nothing but sorcery.'" (5:110)

Oneness of Allah: *Tawheed*

Oneness of Allah was the belief preached by ʿEesaa ﷺ and by every former prophet of Allah. This verse aims to establish the truth about the Oneness of Allah and servitude to Him, as these are conceived in Islam.

This view presents this truth in a vivid scene taken from the Day of Judgment in the same way as the Qur'an presents various scenes of that Great Day. In all such presentations, the picture is portrayed in such an inspiring and effective way that we almost see it before our very eyes. We are moved by each such scene as though it were taking place here and now. We see what is taking place, hear what is being said and feel every reaction and response. So, what does this scene present?

The scene is taken from the Day of Judgment. Here we will have a full account of the various aspects of grace bestowed by Allah on Prophet ʿEesaa ﷺ and his mother Maryam ﷺ. To start with, he was supported by the Holy Spirit in his infancy. Then, he talked to people long before children normally start to talk, freeing his mother of all suspicion raised around her on account of his miraculous birth that had no parallel in history. He also talked to them in the cradle and later as a grown man who was again supported by Jibreel ﷺ.

He was also given knowledge of the Book. Allah imparted to him wisdom in order to deal with different situations in the best way. Allah also taught him the *Tawraah* (Torah), which had been given to the Children of Israa'eel, and the *Injeel* (Gospel) which Allah gave him to confirm the *Tawraah*.

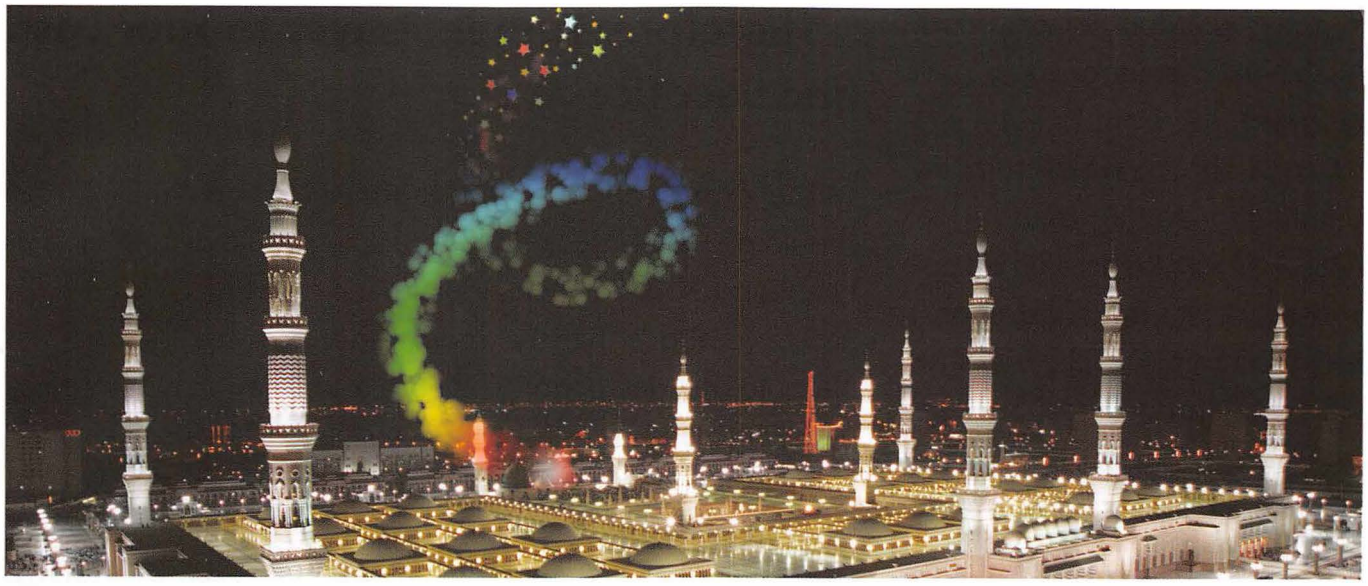
Moreover, Allah supported Prophet ʿEesaa (Jesus) ﷺ with several miracles that no human being could accomplish without Allah's support. Thus, he could fashion a bird shape of clay and breathe into it, and all at once it became a living bird. How did it happen? We do not know, because we do not know how Allah creates life. Prophet ʿEesaa ﷺ cured people born blind, by Allah's leave, when medicine still does not know how to give eyesight to such people. Almighty Allah, who gives human beings their faculty of seeing, is able to open a blind person's eye to see the light. Prophet ʿEesaa ﷺ also cured the lepers without using medicine. Medication is merely a tool, and Allah is able to cure without any tool. Again, ʿEesaa ﷺ was able to restore life to the dead, by Allah's leave. The One who gives life is well able to restore it at any time.

Allah further reminds Prophet ʿEesaa ﷺ of His favours when He extended His protection to him against the children of Israa'eel who, when he produced all these miracles, denied him, claiming that they were plain sorcery. Allah protected him and they were unable to kill or crucify him as they were keen to do. Allah ﷻ simply protected him and elevated him to Himself. (*In the Shade of the Qur'an*, Vol. IV, pp 288-290; English Translation by Adil Salahi and Ashur Shamis)

The use of the word *kahl* in this verse is significant. It is used for a person of age between thirty-four and fifty-one, but Prophet ʿEesaa ﷺ was raised up to the heaven when he was only thirty-three. This clearly indicates that he will come back towards the end of this world, live in it and attain that age.

Review

- Enumerate the favours that Allah granted ʿEesaa ﷺ.
- What is the significance of the use of the term '*Kahl*'?



2.9. Abundance (*Soorat Al-Kawthar, Soorah* 108)

بِسْمِ ٱللَّهِ ٱلرَّحْمَٰنِ ٱلرَّحِيمِ

إِنَّآ أَعْطَيْنَٰكَ ٱلْكَوْثَرَ ﴿١﴾ فَصَلِّ لِرَبِّكَ وَٱنْحَرْ ﴿٢﴾ إِنَّ شَانِئَكَ هُوَ ٱلْأَبْتَرُ ﴿٣﴾ الكوثر: ١ - ٣

Translation of the Meaning of this Soorah

In the Name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful

1. Indeed, We have given you abundance,

2. So pray to your Lord and sacrifice [to Him alone].

3. As to the one who hates you; he is utterly cut off.

Explanatory Notes

Soorat al-Kawthar is the shortest *soorah* of the Qur'an, not only in terms of the number of verses but also in word count, for it consists of only thirteen words. It shares distinction with *Soorat al-'Asr* (103) and *Soorat an-Naas* (110).

The three verses of this *soorah* are addressed, in the first place, to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, and through him to every believing man and woman.

The *soorah* takes its title from the word *al-Kawthar*, which occurs in the first verse. The word *al-Kawthar* is an intense form of the noun *kathrah*, which in its turn denotes abundance, multitude or copiousness. In the above context, which is the sole instance of its use in the Qur'an, *al-Kawthar* signifies, according to several sound *ahaadeeth*, a river in Paradise.

Allah's Messenger ﷺ said, 'Verily, it is a river that my Lord, the Mighty and Majestic, has provided for me, and it has abundant goodness. It is a pond where my community will be brought to on the Day of Judgement. Its containers are as numerous as the stars

in the sky. When a servant of Allah from among them will be prevented from it, I will say, "O Lord! He is indeed from my *Ummah* (followers)." Then He (i.e. Allah) will say, "Verily, you do not know about [the innovations] he introduced [in religion] after you."' (Muslim)

Allah's Messenger ﷺ also said, '*Al-Kawthar* is a river in Paradise with banks of gold and it runs over pearls. Its water is whiter than milk and sweeter than honey.' (Ahmad and at-Tirmidhee)

Therefore, Turn in Prayer to Your Lord and Sacrifice

The expression of gratitude for such bounteous favour should be tremendous. The Prophet ﷺ should devote himself heart and soul to worshipping and serving his Lord. We have said above that this *soorah* addresses itself, in the first place, to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ and through him to every believing man and woman. Of all modes of worship, the prayer is the most outstanding. Likewise, among financial modes of worship, sacrificing animals stands out above others, for it signifies one's willingness to sacrifice one's own self. Animal sacrifice was instituted in order to replace self-sacrifice. The point comes out sharply in the story of Prophet Ibraaheem عليه السلام.

As to One who Hates You, He is Utterly Cut off

Literally the word *shaani'* means one who hates, hating, or a hater and an enemy. It signifies hatred, which is attended by anger. 'As to one who hates you, he is utterly cut off from all goodness' means: O Prophet, indeed whoever hates you and hates the guidance, truth, clear proof and manifest light with which you have been sent is utterly cut off from all goodness. The word *abtar* is used to describe one who leaves no male offspring behind him and so is forgotten after he is dead. A tailless animal is also called *abtar*. Some unbelievers used to taunt the Prophet ﷺ with that word when his sons died in infancy, implying that his death would be the end of his mission. Allah ﷻ denounced them by assuring the Prophet ﷺ that it is his enemies who would be cut off.

Ibn Taymiyyah once mentioned that in every age, Allah Most High will destroy the Prophet's enemies and those who hate him in such a way that history will leave no trace of them.

In this verse, Allah throws back the taunt of those who hated and reviled the Prophet ﷺ. Indeed, the promise of Allah has come true, for the influence and legacy of the Prophet's enemies was short-lived, while his impact on human history and human life has grown and deepened. Today we witness the truth of divine pronouncement as clearly as no one among those addressed by the Gracious Qur'an for the first time ever did or imagined.

Review

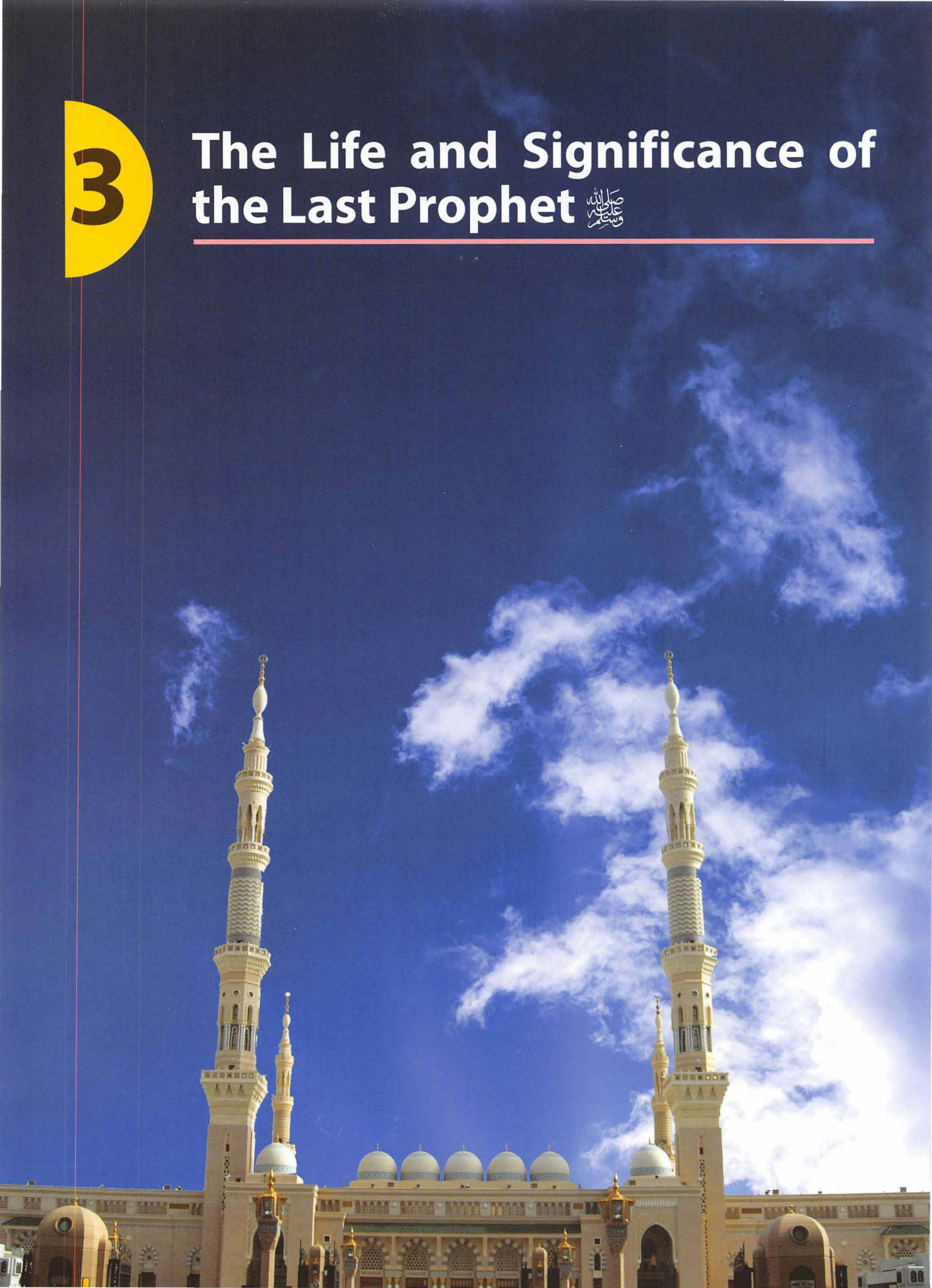
- Who does the *soorah* address?
- Describe the pond of *al-Kawthar*.
- How does the word *abtar* aptly describe the enemies of the Prophet ﷺ?

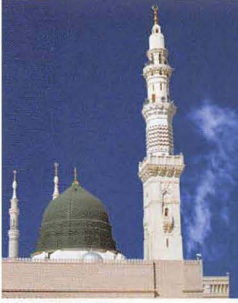


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3 The Life and Significance of the Last Prophet ﷺ

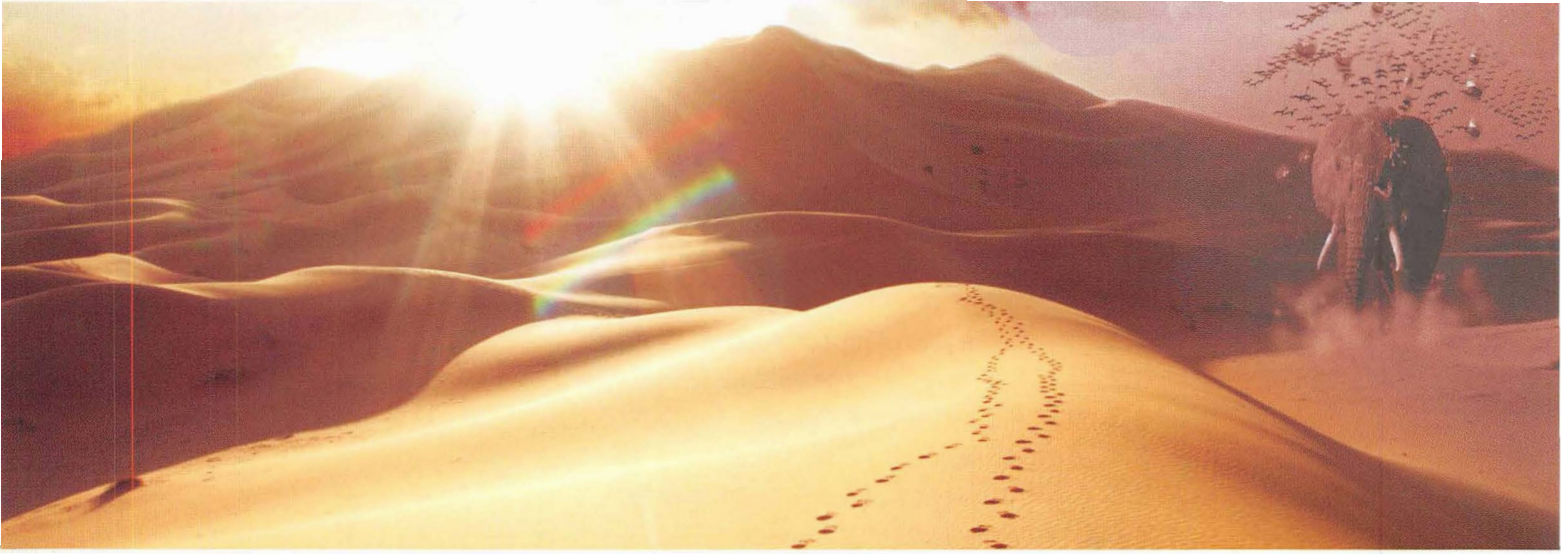




The Life and Significance of the Last Prophet ﷺ

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3.1. The Prophet's Birth: 'The Year of the Elephant'

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ was born in Makkah on Monday morning, the 12th of *Rabeeʿ al-Awwal*, in the Year of the Elephant, 571 CE, some fifty-five days after the unsuccessful expedition of Abrahah against Makkah.

Yemen at that time was under the rule of Ethiopia, and Abrahah was its governor. He built a grand cathedral in Sanʿaa', hoping to make it take the place of Makkah as the great place of pilgrimage for all Arabia. A man from Kinaanah, a large tribe of western Saudi Arabia in Hijaz, understood Abrahah's motive, so he went to Sanʿaa' with the deliberate intention of defiling the church, which he did one night and returned safely to his people.

When Abrahah heard of this, he swore that he would raze the Kaʿbah to the ground in revenge. Having made his preparations, he set off for Makkah with a large army of sixty thousand warriors, in the front of which he placed a colossal elephant. His army included between nine to thirteen elephants. When Abrahah reached al-Muhassir Valley, between Muzdalifah and Mina, the elephant knelt down to the ground. Abraha's soldiers did everything they possibly could to bring it to his feet, but it stubbornly refused to move. Whenever they directed it towards the north, south or east, the elephant would move quickly, but whenever they directed it towards Makkah it would kneel down. This was the clearest of forewarnings for the army not to move one step forward, but Abrahah was blinded by his ambition for the sanctuary he had built and his determination to destroy the Kaʿbah. Had he and his army turned back, they would perhaps have escaped the great disaster. But it was too late.

Suddenly the western sky grew dark, and a strange sound was heard in the distance. Its volume gradually increased. A great wave of darkness arrived upon the army from the direction of the sea, and the air above them was full of birds which were very much like sparrows and swallows. Each bird had three pebbles the size of dried peas, one in its beak and each one of the other two between the claws of each foot.

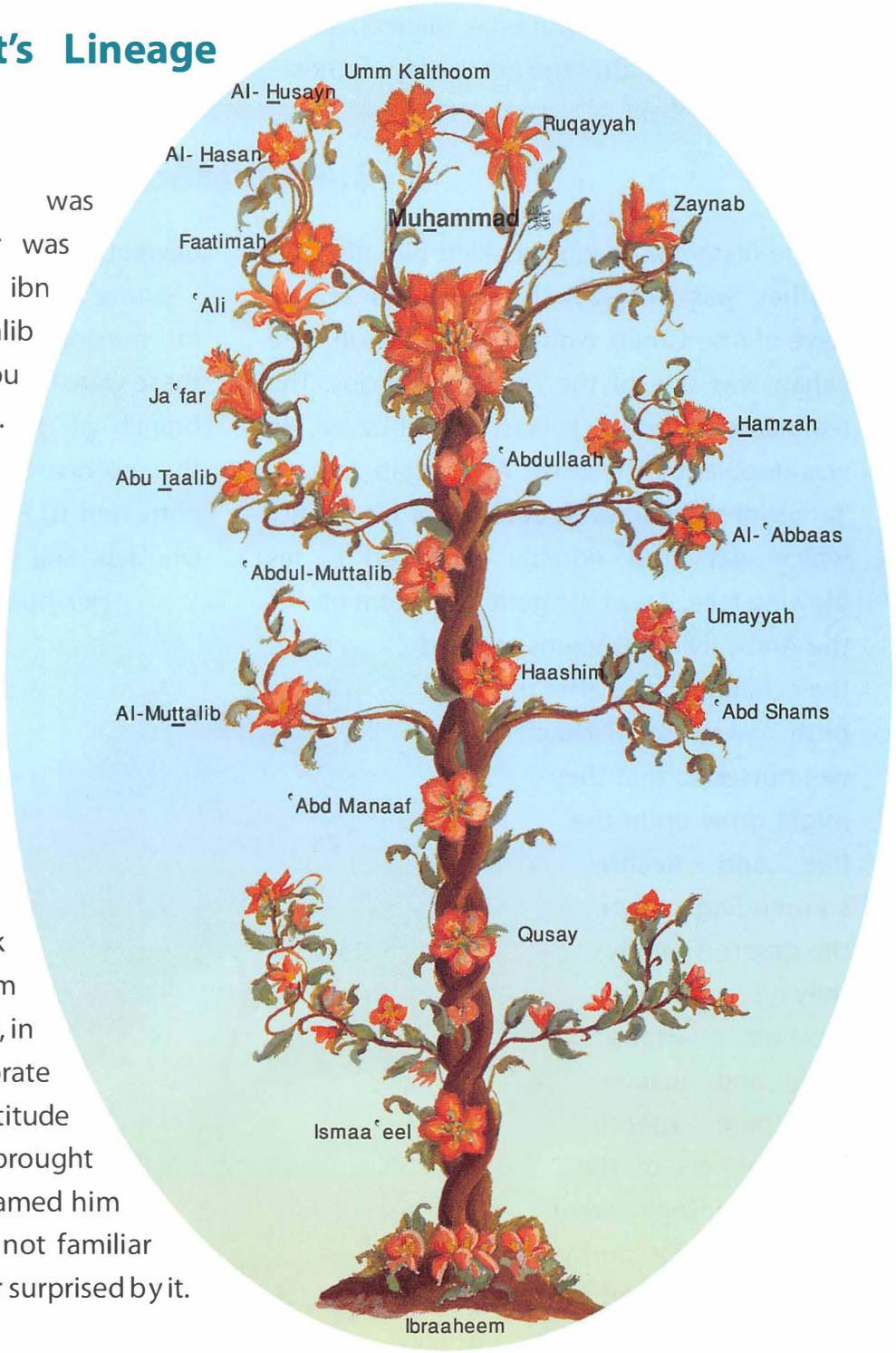
They swooped to and fro over the army, pelting them as they did so. The pebbles were hard and they landed with such rapidity that they even pierced coats of mail. Every stone found its mark. Every pebble killed its man. As soon as a soldier was hit, his flesh began to rot. A large number of Abrahah's soldiers were killed in this way. Many others, Abrahah included, died soon after their return to Sanʿaa'.

The Arabs attached great importance to this event. They dated their calendar from it, saying, 'This occurred in the Year of the Elephant', 'so-and-so was born in the Year of the Elephant' or 'this happened so many years after the Year of the Elephant'.

According to many scholars, this event took place in the year 571 of the Christian Calendar. According to others, however, it occurred in the year 570 CE. There is a difference of opinion among scholars concerning the exact date of the birth of the Prophet ﷺ. Some scholars maintain that he was born on the 9th *Rabeeʿ al-Awwal* in the Year of the Elephant.

3.2. The Prophet's Lineage and Ancestry

The Prophet's father was ʿAbdullaah, and his mother was Aaminah, daughter of Wahb ibn ʿAbd Manaaf. ʿAbdul-Muttalib was his grandfather, and Abu Taalib was one of his uncles. The prophet ﷺ was born among the best of tribes on earth and was of the best of lineages. His ancestry can be traced back to Prophet Ibraaheem عليه السلام. As soon as he was born, his mother sent word to his grandfather, ʿAbdul-Muttalib, informing him of the birth of a boy and asking him to come to see him. ʿAbdul-Muttalib came, took him in his arms and carried him to the Kaʿbah, where he voiced, in a passionate manner, an elaborate invocation of thanks and gratitude to Allah for this gift. Then he brought him back to his mother and named him Muhammad. The Arabs were not familiar with this name and were rather surprised by it.



3.3. The Short-Lived ʿAbdullaah

We possess only scant information about ʿAbdullaah, the father of the Prophet ﷺ. He was the favourite of his father, the celebrated ʿAbdul-Muttalib. He was married to Aaminah, the daughter of Wahb, who was a noble lady from Banu Zuhrah of the Quraysh. The marriage was extremely short-lived. ʿAbdullaah set out on a trading expedition to Syria, leaving Aaminah expecting his child. He never returned. ʿAbdullaah died in Madeenah on his return trip from Syria. When news of his death reached Makkah, Banu Haashim, and especially Aaminah, was grief-stricken. Allah's Messenger ﷺ was not yet born. ʿAbdullaah had no children except the future Prophet, nor had Aaminah any other child. ʿAbdullaah was buried in Madeenah. He was twenty-five when he died. Allah's Messenger ﷺ was born shortly after the death of his father.

3.4. Childhood

The first woman who suckled him after his mother was Thuwaybah, the freed female slave of Abu Lahab, with her son, Masruh. Abu Lahab was one of the Prophet's uncles. The real name of this uncle was ʿAbd al-Uzzaa. He was popularly nicknamed Abu Lahab, literally 'father of the flame' on account of his beauty which was most notably expressed in his glowing face. It was the general custom of the Arabs living in towns to send their children, soon after their birth, away to Bedouin wet nurses so that they might grow up in the free and healthy surroundings of the desert. Thereby they would develop a strong body and acquire the pure speech and manners of the Bedouins. They were noted both for purity of their language and for being free from those vices which usually develop in inactive societies.



Some of the tribes had a high reputation for nursing and rearing children. Amongst these were the Banu Saʿd ibn Bakr, an outlying branch of Hawaazin, whose territory lay to the southeast of Makkah. The Prophet ﷺ was entrusted to Haleemah, the daughter of Abu Dhu'ayb. She was from Banu Saʿd ibn Bakr. Her husband was al-Haarith ibn ʿAbd al-ʿUzzaa, called Abu Kabshah, from the same tribe.

Traditions describe how Haleemah and all her household were favoured by successive strokes of good fortune while the child Muhammad ﷺ lived under her care. It is narrated that Haleemah described in after-years that she, along with her husband and a recently born

son of their own whom she was nursing, set out from her village in the company of some women from Banu Sa'd ibn Bakr in quest of nurselings to suckle. She said,

It was a year of drought. We had nothing left. I set forth on a grey female donkey of mine and we had with us an old she-camel which could not yield one drop of milk. We were kept awake all night by our son who would keep crying all night because of hunger, for I had not enough in my breast to feed him. At length, we reached Makkah and set about looking for nurselings. Aaminah offered her son first to one and then to another, until she had tried them all and they had all refused.

That was because we hoped for some favours from the boy's father. "An orphan!" we said, "What will his mother and grandfather be able to give us?" We had fixed our eyes on the reward that we would get from the child's father.

Every nurse who had come with me got a baby, and when we were about to depart, I said to my husband, "I hate to return in the company of my friends without having taken a baby to suckle. I shall go to that orphan and take him." So I went and took him for no reason except that I could find none but him.

I carried him back to where our mounts were stationed, and no sooner had I put him in my bosom than my breasts overflowed with milk for him. He drank his fill, and his foster-brother also drank his fill. Then they both slept, although my baby had not been able to sleep the previous night at all. My husband went to that old she-camel of ours and he found her udders full. He milked her and drank of her milk. I also drank with him until we could drink no more. Our hunger was satisfied. We enjoyed a sound sleep during the night, and in the morning my husband said to me, "By Allah, Haleemah, you have taken a blessed child."

Then we set out. I carried him and rode my donkey which outstripped the whole troops of fellow-travellers so much so that none of their donkeys was able to keep pace with her. We reached our dwellings in Banu Sa'd. It was a barren place. But when we brought Muhammad ﷺ to live with us, the barren land soon sprouted lush grass. My flock would come fully satisfied at every evening full of milk. We continued to enjoy this increase and bounty from Allah. The baby was growing well. None of the other boys could match him for growth until the baby's two years had passed, and I weaned him.

By the time he was two-years old, Haleemah took him again to his mother although she was eager that he should stay with her for the blessings he had brought her and her family. The Prophet's mother gave him once more into her keeping and Haleemah brought him again to her home. The Prophet ﷺ stayed with them until he was four or five years old.

While the Prophet ﷺ was staying in Haleemah's house, a very strange incident took place. An angel came, split open his chest and removed a blood clot from his heart and threw it away. Then he cleansed his heart and replaced it. Muslim has recorded this incident in his *Saheeh* on the authority of Anas ibn Maalik ﷺ who said, 'While the Prophet ﷺ was playing with some boys, Jibreel ﷺ came to him, took him, laid him to the ground and split open his chest. Jibreel extracted his heart, removed from it a black clot and said, "This is the portion of Satan in you." He then washed the heart with Zamzam water in a basin made of gold, joined the heart together and returned it to its place. The children ran up to their mother and said, "Muhammad has been murdered." They hurried to him to find him standing alone, pale and shaken.' Anas ﷺ added, 'I have seen the stitch marks on his chest.'

This incident certainly deserves more than a passing thought or mention. What happened on that day was one of the signs of Prophethood. It was a clear proof that Allah had chosen Muhammad ﷺ for a very important message. Purification from Satan's influence was in fact preparation for protecting the Prophet ﷺ from evil of every sort. Although idol-worship and evil deeds were practised on a large scale among the Quraysh, the Prophet ﷺ never ever bowed down to an idol, nor committed a sin. The removal of the blood-clot from his heart

certainly purified him from every immaturity and recklessness of youth. The incident also shows us the degree to which Allah protected the Prophet ﷺ and prevented Satan from having any influence over him whatsoever.



3.5. Aaminah and ʿAbdul-Muttalib Pass away

After this incident, Haleemah was so worried about the boy that she took him once more to Makkah and returned him to his mother. He was six years old then. The boy lived happily with his mother in Makkah for some time, winning the affection of his grandfather and his uncles and aunts, and his many cousins with whom he played.

The reunion of orphan Muhammad ﷺ with his real mother was destined to be short-lived indeed. When he was six years old, his mother decided to take him on a visit to his maternal uncles in Madeenah. She was in her early twenties then. She set out to cover a journey of about 500 kilometres with her orphan boy and her female servant Umm Ayman. She spent a month there and then decided to go back to Makkah. However, not long after they had set out on their return journey, Aaminah fell ill. After some days, she died at Abwaa', on the road between Makkah and Madeenah, and she was buried there.

Umm Ayman brought the boy back to Makkah and she did all she possibly could to comfort him now that he had lost both his father and mother. His grandfather 'Abdul-Muttalib took complete charge of him. It soon became clear that his special fondness for ʿAbdullaah had been transferred to ʿAbdullaah's son.

ʿAbdul-Muttalib was the foremost chief of Makkah and the undisputed leader of Banu Haashim. He was the most handsome among the Quraysh men. He was very tall, kind-hearted, generous, kind and enjoyed great character. He was held in high esteem, and no ruler had ever met him but would show him respect and hold him in awe. He had been the leader of the Quraysh until his death.

ʿAbdul-Muttalib was very fond of his grandson, and their intimate relationship grew even stronger as time passed. Every day, he would spread a couch in the shade of the Ka'bah, and out of respect for their father none of his sons would venture to sit on it, but he would seat himself beside the Prophet ﷺ on the couch and stroke his back. Almost everyday they would be seen together. But, alas, him too Muhammad ﷺ was destined to lose very soon.

When Muhammad ﷺ was eight years, two months and ten days old, his grandfather passed away in Makkah. Umm Ayman reported that she had seen the youthful Muhammad ﷺ weeping as he quickened his steps to follow

the coffin of his guardian and protector. The princely patriarch died at the age of eighty-two, according to the most reliable sources. Some scholars put his age at over a hundred years when he died. When he was dying, ʿAbdul-Muttalib entrusted his grandson to Abu Taalib, who was a full brother of young Muhammad's father.

Abu Taalib continued the love and the kindness that his nephew had received from the old man. Henceforth he was as one of his own sons, and his wife Faatimah did all she possibly could to take the place of his mother. After many years, Allah's Messenger ﷺ used to say of her that she would have let her own children go hungry rather than him. Like his father, Abu Taalib was dignified, honoured and greatly respected by his people.

Review

- What importance did the Makkans attach to the incident of the Elephant?
- Mention the Prophet's parents. Who named him Muhammad?
- Why, you think, the Arabs were surprised by this name?
- Why did Haleemah finally take in baby Muhammad ﷺ? What blessings did she enjoy?
- How can you say that the Prophet's chest was literally opened? What was the wisdom behind this?

3.6. Muhammad's Early Occupation



Muhammad ﷺ did what he could in his early youth to earn his livelihood. In fact, he tended sheep and goats for a wage and would thus spend day after day alone in the hills above Makkah or on the slopes of the valleys beyond.

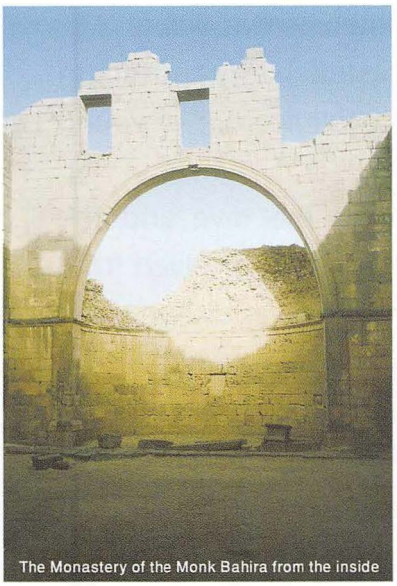
When Muhammad ﷺ was still young, Abu Taalib was going through a financial crisis. He had many mouths to feed, and his business was not going so well. To help his uncle get through these hard times, Muhammad ﷺ worked as a shepherd. In an authentic *hadeeth*, he is reported to have said, 'Every prophet tended sheep.' His Companions asked him, 'And did you?' He replied, 'Yes, I tended them for the Makkans in return for *qaraareet*.' Ibn Hajar mentions that scholars hold two opinions concerning the meaning of the Arabic word *qaraareet*. The first opinion states that a *qeeraat* (singular of *qaraareet*) is a part of a *dinar* or *dirham*, and the second one states that *qaraareet* is the name of a place in Makkah.

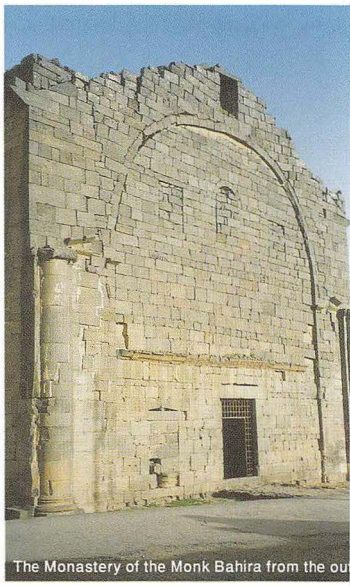
Working as a shepherd afforded the Prophet ﷺ the chance to work in peace and quiet, to enjoy

the beauty of the desert and to contemplate the wonders and grandeur of Allah's creation. Indeed, Allah would have provided the Prophet ﷺ with wealth and comfort so that he would not have to work as a shepherd, but this practice was a divine training for him so that it would be much easier for him to deal with people and tolerate their harm. Indeed, a shepherd needs a great deal of patience and forbearance to look after his flock. This practice proved useful to the prophets. A shepherd picks up and develops many wonderful qualities: the very qualities that the Prophet ﷺ needed to lead his community to the truth. Some of these qualities include patience, humbleness, bravery, mercy and compassion, and above all the love of earning one's living through hard work.

By doing so his followers were also taught a very good lesson, namely, the most honourable way to live is to eat from what one earns by engaging in lawful work. A person who invites others to Islam must especially avoid taking from what is in their hands. He should be independent of all human beings. A self-sufficient man is dignified in the sight of others. Whatever good he does, he does it for Allah. The Prophet ﷺ once said, "Never has any one eaten a better food than what he has eaten out of the labour of his own hands; and David, the Prophet of Allah, used to eat out of the labour of his own hands. (Al-Bukhaaree, *ḥadeeth* no. 2072) Moreover, this *ḥadeeth* is suggestive of the adoption of a lawful occupation, no matter how people may look askance at it. That was the reason why the prophets took such occupations.

When one is self-sufficient, depending upon no one but Allah, one gains the freedom of being able to speak the truth. Because they are dependent upon the generosity of others, many people bow their heads low before evildoers. They remain silent about their wrongdoing for fear of losing their jobs and their livelihood.


The Monastery of the Monk Bahira from the inside

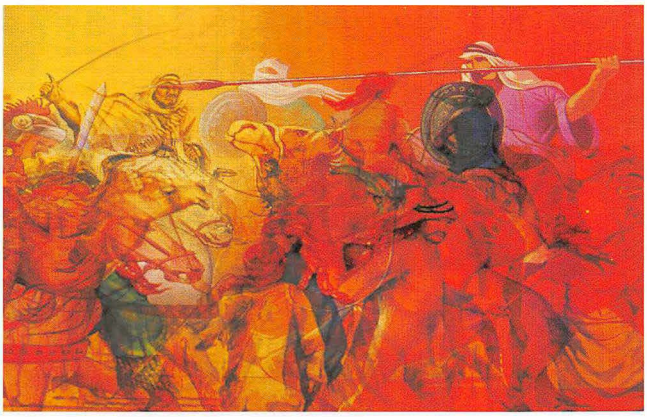

The Monastery of the Monk Bahira from the ou

3.7. Baḥeeraa the Monk

When Muḥammad ﷺ was twelve years old, he accompanied his uncle, Abu Ṭaalib, on a trade journey to Syria. When they reached Buṣraa, an ancient city in southern Syria that was under the Roman rule, there was a monk named Baḥeeraa, who came out of his cell to meet them. Although he had not met them before, he readily recognized the Prophet ﷺ and said while taking his hand, 'This is the master of all mankind. Allah will send him with a message which will be a mercy to all beings.' Abu Ṭaalib asked him, 'How do you know that?' Baḥeeraa replied, 'When you appeared from the direction of ʿAqabah, every single rock and tree fell down in prostration, which they never do except for a prophet. I can also recognize him by the apple-like 'Seal of Prophethood' below his shoulder bones.' He also asked Abu Ṭaalib to send the boy back to Makkah and not to take him to Syria as there was a serious danger to his life from the Romans and the

Jews. Abu Ṭaalib obeyed and sent him back to Makkah with some of his servants.

The trip to Syria was no doubt a major event in the life of the Prophet ﷺ. For the first time, he saw the bustling commercial centres of other lands. The trip brought him into contact with a society which differed considerably from the one in which he had grown up.



3.8. The Sacrilegious (*Fijaar*) War

A war that raged between Kinaanah and Quraysh on one side and Qays ʿAylaan, an important clan of the Hawaazin, on another was called the *Fijaar* or the Sacrilegious War because both sides violated the sanctity at the Holy House. The conflict dragged on for three or four years. Allah's Messenger ﷺ took part in one of these battles. His efforts were, however, confined to helping by gathering enemy arrows that had missed their mark and handing them over to his uncles so that they could shoot them back. At that time, the Prophet ﷺ was about twenty years old.

The Arabic word *fijaar* means wickedness. This war was given such a name because the sanctity of Makkah was being violated, and the Arabs considered any violation of Makkah to be a wicked crime. The Prophet ﷺ learnt about war and chivalry during these tribal encounters.

3.9. *Hilf al-Fudool*: Alliance of the Virtuous

As a young man, the Prophet ﷺ took part in the formation of the 'Alliance of the Virtuous' in Makkah. He once said, 'I was present in the house of ʿAbdullaah ibn Judʿaan at so excellent a pact that I would not exchange my part in it for a herd of red camels, and if now, in Islam, I were summoned to it I would gladly respond.'

The expression *fudool* comes from the word *fadl*, which means nobility, superiority and virtue. Hence, it was an appropriate name for the alliance. The owner of red camels during those times would today be equivalent to a millionaire.[1]

In fact, *Hilf al-Fudool* was a kind of league against injustice. Members of the alliance were required to come to the aid of those who needed an extra helping hand, such as the oppressed victims of injustice, widows, slaves, orphans, the travellers, the poor and the elderly. The objective of this alliance was to protect the defenceless and ensure the safety of strangers in Makkah. The league came about because a stranger from Yemen sold goods in Makkah to an influential member of a powerful local clan who subsequently refused either to pay the price or to return the goods, as a result of which the wronged seller stood up in the vicinity of the Kaʿbah and implored aid for himself as a stranger in the city. Several members of the Quraysh aristocracy rallied to his assistance and secured the return of his goods. Meeting in the house of ʿAbdullaah ibn Judʿaan, they pledged henceforth to combat oppressive acts and uphold justice. The Prophet ﷺ, then in his early twenties, was present at this gathering.

1- Ali Mohammad as-Sallaabee, *The Noble Life of the Prophet* ﷺ, Darussalam, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, 2005, Vol. 1, p. 103.

3.1. Divine Protection

Allah's Messenger ﷺ was protected by Allah. He distanced himself from the indecencies and bad habits of the *Jaahiliyyah*, the pre-Islamic period of social and moral decline. The term *Jaahiliyyah* is commonly translated as the 'Age of Ignorance': ignorance, that is, of the word of Allah.

Allah's Messenger ﷺ felt a deep sense of revulsion at the worship of idols. Once he was requested to act in the name of the idols al-Laat and al-'Uzzaa, but he replied with the startling answer, 'Do not ever ask me anything for the sake of these idols. I have never hated anything more.'

The Prophet ﷺ never lied or deceived anyone; he was sincere and truthful. He outshone everyone in truthfulness, trustworthiness, bravery and modesty. He respected family ties. He shared the burden of others. He honoured his guests, always provided his own food and was content with simple meals. What set him apart from his fellow Makkans was his absolute truthfulness, trustworthiness, integrity, sense of justice and compassion for the poor, the oppressed and the downtrodden, as well as his total refusal to worship any idol or do anything immoral. He had gained experience in trading through his travels with the trade caravans to greater Syria because of his honesty, hard work and the business acumen he showed in trading; he was soon being sought after to take charge of other people's merchandise, that is to say, for those who could not travel themselves so that they would trade on their behalf.

Soon he was popularly acclaimed for these qualities. *As-Saadiq* (the truthful) and *al-Ameen* (the trustworthy) were the titles on everybody's lips for Muhammad ﷺ, which itself means 'the praised one.' Always faithful and truthful, people used to deposit their valuables with him for safekeeping.



3.11. The Prophet's Marriage to Khadeejah رضي الله عنها

Khadeejah belonged to the famous Quraysh tribe. She was the daughter of Khuwaylid ibn Asad. She was from the noblest of families and the richest of their women. She was intelligent, resourceful, discreet, affectionate and of noble character. She conducted trade with the help of active partners who got a share in profits. When she learnt of Muhammad's honesty, trustworthiness and high moral qualities, she sent him a message expressing her desire to take her goods for her to Syria. She promised she would give him share of the profits that was greater than what she would normally give others. He agreed to the terms and travelled in the company of Maysarah, a servant she had provided to be his travel companion.

The Prophet ﷺ succeeded in his trade mission very well. The profits were unusually high. His mild manners and agreeable temperament won him the hearts of men he employed in the course of his journey. Throughout the trip, Maysarah witnessed the wonderful character, nobility and truthfulness of the Prophet ﷺ.

In addition to that, Khadeejah experienced plentiful blessings in her wealth. Based upon these reasons, she had a heart to heart discussion with her friend Nafeesah, the daughter of Munyah, telling her about the positive feelings she was having about the Prophet ﷺ. Nafeesah went to the Prophet ﷺ and proposed to him on behalf of Khadeejah. The Prophet ﷺ was so pleased with the proposal that he went to his uncles to seek their advice. They all agreed to his marriage to her.

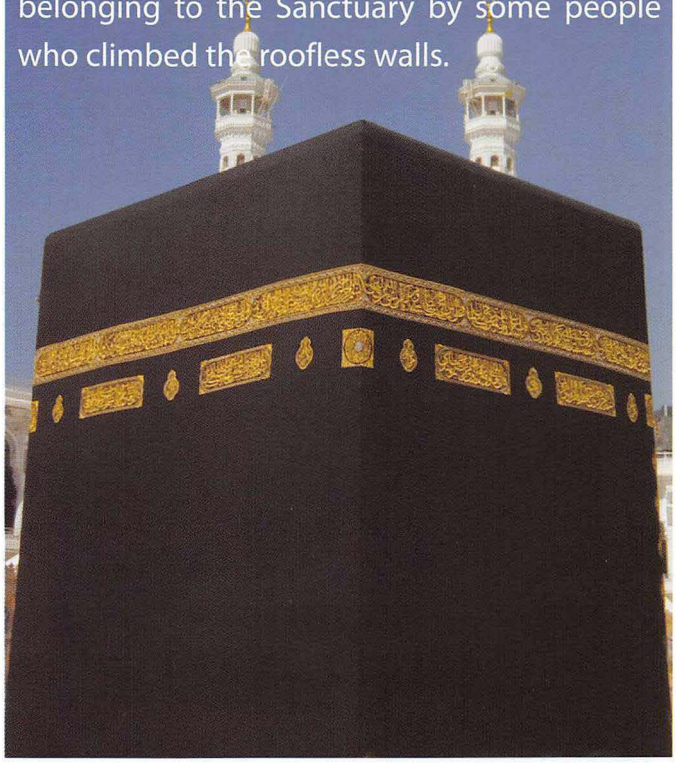
Khadeejah ﵂ was at that time a widow, at the rather advanced age of forty. Very wealthy and with a strong and independent will, she had repeatedly declined marriage offers made by some of the most prominent men of the Quraysh, after the death of her second husband. She had previously been married to ʿAteeq ibn ʿAa'idh al-Makhzumee. She bore him a female child. After him she was married to Abu Haalah at-Tameemee. She bore him a boy. Abu Haalah died before the advent of Islam.

Muḥammad ﷺ married her at the age of twenty-five years, in the prime of his youth. The marriage proved to be one of affection and happiness. She was the first woman that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ married, and he did not marry any other woman until she died. Their marriage was wondrously blessed. She bore him six children, two sons and four daughters. Their eldest child was a son named al-Qaasim, and the Prophet ﷺ came to be known as Abul-Qaasim, the father of al-Qaasim. But the boy died in infancy. The next child was a daughter whom they named Zaynab, and she was followed by three other daughters Ruqayyah, Umm Kulthoom and Faaṭimah; and finally another short-lived son, ʿAbdullaah who was also called aṭ-Ṭaahir and aṭ-Ṭayyib.

All their daughters except Faaṭimah ﵂ died during the Prophet's lifetime. Faaṭimah ﵂ died six months after his own death. All his daughters witnessed Islam, embraced it and emigrated to Madeenah. Of the daughters who married, only Faaṭimah had descendants. She was the mother of al-Ḥasan and al-Ḥusayn. Her husband ʿAli was a cousin of the Prophet ﷺ and the fourth rightly-guided caliph.

3.12. The Rebuilding of the Kaʿbah

When the Prophet ﷺ was thirty-five years old, the Quraysh decided to rebuild the Kaʿbah. As it then stood, its walls were scarcely above a man's height and it had no roof. Therefore, even when the door was locked, access was easy. It is said that while a woman was burning incense she accidentally set fire to the building, thus causing a great deal of damage to it. Some historians assert that the main reason for the reconstruction was a theft of treasures belonging to the Sanctuary by some people who climbed the roofless walls.



Being situated in perhaps the lowest part of the valley of Makkah, the Ancient House was often flooded by torrents of water coming down from the surrounding high ground and hills. The condition of the building had deteriorated. The Quraysh, therefore, resolved to rebuild it. However, their awe of the Kaʿbah made them hesitate to lay hands on it. They were afraid of incurring the wrath of Allah. it was the daring of the chief of Makhzoom, al-Waleed ibn al-Mugheerah, that put an end to their doubts and fears. He started the demolition by pulling down a portion of the southern wall. But the rest of the people held back. They waited until the next morning to see what evil would befall them. When nothing happened, they all joined in the demolition. Four major clans of the Quraysh worked together in harmony, each clan building one wall of the four-walled Sanctuary. Wood from a Roman vessel, which had wrecked at about that time on the Red Sea Coast near Jeddah, was bought and used for the new building, and the Quraysh were assisted in their work by a Roman mason, probably a survivor of the wreck.

But when the building was as high as an average man's height, it was time to place the Black Stone in the eastern corner. The act of putting the Black Stone in place was considered to be the highest honour, and each of the clans was determined to claim it. A violent disagreement broke out amongst them. Each clan wanted the honour of lifting it to its place. The dispute could have broken out into a serious conflict, but thanks to the wisdom of an old chief of the Banu Makhzoom, whose name was Abu Umayyah ibn al-Mugheerah, bloodshed was averted and a peaceful solution was agreed upon. He suggested to the Quraysh that the first man to enter through the gate of the Mosque would be entrusted with the task of putting the Black Stone in place. The plan was arbitrary, but it worked. They agreed to follow the old man's counsel. As the Quraysh assembled, anxiously waiting with their eyes fixed on the gate, Muhammad ﷺ entered. He was given a warm welcome. They cried with satisfaction and spontaneous excitement, 'Here comes Muhammad! Here comes *al-Ameen* (the trustworthy)! We accept his judgment.'

When they explained the matter to him, he said, 'Bring me a cloak.' And when they brought it, he spread it on the ground. He then took the Black Stone and laid it in the middle of the mantle and said, 'Let each clan catch hold of the border of the cloak. Then lift it up all of you together.' And when they had lifted it up to the right height, he took the Black Stone and placed it in the corner with his own hands. The building was then continued and completed above, and roofed over with beams from the stranded ship. This was how Muhammad ﷺ prevented a war from breaking out among the Quraysh by a supreme display of wisdom. The rebuilding of the Kaʿbah was perhaps the first major event in which Muhammad ﷺ appeared in public after his much-talked-about marriage with Khadeejah ؓ: the prominent lady of the Quraysh.



3.13. Meditation in the Cave of Hiraa' (Mount Hiraa')

As the Prophet ﷺ approached the age of forty, he came to spend more and more of his time in retreat. He would withdrew into seclusion in the Cave of Hiraa', towards the top of Mount Hiraa', some two miles northeast of Makkah towards the back of the mountain. He applied himself there to ardent devotions, i.e. worship. He spent his time in long vigils, prayers and contemplation—sometimes for several days at a time. This mountain is called *Jabal an-Noor* (Mount of Light) because there the first verses of the Qur'an were revealed.

At Mount Hiraa', he would remain plunged in deep thought and reflection. In his solitary retreat, the Prophet ﷺ would be quite alone most of the time. He would take with him provisions and devote a certain number of nights to the worship of Allah. Then he would return to Khadeejah ﵂, and on his return take more provisions and go again to the mountain. During these times it often happened that after he had left the town and was approaching the mount he would hear clearly the words, 'Peace be on you', and he would turn and look for the speaker, but no one was in sight, and it was as if the words had come from a stone or a rock. Allah's Messenger ﷺ is reported to have said, 'I know the rock in Makkah that used to greet me. I know it very well.' (Muslim, *hadeeth* no. 2277)

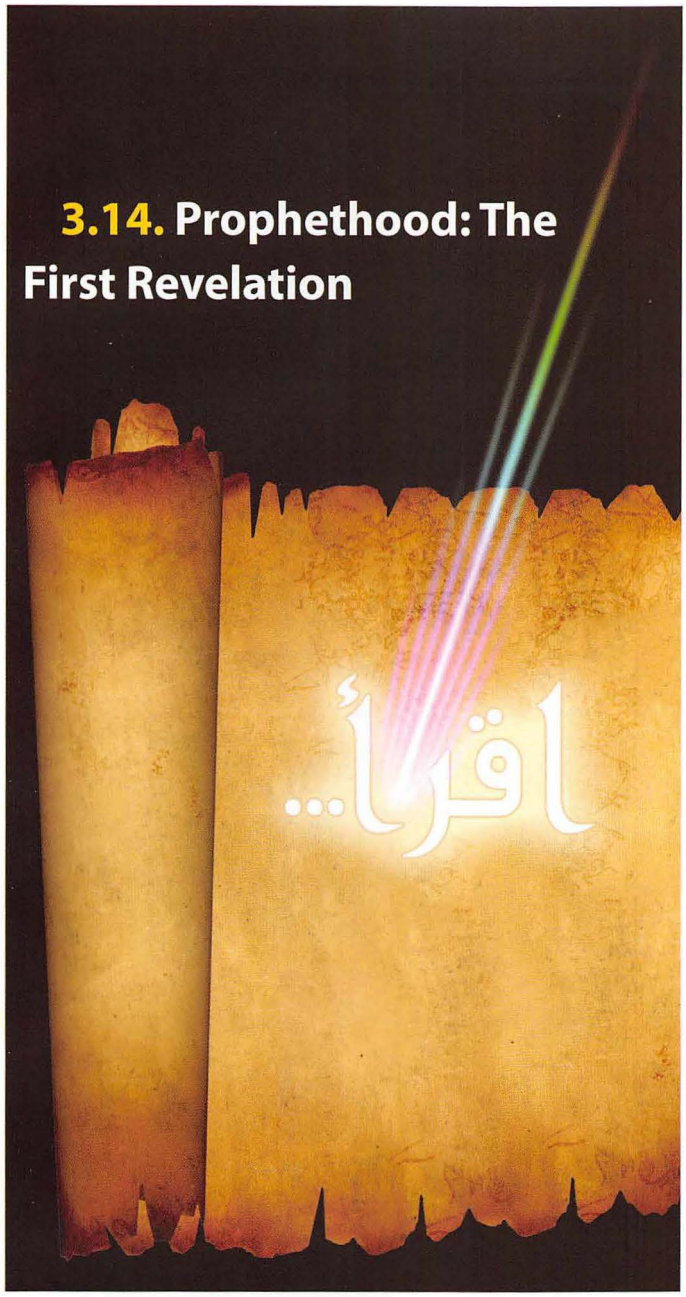
The first kind of revelation to which the Messenger of Allah ﷺ was initiated was the true dreams during sleep, and he never saw a dream but it came like the breaking of light and dawn. (al-Bukhaaree) This lasted for six months. The first of these Prophetic dreams occurred in the month of *Rabeeʿ al-Awwal*, when the Prophet ﷺ had just completed his fortieth year.

The Prophet ﷺ once said that the true good dream is one of the forty-six parts of Prophethood. We know that the total period of revelation was twenty-three years, of which the first six months formed of true dreams. It is important, however, to note here that no verse of the Qur'an was revealed to him in his sleep. The entire Qur'an was revealed to him while he was awake.

Review

- Who was Umm Ayman? What role did she play after the death of Aaminah?
- How can you say that ʿAbdul-Muttalib was very fond of his grandson?
- What was the Prophet's early occupation? How did it aid in honing the skills needed for Prophethood?
- Why, do you think, should a Muslim be self-sufficient?
- Why do you think the Prophet ﷺ was very pleased with his involvement in the formation of the *Hilf al-Fudool*?
- What prompted Khadeejah ؓ to propose marriage to the Prophet ﷺ? How was this marriage blessed?

3.14. Prophethood: The First Revelation



During one *Ramadhaan*, in his third year of solitude in the cave of Hiraa', the Prophet ﷺ was alone in the cave of Hiraa' on the night destined for the beginning of his prophetic mission. He was precisely forty lunar years, six months and twelve days old; that is to say, thirty-nine Gregorian years, three months and twenty days.[2]. It was the twenty-first night of *Ramadhaan*, Monday, August 10, in the year 610 of the Christian Calendar.

The Prophet ﷺ was alone and fully awake in the cave when Angel Jibreel عليه السلام appeared and said to him, 'Read!' The Prophet ﷺ replied, 'I cannot read.' The Prophet ﷺ himself later narrated what happened next:

'Then the angel took me and pressed me until all strength went out of me, then he released me and said, "Read!" I said, "I cannot read." Then he took hold of me and pressed me again until all strength went out of me; then he released me and said, "Read!" I replied, "I cannot read." Then he took me and pressed me a third time; then he released me and said,

> Read in the Name of your Lord Who has created!
> He has created man from a clinging clot.
> Read, for your Lord is the Most Gracious,
> Who has taught by the pen,
> Taught man what he knew not.' (*Surat al-'Alaq*, 96:1-5)

Trembling with fear, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ returned to Khadeejah رضي الله عنها and said, 'Wrap me up! Wrap me up!' She wrapped him up until he felt secure again. Then he told her about what had happened and said, 'Indeed, I fear for myself!' Khadeejah رضي الله عنها said, 'By Allah! Allah will never humiliate you! You fulfil the duties of kinship, support the weak, help the poor, honour guests and help those in genuine distress.'

Then she set out with him to her parental cousin Waraqah ibn Nawfal who had embraced Christianity before Islam and used to write the Bible in Hebrew. He was also old and blind. Khadeejah رضي الله عنها said to him, 'My cousin, listen to your nephew.' Waraqah turned to Muhammad ﷺ and said, 'What did you see, my nephew?' Muhammad ﷺ told him what he had seen. Waraqah then said to him, 'That was the Angel of Revelation whom Allah sent down upon Moosaa. If only I were younger and would be able to live up to the time when your people will drive you out.' Muhammad ﷺ asked, 'Will

2- For more details, see Safi-ur-Rahman al-Mubarakpuri, *The Sealed Nectar*, Darussalam, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia 2002, pp. 86-7.

they really expel me?' 'Yes,' he replied, 'anyone who ever brought something similar to what you have brought was treated with hostility. If I should live till then, I would certainly give you support and assistance.' Waraqah passed away soon afterwards before the Prophet ﷺ began to preach Islam publicly and before the persecution by the Quraysh started, and the revelations paused for a while. (al-Bukhaaree)

It was an Arab custom, which is also prevalent these days, to address an old and respected man as uncle, hence Khadeejah's words 'your nephew'. Waraqah believed that Muhammad ﷺ was the final Messenger sent to mankind. He is counted among those who embraced Islam. The Prophet ﷺ later stated that Waraqah was one of the dwellers of Paradise. He once said, 'Do not speak ill of Waraqah, for I indeed saw that he had a garden or two gardens in Paradise.' (al-Haakim)

3.15. The Pause of Revelations – *Fatrat al-Wahiy*

Between the first revelation mentioned in the above tradition and the next a period elapsed during which the Prophet ﷺ received no revelation, which was a time of deepest distress for the him. There is no unanimity regarding the duration of the pause of the revelations or the intermission. It is, however, reasonable to maintain that it was in fact short, lasting only a few days. To say that it lasted about two and half or three years is not correct.

3.16. Revelations Resume

In fact, the pause of revelations for a few days was to relieve the Prophet ﷺ of the intensity of the awe he had experienced in the Cave of Hiraa' and to increase his longing for revelations. And after the pause, the revelation came to him again. It is recorded in Saheeh al-Bukhaaree that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ was heard talking about the break of revelation as follows:

'While I was walking, I heard a voice coming from the sky. I looked up and saw the same angel who had visited me at the Cave of Hiraa', sitting on a throne between the sky and the earth. He filled me with awe and I returned home and said, 'Wrap me up! Wrap me up!' Then Allah the Most High revealed the following verses:

O you wrapped in a mantle!
Arise and deliver your warning.
Magnify your Lord.
Purify your clothes,
And keep away from idolatry. (*Soorat al-Muddath-thir*, 74:1-5)

After this the revelation started coming frequently and regularly.'

Thus, for the first time, the Prophet ﷺ was commanded to preach Islam. The above-quoted verses were the first verses to be revealed after the pause of revelations.



3.17. The Call to Islam in Makkah – the Secret Stage

When Allah's Messenger ﷺ received his Lord's command to 'rise and warn', he indeed rose and warned his people and carried doing so until he met his Lord, some twenty-three years later. He spent these twenty-three years vigorously and relentlessly striving to abide by the noble and weighty order to 'rise and warn'. He complied with his Lord's command with unique vigour, energy and dedication. His efforts in this respect fall into two major stages: a secret stage and a public stage. The secret stage was approximately for the first three years of his mission. The second stage lasted until he finally left Makkah on his famous *hijrah* (emigration) to Madeenah and the rest of his life.

The private stage was marked by secrecy in conveying the message. It was distinguished by great care and caution in carefully inviting certain individuals to Islam.

3.18. The Early Muslims

At first, as we have pointed out above, Muhammad ﷺ preached Islam secretly among close relatives, friends and acquaintances. The first to accept Islam was, as is universally acknowledged, his wife Khadeejah. ʿAli ibn Abee Taalib, who was a ten-year-old cousin of the Prophet ﷺ and a member of the household and later son-in-law, was the next convert. The Prophet ﷺ undertook to support ʿAli because of the limited resources of Abu Taalib and the large size of his family. Next was the Prophet's freedman and adopted son Zayd ibn Haarithah. Next to accept Islam was Abu Bakr who was the Prophet's close friend and confidant for many years.

Regarding the conversion of Abu Bakr, Muhammad ﷺ said,

"I never invited anyone to Islam who did not display some hesitation in embracing it except Abu Bakr. He alone did not delay when I invited him to Islam, nor did he hesitate."

Abu Bakr was the first convert outside the immediate household of Muhammad ﷺ. He was two years younger than the Prophet ﷺ who was forty years old. Abu Bakr ؓ was thus the first male adult to accept Islam. Being a successful merchant, he possessed considerable wealth. He was very

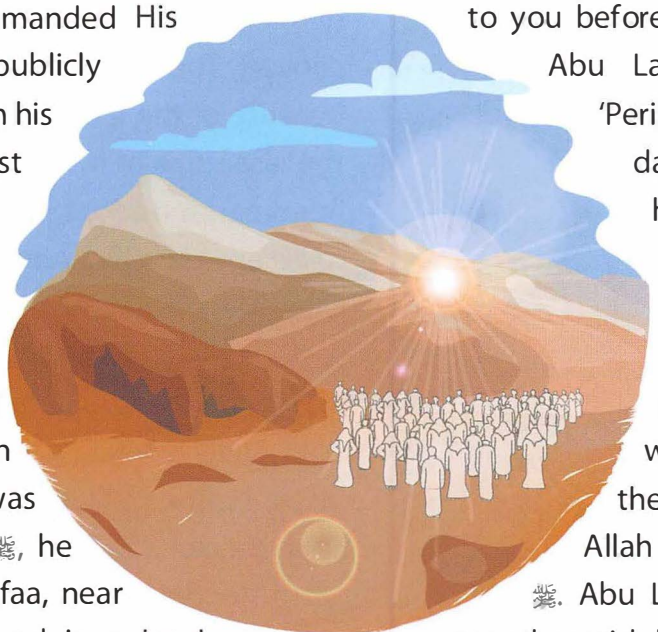
popular in Makkah owing to his fine and easy manners. He was the first of the prominent personalities of Makkah to accept Islam. He was the first free-born man who openly declared himself a Muslim. People regularly turned to him for advice because of his knowledge and experience. Through his personal efforts, quite a good number of people embraced Islam. These include ʿUthmaan ibn ʿAffaan, az-Zubayr ibn al-ʿAwwaam, ʿAbdur-Rahmaan ibn ʿAwf, Saʿd ibn Abee Waqqaas and Talhah ibn ʿUbaydullaah.

Among the early Muslims were also Bilaal ibn Rabaah the Ethiopian, Abu ʿUbaydah ibn al-Jarraah, Abu Salamah ibn ʿAbdul-Asad, al-Arqam ibn Abee al-Arqam, ʿUthmaan ibn Madhʿoon, and his two brothers Qudaamah and ʿAbdullaah. ʿUbaydah ibn al-Haarith, Faatimah bint al-Khattaab, sister of ʿUmar, the second rightly-guided caliph, Saʿeed ibn Zayd, husband of Faatimah bint al-Khattaab and several others who accepted Islam.

Among the first Muslims, the Quraysh were a clear majority. The thought that the early converts consisted primarily of slaves, social outcasts and downtrodden persons is both wrong and biased. The vast majority of those early Muslims were, in fact, Quraysh free-born men and were not slaves at all.

3.19. The Call to Islam in Makkah – the Public Stage

During the three years of the private stage, many people accepted Islam in Makkah. Groups of men and women entered Islam. Soon the mention of Islam was on everyone's lips in Makkah. Then Allah commanded His Messenger ﷺ to proclaim publicly what had come to him from his Lord: 'And warn your nearest relatives.' (26: 214)



This verse was revealed roughly three years after the first revelation at Hiraa'. Al-Bukhaaree records that when the verse, 'And warn your nearest relatives,' was revealed to the Prophet ﷺ, he ascended the hill of as-Safaa, near the Kaʿbah, and proclaimed in a loud voice: 'O Banu Fihr, O Banu ʿAdiy,' calling the clans of the Quraysh, till they had all gathered. Among those present was Abu Lahab, an uncle of the Prophet ﷺ. The Prophet ﷺ then addressed them, 'Tell me, if I were to inform you that some cavalry in the valley were about to attack you, would you believe me?'

They replied, 'Yes, we have never experienced any lie from you.' He then said, 'I am a warner to you before a severe punishment.' Abu Lahab shouted angrily, 'Perish you for the rest of the day. Is it for this that you have gathered us?'

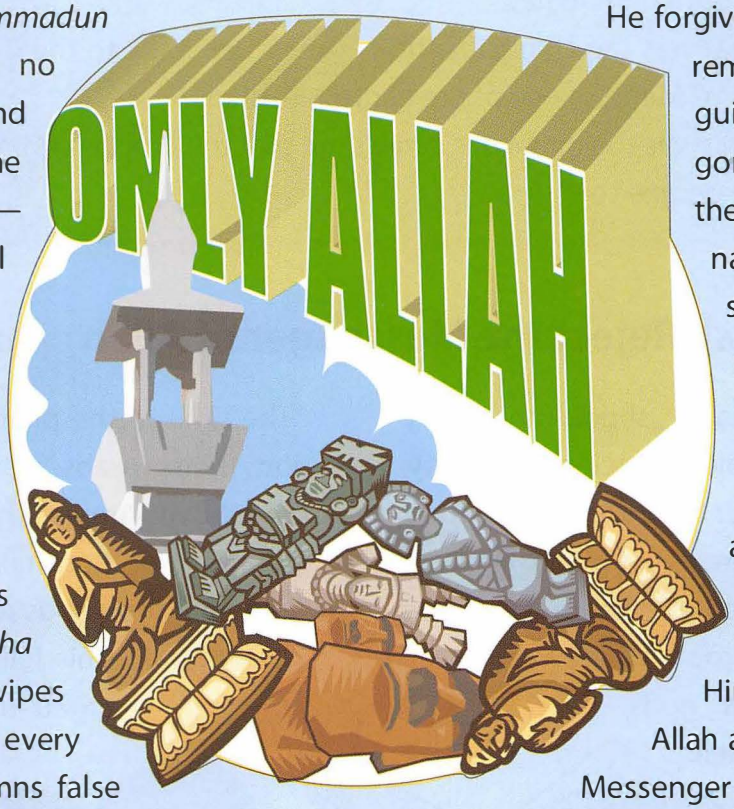
The Prophet ﷺ was dismayed by the response. The response of the Quraysh was not warm. It was hostile in the case of Abu Lahab. But Allah comforted the Prophet ﷺ. Abu Lahab was condemned together with his wife in strong terms. *Soorat al-Masad* was revealed to the Prophet ﷺ. Thus the first person to threaten the Prophet ﷺ and attempt to shout him down was his own uncle, Abu Lahab.

The above-mentioned tradition from al-

Bukhaaree marks the beginning of the public stage in which Allah's Messenger ﷺ openly called the Quraysh to acknowledge and worship no god apart from Allah, the only True God.

3.20. Essentials of the Prophet's Early Call of His People

In the first instance, Allah's Messenger ﷺ invited the Quraysh idolaters of Makkah to declare the testimony of faith: *Laa ilaaha illallaah, Muhammadun Rasulullaah* (There is no god but Allah, and Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah) — the famous Muslim call to pure monotheism (*tawheed*).



The statement *Laa ilaaha illallaah* consists of two phrases: one is a negation, the other is an affirmation. *Laa ilaaha* (there is no god) wipes out the existence of every false god and condemns false worship. The word *ilaah* could refer to any matter, person, idea or notion which is undeservedly taken or adopted as an object of worship or adoration, irrespective of whether it is done out of excessive love or excessive fear, while the words *illallaah* affirm the existence of the One, True God — Allah.

Allah is there. He is the only True God. He is the Creator and the Provider. He is your Lord and Master. Life and death are under His command. He alone should be feared. From Him alone we should ask everything. He alone is worthy of worship. His order and His decree are fulfilled in the heavens, in the farthest reaches of the earth and beneath it, in the seas, the skies and every other part of the universe. His knowledge and mercy encompass everyone and everything. He forgives sins, relieves stress, removes woes and guides those who have gone astray. He feeds the hungry, clothes the naked and heals the sick. He is One and Alone and has no partners. Allah is your only Lord and Master. Surrender your beings and your lives totally to Him Alone. Worship and serve no one but Him. There is no god but Allah and Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah.

The roots from which the word Islam comes means both 'submission', 'peace' and 'security'. The term Islam thus signifies the religion in which peace, security and submission are attained through total submission to the will of Allah. Everything in the heavens and on earth belongs to Him. No man has a right to be master of another man or to spread corruption on earth.

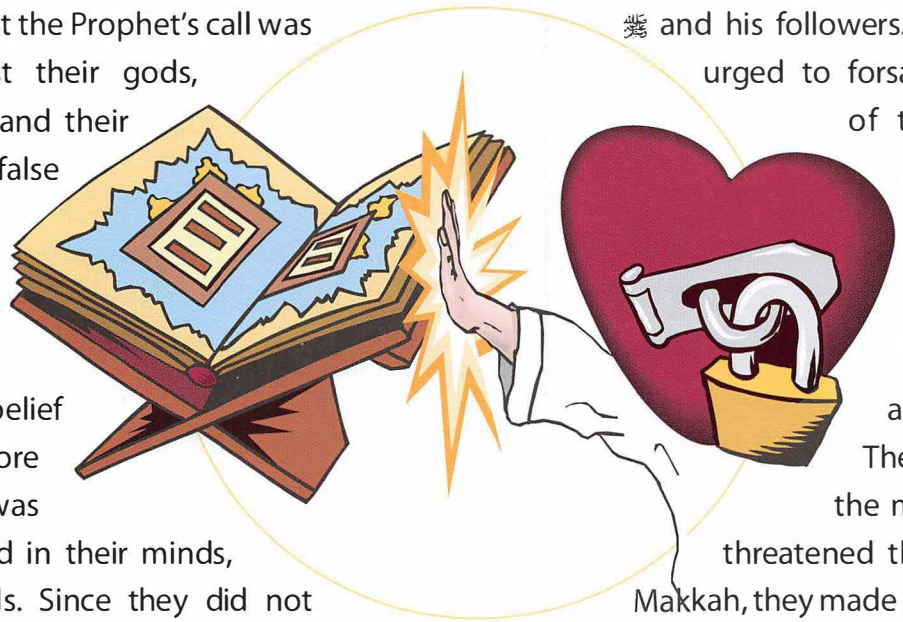
Allah's Messenger ﷺ told the Quraysh idol-worshippers: An everlasting life awaits you beyond where you will meet Allah and your life will be justified. You must prepare yourselves for that.

Review

- What role did true dreams play in Muhammad's Prophethood? Was any part of the Qur'an revealed in his sleep?
- How was Khadeejah ﵂ a pillar of support to the Prophet ﷺ after he experienced his first revelation?
- What is *fatrat al-wahiy*? How long did it last? What was the wisdom behind it?
- What was the characteristic of the secret stage to the Call of Islam? Mention five of the earliest Muslims?
- What was the initial basic message that the Prophet ﷺ invited the people to?

3.21. The Quraysh Reject the Messenger of Allah ﷺ and His Message

This simple message shook the very foundations of the Makkan society. In reality, the Quraysh lived under the yoke of false gods. Idols lorded over them. Man-made gods of their own desires lorded over them. When the Quraysh saw that the Prophet's call was directed against their gods, their principles and their long-standing false practices, they were greatly alarmed. Polytheism (the false belief that there is more than one god) was deeply ingrained in their minds, hearts and souls. Since they did not believe in any divinely revealed religion, their hearts had hardened. They had become a materialistic people. They cared only for their worldly welfare. The situation was extremely grave, they thought.



The time of the pilgrimage would soon be upon them. Arabs would come to Makkah from all over Arabia. The Quraysh had a high reputation for hospitality. Now the pilgrims would hear their gods rejected by the Prophet ﷺ and his followers. They would be urged to forsake the religion of their forefathers and to embrace Islam. They were terrified. They would lose their authority. Therefore, when the message of Islam threatened their authority in Makkah, they made up their minds to use all their energies and resources in an effort to protect the authority and wealth to which they had grown accustomed. It was very hard for them to give up their ancesterors' way of life. They feared that Islam would bring an end to

their economic well-being and would end their free way of life and their superior social status.

Allah's Messenger ﷺ taught that Allah is One. The Makkans had many gods and goddesses. Their fathers and grandfathers had worshipped these gods for generations. The Makkans drew economic benefits from their religious beliefs, which they feared they might lose by becoming Muslims. Makkah was the centre of their religion. The Quraysh were in charge of the Holy Kaʿbah. The Kaʿbah had three hundred and sixty idols. People came from all over Arabia to worship these idols in the Kaʿbah. The Prophet's ﷺ message threatened them all. It challenged them. It exposed them. Therefore, his immediate enemies in Makkah rose against the Prophet ﷺ and his call. They began to call him a poet, a soothsayer, and a man possessed.

Many simply heard the Qur'an and embraced Islam. Some saw the Prophet ﷺ and were immediately captivated by the light of mercy, generosity, and humanity that was visible in his manners and morals, in his works and words. Islam began to spread, and the opposition continued to harden and intensify, growing all the more furious and violent.

3.22. The Quraysh Take Action

Those who embraced Islam and joined the Prophet ﷺ were also tortured in countless ways, just as was the Prophet ﷺ himself: They were mocked, abused, tortured, flogged, imprisoned and boycotted. The Quraysh turned to cheap means in a desperate attempt to turn the tide of the Prophet's call.

Some were subjected to much more inhuman tortures. They were made to lie on burning coal fires until the melting body fat extinguished them. Some were dragged over burning sand and rocks. Yet such was the strength of their faith that none of them abandoned it in the face of such trials and tribulations.

3.23. The Quraysh Approach Abu Ṭaalib

Muḥammad ﷺ continued his mission. He proclaimed the truth loudly. Abu Ṭaalib continued to care for him and defend him. Eventually, a delegation of the chiefs of the Quraysh visited Abu Ṭaalib in a desperate effort to persuade him to forsake his nephew. They said, 'Abu Ṭaalib! Your nephew has insulted our gods. He has criticized our religion, ridiculed our customs and degraded our forefathers. Either leave him to us or there will be a bitter split between you and us.'

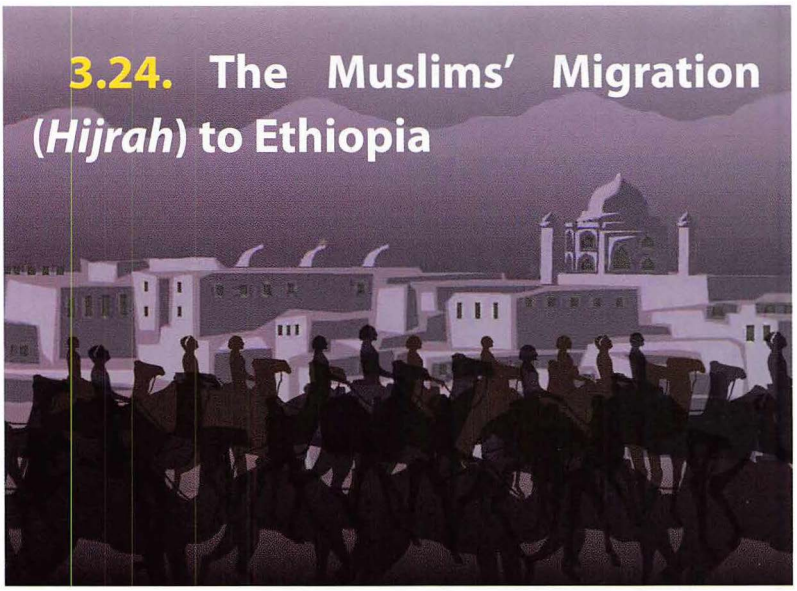
They visited Abu Ṭaalib three times. Once Abu Ṭaalib said to the Prophet ﷺ, 'Nephew, your people have come to me with threats. Spare me and yourself. Do not burden me more than I could bear.'

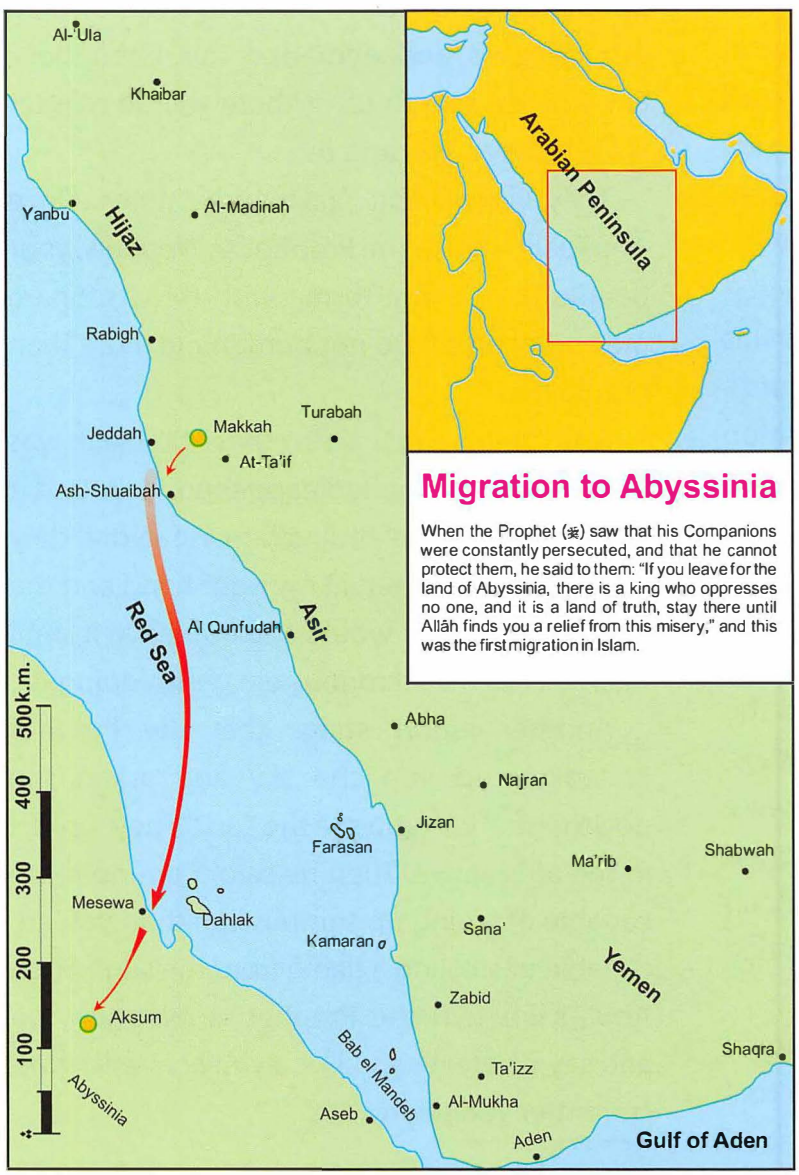
Allah's Messenger ﷺ saw that Abu Ṭaalib was very upset by what had happened. He found it hard to carry on defending him. He said, 'If they were to place the sun in my right hand and the moon in my left, I would still not leave it until Allah makes me victorious or I perish doing it.'

Another report states that the Prophet ﷺ looked up into the sky and asked the polytheists, "Can you see the sun?" They replied in the affirmative. Then he said, 'I am no more capable of giving up this mission than you are capable of stealing a flame from the sun.'[3] Then Abu Ṭaalib told the Prophet ﷺ, 'Nephew, go and say whatever you like. By Allah, I will never surrender you to anyone.'

3- Mahdi Rizqullah Aḥmad, *A Biography of the Prophet* ﷺ, Darussalam, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, 2005, Vol. 1, p. 172.

3.24. The Muslims' Migration (*Hijrah*) to Ethiopia





The Quraysh intensified their efforts to repress the spread of Islam and to oppress the new Muslim converts. The noble and merciful Prophet ﷺ was moved when he saw the trials and tribulations to which his followers were subjected. However, as the persecution grew unbearable, the Prophet ﷺ said to his Companions, 'If you go to Abyssinia (modern Ethiopia), you will find there a king in whose country no one is wronged.' The Prophet ﷺ himself and a few of his Companions were comparatively safe due to the protection afforded to them by Abu Taalib, but the same did not apply to the rest of his followers.

So, it came about in the month of *Rajab*, in the fifth year of the Prophet's mission, that about a dozen Muslim men and four women secretly left Makkah for Ethiopia, where they received a friendly reception by Ashamah Negus, who had obviously strong tendencies towards the doctrine of pure *Tawheed* (Oneness of Allah) preached by the Prophet ﷺ.

These emigrants included a daughter of the Prophet ﷺ, Ruqayyah رضي الله عنها, who was accompanied by her husband 'Uthmaan ibn 'Affaan. With respect to these few emigrants, Allah's Messenger ﷺ said, 'They are the first people to emigrate in the cause of Allah, after Ibraaheem عليه السلام and Lut عليه السلام.'

The first migration, or *hijrah*, made a profound impression on the minds of the idol-worshipping Quraysh, for they realized that the Muslims were prepared to sacrifice everything, even

home and country, for the sake of their faith. Soon afterwards, the emigrants learnt of mass conversion of the people of Makkah to Islam, and some of them made their way back home to Makkah. But this turned out to be only a rumour.

The Prophet ﷺ ordered his followers again to migrate to Ethiopia. In this second migration, eighty-three men and eighteen women participated, for the Muslim community had obviously grown after ʿUmar's acceptance of Islam. Soon afterwards, the Quraysh sent a deputation to Ethiopia, hoping that the emigrants be forced to return to Makkah. But the Negus was by this time fully convinced of the divine origin of the Prophet's teachings, and he firmly refused to surrender the emigrants.

It is important to note that the migration to Ethiopia was not a single event, for it took place in two successive stages. And this was the first migration of Islam.

3.25. Why Abyssinia?

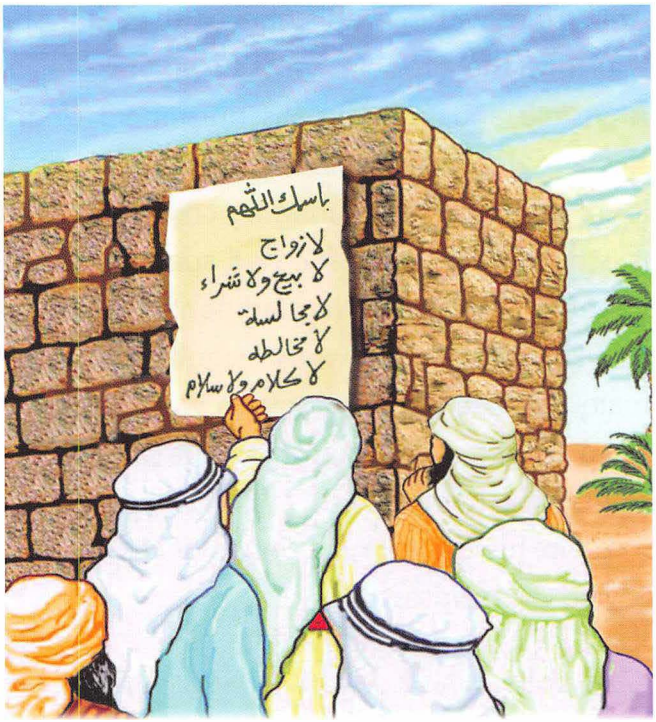
There are a number of reasons why the Prophet ﷺ chose Abyssinia over other lands. Firstly, the Negus, the king of Ethiopia, was a just king, a fact that the Prophet ﷺ himself pointed out when he said that in the Abyssinian king's country no one was wronged. This proved to be true, for the Negus protected the Muslims and refused to hand them over to the Quraysh. Secondly, Abyssinia at that time was a land of prosperity. It was a trade centre to which the Quraysh travelled. Thirdly, and perhaps most importantly, the Quraysh had no authority whatsoever in Abyssinia. The Prophet's Companions could not migrate to any other place within the Arabian Peninsula, since for the most part, and on most occasions, the Arab tribes within Arabia obeyed the Quraysh. Fourthly, the Prophet ﷺ knew about life in Abyssinia and loved it. His nursemaid Umm Ayman, who was Abyssinian herself, spent a lot of time with him during his childhood, and it is not unlikely that she had spoken to him about her homeland, its traditions and rulers. Finally, and perhaps most significantly, the main purpose of the migration was to spread Islam outside of Makkah, and not simply flee from persecution.

As In his book *In the Shade of the Qur'an*, Sayyid Qutb writes,

> The Messenger of Allah ﷺ was searching for a stronghold outside of Makkah, a stronghold that could protect the beliefs of Islam and guarantee the freedom to openly practise Islam. In my estimation, this was the foremost reason that prompted the migration. The view that the Prophet's Companions migrated only to save themselves is not supported by strong evidence. Had they migrated only to save themselves from torture and temptation to leave the fold of Islam, those Muslims who were the weakest in status, strength and protection would have migrated as well. But the fact is that slaves and weak Muslims, who bore the major brunt of persecution and torture, did not migrate. Only men who had strong tribal ties – ties that protected them from torture and temptation – migrated to Abyssinia (Ethiopia). In fact, the majority of those who migrated were members of the Quraysh.[4]

The fact that the Negus and other Abyssinian people embraced Islam supports the view that spreading Islam in Ethiopia was one of the reasons behind migration to that land. This is not the place to elaborate on this point here, but it is recommended to read Ali Mohammad as-Sallaabee's *The Noble Life of the Prophet* ﷺ.

4- Quoted by Ali Mohammad as-Sallaabee, *The Noble Life of the Prophet* ﷺ, Darussalam, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, 2005, Vol. pp. 487-488.



2.26. The Boycott

The failure of the Makkan delegation to obtain the expulsion of Muslims from Ethiopia provoked hostile reaction in Makkah where the persecution of Muslims was further intensified. When the Quraysh saw that the Prophet's Companions sought refuge in a country where they had found security and stability, that the Negus had undertaken to protect them, that the fearsome ʿUmar ibn al-Khattaab ﷺ had accepted Islam and that Islam continued to spread among the tribes of Arabia, the Quraysh decided on a total boycott of the Prophet ﷺ and his family.

They wrote a document in which they made it binding upon themselves that they would not marry with them, nor give their daughters in marriage to them; neither would they sell them anything, nor buy anything from them; nor would allow any kind of provision to reach them, not to show mercy to them; not to mix with them; not to sit with them; not to speak to them; not to enter their houses until they handed Allah's Messenger ﷺ over to them. They vowed to observe the terms of the document and vowed to observe its terms. They then hung the document inside the Kaʿbah, in order to impress it even more upon themselves.

The boycott was fully enforced against the Prophet ﷺ, his followers, and their protectors, Muslims and idolaters alike. The boycott took place in the beginning of the seventh year of the Prophet's mission. The isolation and boycott lasted for about three years.

The narrow pass, Shiʿb of Abu Taalib, to which they had been confined, was a rugged little valley enclosed by hills on all sides and could be entered from Makkah by a narrow way through the mountains. In this dry valley, Allah's Messenger ﷺ, his followers and the clans of Banu Haashim and Banu al-Muttalib were obliged to retire with limited supplies of food and necessities. Soon the supplies of food and basic necessities began to run short. The Quraysh prevented them from going to the market-place. Whenever any merchandise arrived in Makkah from abroad, the Quraysh would purchase all of it, regardless of whether they needed it or not. Their sole intent was to inflict as much harm as possible on the Banu Haashim clans and consequently lay their hands on the Prophet ﷺ.

The hardship and suffering became their lot. As days and months of their confinement dragged along, the wailing of hungry children and women in the valley could be heard in Makkah. The siege and embargo became too difficult to bear. They were forced, out of hunger, to eat the leaves of trees. Many idolaters were moved to pity and sympathy. Others were impressed by the courage, devotion and dedication of the Muslims to their cause. The Prophet ﷺ continued to go to the Kaʿbah and

to pray openly. He used every opportunity to preach to outsiders who visited Makkah for trade or on pilgrimage during the sacred months. In the third year of the boycott and the siege, many Quraysh leaders began to feel guilty about isolating their kinsmen to perish in the valley. Ultimately, the unjust boycott was lifted and the Muslims were allowed to return to their homes.

The boycott is a useful reminder of the hardships and sufferings which the early Muslims had to bear in the cause of their faith. It also shows that the boycott was a weapon to which enemies of Islam have always resorted in their futile effort to put an end to Islam.



3.27. The Year of Grief

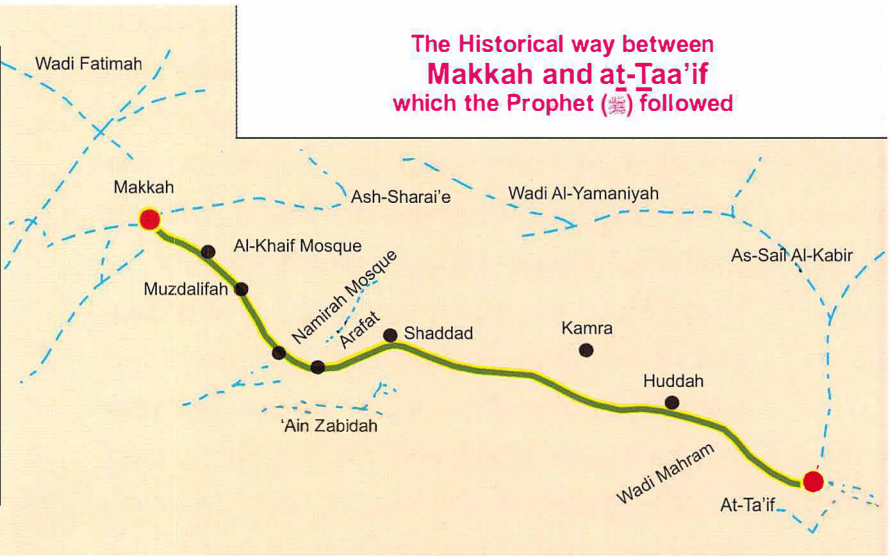
Hardly had the Messenger of Allah ﷺ settled in Makkah after the end of the boycott when two events took place that were particularly hard for him to bear. First, Abu Ṭaalib, his uncle and protector, passed away. It was the tenth year of the Prophet's mission. Abu Ṭaalib, however, never became a Muslim. He died as an idolater.

A few days after Abu Ṭaalib's death, Khadeejah ﵂, the Prophet's beloved wife who had always helped and consoled him in times of hardship and distress, also died. She was about sixty-five years old and he was nearly fifty. They had lived together in profound harmony, and she had been not only his wife, but also his intimate companion, his wise counsellor and the mother to his whole household, which included ʿAli and Zayd ibn Ḥaarithah. Her death left the Messenger of Allah ﷺ without that affectionate support which had for so long helped to sustain him in the face of trial and persecution. He was deeply grieved and was almost overwhelmed by sorrow. The year in which Abu Ṭaalib and Khadeejah ﵂ died became known as the Year of Grief (*ʿAam al-Ḥuzn*), because of the tremendous loss to the already affected Prophet ﷺ.

3.28. The Journey to aṭ-Ṭaa'if

To preach in Makkah now seemed hopeless, and to provoke the Quraysh was not the best wisdom. The Prophet ﷺ, therefore, decided to carry his message to the people of the nearby green and beautiful town of aṭ-Ṭā'if. In the month of *Shawwaal,* towards the end of May or the beginning of June 619 CE, in the tenth year of Prophethood, the Prophet ﷺ set out on foot towards aṭ-Ṭaa'if, about sixty to seventy miles from Makkah, accompanied by his trusted adopted son Zayd ibn Ḥaarithah, to invite people to Islam. Once there, he went straight to a leading family in the city. But their response to his call was very disappointing.

The tribal leaders ridiculed him and rejected his call. They instigated their slaves and street urchins to follow him and shout abuse at him. They kept pelting him with stones until his feet started bleeding. Zayd, who tried his best to shield him, received a painful wound in the head. The insolent mob continued to chase the Prophet ﷺ and his Companion two or three miles across the sandy plains until they were driven to the outskirts of the city, where the



Makkah. The Makkans had learnt of the Prophet's disappointment at at-Taa'if and were preparing a degrading reception for him, but Allah's help arrived. A good-hearted chief, al-Mut'im ibn 'Adiyy, took him under his protection and brought him to his home. Thus did Allah's Messenger ﷺ re-enter Makkah, guarded by a polytheist, scoffed at by his fellow citizens.

At-Taa'if episode was the hardest moment in the Prophet's life.

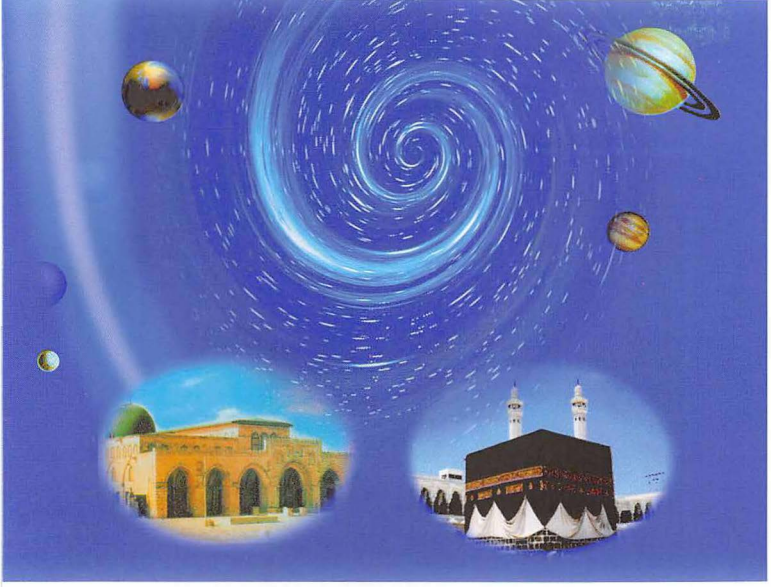
Prophet ﷺ and Zayd took shelter in a vineyard. When the vineyard's owners saw the Prophet ﷺ bleeding, they were obviously moved. They sent their Christian slave, 'Addaas with a cluster of fresh grapes placed on a platter.

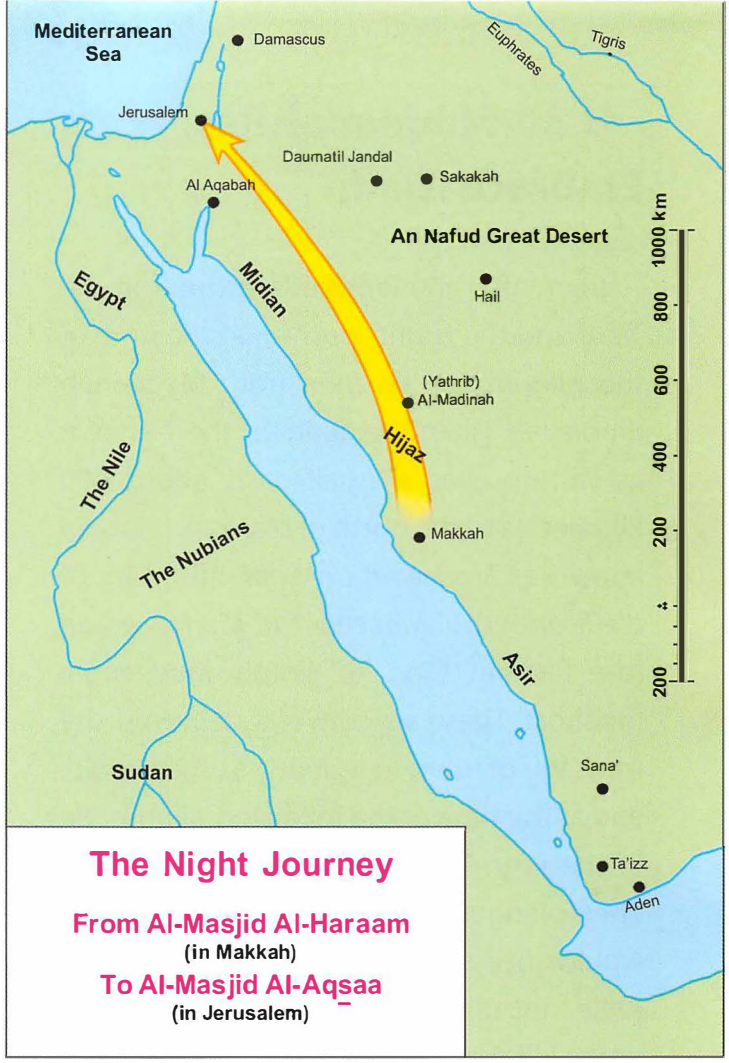
Before the Prophet ﷺ started eating he said, 'In the Name of Allah.' 'Addaas looked eagerly into his face, then he said, 'These are not the words that the people of this country normally say.' Allah's Messenger ﷺ said, 'Where are you from, and what is your religion?' 'I am a Christian from Nineveh,' 'Addaas replied. The Prophet ﷺ then said, 'That means from the city of the righteous man Yoonus the son of Mattaa.' Upon saying this, 'Addaas bent over him and kissed his head, his hands and feet. Later on, when the Prophet ﷺ felt somewhat refreshed, he set out towards Makkah.

Late that night he reached the valley of Nakhlah, halfway halt between at-Taa'if and Makkah. While he was standing in prayer there, a group of seven *jinn* who passed by listened spellbound to his recitation. As soon as he completed the recitation, they embraced Islam and returned to their community, urging them to favourably respond to the Prophet's call to Islam. Ultimately, the Prophet ﷺ returned to

Review

- What was the main reason for the Quraysh to reject Islam?
- How did the Quraysh aim at putting an end to the Prophet's Mission by:
  - **a.** torturing the reverts
  - **b.** approaching their leader Abu Taalib
- What do you know about the migration to Abyssinia? Why did the Prophet ﷺ choose this land alone?
- What were the terms of the boycott, and where did the Muslims live during it? Did the Quraysh manage to curb the prophetic mission?
- What is the Year of the Grief? Why was it called as such?
- Why did the Prophet ﷺ go to at-Taa'if? Was he successful in achieving his goals?





3.29. The Night Journey and the Ascension to Heaven (the *Israa'* and the *Mi'raaj*)

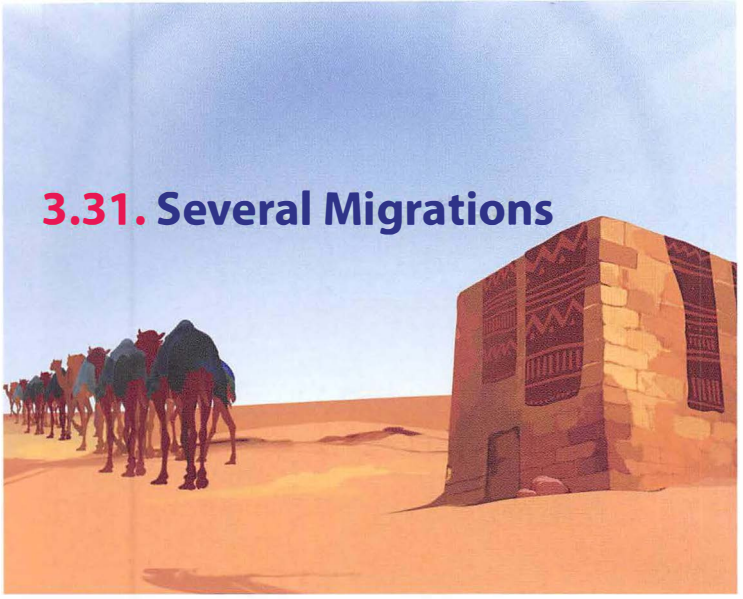
It is in this period that the Prophet's Night Journey to Jerusalem (*Israa'*) and his ascension from there to heaven (*Mi'raaj*) took place. One night the Prophet ﷺ was awakened from sleep and taken, in the company of Angel Jibreel عليه السلام, first to Jerusalem. There he was met by all the prophets, who gathered together behind him as he prayed in the centre of the site of the Sanctuary, the spot where the Dome of the Rock stands today. From the rock, led by Angel Jibreel عليه السلام, he ascended through the seven heavens and beyond. Thus he saw what Allah made him see, the heavenly worlds which no human eye can see. During the journey, the five daily prayers were made obligatory for his followers. This event is referred to in Arabic as *al-Mi'raaj* (ascension into heaven) in the *hadeeth* and the Prophet's biography (*seerah*). It is also briefly referred to in the Qur'an (*Soorat al-Israa'*, 17:1 and *Soorat an-Najm*, 53: 13-18). Both the Night Journey (*Israa'*) and the Ascension (*Mi'raaj*) were bodily occurrences.

When Muhammad ﷺ spoke to the people he met in the mosque of his journey to Jerusalem, his enemies were immediately victorious. They now felt that they had a sure cause for mockery. Every child of the Quraysh knew that it would normally take a rider about a month to go from Makkah to Syria and a month to return. Muhammad ﷺ, they mistakenly thought, claimed to have gone there in one single night. A group of men went to Abu Bakr and asked him, 'What do you think of your friend now? He has told us that he went to Jerusalem last night and prayed there and then returned to Makkah.' Abu Bakr confidently replied, 'If he says so, then it is true. There is nothing surprinsing about that. In fact, he tells me about the revelations that he receives during any hour of the day or night, and I know him to be speaking the truth.' It was for this reason that the Prophet ﷺ gave him the nickname *as-Siddeeq*, which means 'the truthful'.

3.30. Madeenah Residents Embrace Islam

Soon after the Prophet's return from aṯ-Ṯaa'if and the Night Journey, at the time of the pilgrimage, six men from Madeenah embraced Islam. Madeenah, then known as Yathrib, was a small oasis about 400 kilometres to the north of Makkah. It is now known as *Madeenat-un-Nabiy* (the City of the Prophet), *al-Madeenah al-Munawwarah* (the Radiant City), or simply Madeenah, for short. These six converts delivered the message of Islam to as many as they could, and at the time of the following pilgrimage in the year 621 CE, twelve persons came. They pledged to the Prophet ﷺ that they would not associate anyone in worship with Allah, not to steal, not to commit adultery, not to kill their children, not to utter slander and not to disobey him. This time the Prophet ﷺ sent Muṣ'ab ibn 'Umayr with them to teach them the Qur'an and Islam and to spread the message of Islam.

More and more people in Madeenah – men, women and tribal chiefs – accepted Islam over the course of a year. At the time of the following pilgrimage seventy-three men and two women came. They met the Prophet ﷺ at al-'Aqabah, a place in the valley of Mina, not far from Makkah. They pledged to protect the Prophet ﷺ as they would protect their own women and children. They invited him and all Muslims in Makkah to Madeenah. When asked what would be theirs if they fulfilled their pledge, the Prophet ﷺ replied, 'Paradise'. Thus the beginning was made, and the foundations of Islamic society and civilization were set.



3.31. Several Migrations

Makkah was no longer a safe place for Muslims to live in. Therefore, Allah's Messenger ﷺ encouraged his followers to migrate to Madeenah. Quietly they started to move out. The Muslims of Quraysh began to migrate in considerable numbers. In a few months, more than a hundred families had left their homes and migrated to Madeenah. It was not long before most of his Companions had migrated with the exception of Abu Bakr and 'Ali.

The Quraysh did all that they possibly could to stop the migrations. They were aware of the power of the Prophet's message. They sensed the danger that Muslims' presence in Madeenah posed to their northern trade caravan routes. They saw no other way to stop all this but to kill the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. The Quraysh notables consulted one another on what course of action to take regarding Muḥammad ﷺ.

They finally agreed that each clan would provide one strong and well connected young man, give them a sword each, and together they would attack the Prophet ﷺ, each striking a blow the moment he would leave his house. That way, they thought, the responsibility for his murder would be divided among the tribes, and his blood would thus be on all the clans' hands. Consequently, the Prophet's clan would have to accept blood money instead of revenge. The Quraysh held this council on Thursday morning, *Ṣafar* 26, in the fourteenth year of the Prophet's mission (September 12, 622 CE).

3.32. The Long-awaited *Hijrah* Takes Place

However, Allah had already informed the Prophet ﷺ, through Angel Jibreel عليه السلام of Quraysh's wicked plot. The long-awaited hour of undertaking the *hijrah* had come. Having learned of the plot and guided to leave Makkah for Madeenah, Allah's Messenger ﷺ went at midday to Abu Bakr's house to finalize the emigration. Abu Bakr was overjoyed at having been chosen for the honour and blessing of being the Prophet's companion on his blessed and epoch-making journey.

On that fateful night, as darkness fell, the youths chosen by the Quraysh leaders to murder the Prophet ﷺ surrounded his house. They had decided to pounce on him as soon as he came out of his house for the dawn prayer. Meanwhile, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ handed over all the money and belongings left by the Makkans with him for safekeeping to ʿAli رضي الله عنه. The Prophet ﷺ asked him to stay behind in Makkah so that he would give all goods deposited in their house for safekeeping back to their owners. The Prophet ﷺ had always been known to be trustworthy (*al-Ameen*), and there were so many Quraysh polytheists who would trust him with their property as they would trust no one else.

The Prophet ﷺ also informed ʿAli ﷺ of what Jibreel عليه السلام had told him about the plot Quraysh had hatched against him. The Prophet ﷺ took up a green mantle in which he used to sleep and gave it to ʿAli, saying, 'Sleep on my bed in it, and no harm will come to you from them.' ʿAli ibn Abee Ṯaalib lay down on the Prophet's bed and covered himself with the latter's cloak in order to deceive the Quraysh who had become aware of his intention to emigrate and were bent on killing him.

Then the Prophet ﷺ began to recite *Surat Yaa Seen*. When he came to the words "And We have put a barrier before them and a barrier behind them; and We have veiled them so that they cannot see (36:9)", he came out of his house, and Allah took away the conspirators' sight so that they could not see him, and so he passed through their midst and went on his way. When it was dawn, ʿAli rose and went to the door of the house, still wrapped in the Prophet's green cloak. When the plotters saw who it was, they realized that they had been somehow outwitted.



3.33. The *Hijrah*

Allah's Messenger ﷺ thus left his house during the night on *Ṣafar* 27, in the fourteenth year of his mission, corresponding to the 12 or 13 September, 622 CE. He returned to Abu Bakr, and losing no time they went out. As they had planned, they made for a cave at Mount Thawr, a little to the south on the way

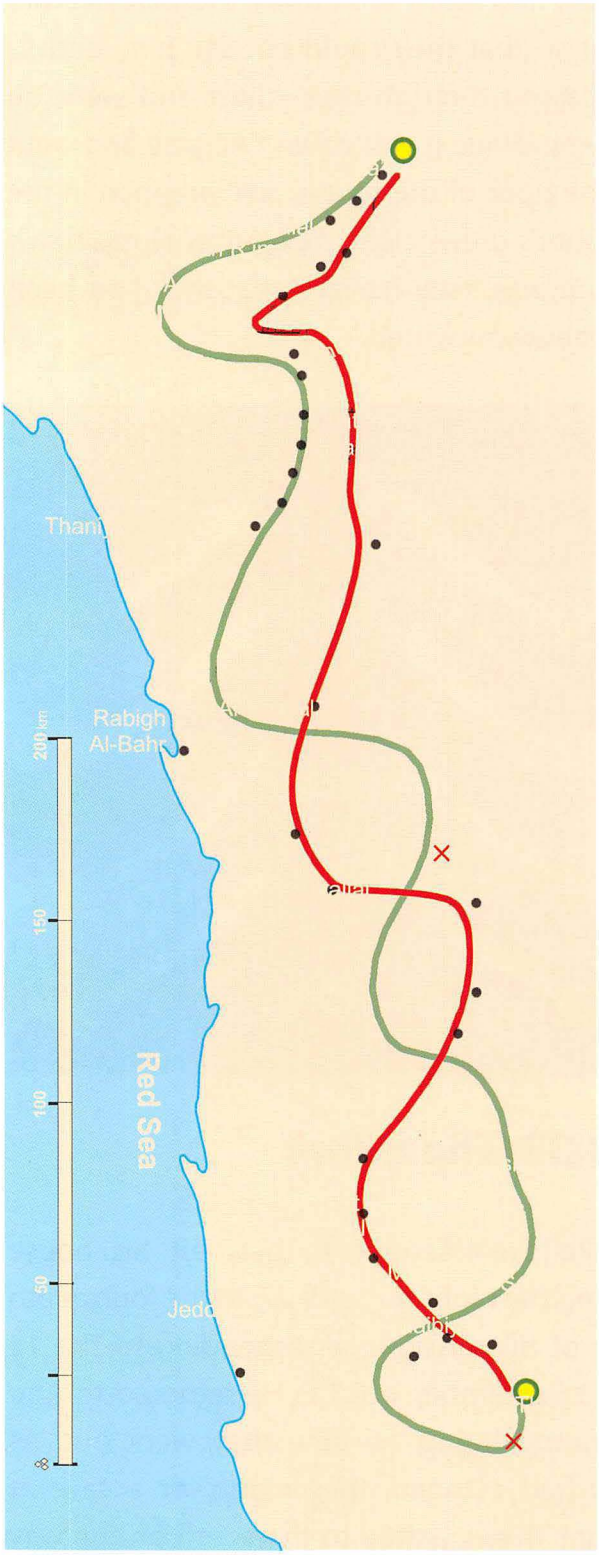
The Hijrah

The route taken by the Messenger (ﷺ) from Makkah to Al-Madinah

He left the Cave of Thawr on Monday 1 Rabeeʿ al-Awwal and entered Al-Madeenah on Friday 12 Rabeeʿ al-Awwal (16 July 622 CE)

The route followed by the Prophet (ﷺ)

The caravan route at that time



to Yemen. They knew that as soon as the Prophet's absence was discovered search bands would be sent out to cover all the northern outskirts of the city of Makkah. When they had gone a little way beyond the precincts of Makkah, the Prophet ﷺ stopped his camel. He looked back and said, 'Of all Allah's earth, you are the dearest place to me and the dearest to Allah. Had my people not driven me out of you, I would not have left you.'

When the Quraysh realized that the Prophet ﷺ had evaded them, they became furious. They offered a reward of a hundred she-camels to anyone who could find him and bring him back to Makkah. Horsemen were already following each and every route from Makkah to Madeenah. Both the Prophet ﷺ and Abu Bakr ؓ stayed in the Cave of Mount Thawr for three days: Friday, Saturday and Sunday. The Quraysh continued their search to get hold of them. Both al-Bukhaaree and Muslim mention that the Quraysh pursuers actually came to the cave. Abu Bakr ؓ worried so much about the safety of the Prophet ﷺ that he shook with fear, but the Prophet ﷺ reassured him, 'What do you think of two men whose third is Allah Himself, Abu Bakr?' The Qur'an itself refers to this exchange between the Prophet ﷺ and Abu Bakr ؓ. When the pursuers were standing above the cave, Abu Bakr ؓ said, 'If one of them were to look beneath his feet, he would see us, Prophet of Allah.' The Prophet ﷺ confidently answered, 'Do not grieve, for Allah is with us.' (9:40)

An expert and trustworthy man by the name of ʿAbdullaah ibn Urayqit who had not yet embraced Islam had been hired by Abu Bakr as a guide. He reached the cave after three nights according to the plan. He brought with him Abu Bakr's two camels. The camels were very well looked after by Abu Bakr. Allah's Messenger ﷺ insisted on paying the cost of his camel, thus indicating the importance and desirability of each Muslim paying, as far as possible, the expenses of his own migration. It was

the Prophet's *hijrah*, his cutting off of all ties of home and homeland for the sake of Allah. The act of emigration, therefore, must entirely be his own; not shared by anyone else – in any respect. The mount on which the act was accomplished must therefore be his own. The camels name was al-Qaṣwaa', and she remained his favourite camel.

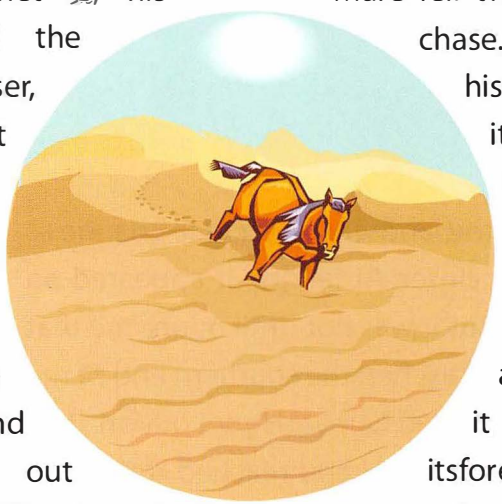
After three days in the cave, when Allah's Messenger ﷺ and Abu Bakr were ready to be on the road again, Abu Bakr's daughter Asmaa' came along with a large bag of provisions for the journey. She wanted to fasten it to one of the camels, but she could not find a string to tie it with. As she had forgotten to bring a rope, she took off her waistband and tore it into two lengths, using one to tie the bag securely to her father's saddle, and the other to tie their water skin. For this reason, this noble and brave young woman who was later married to the celebrated Companion of the Prophet ﷺ, az-Zubayr ibn al-ʿAwwaam ﷺ, earned the title '*Dhaat an-Niṭaaqayn*' (the one with the two waistbands). A *niṭaaq* was a waistband of cloth worn by women in the olden days.

The Prophet ﷺ, Abu Bakr, and ʿAamir ibn Fuhayrah, Abu Bakr's freedman departed, and their guide ʿAbdullaah ibn Urayqit led them through the seldom used routes along the coastal way. This incident took place on 1 *Rabeeʿ al-Awwal*, 1 AH (September 16, 622 CE).

3.34. The Suraqah Incident

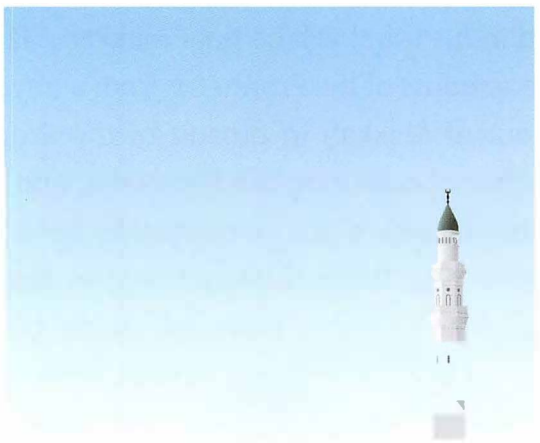
The award of one hundred camels, for each of them, which the Quraysh had announced to anyone who would capture the Prophet ﷺ and Abu Bakr, was so tempting that young men were in pursuit on every possible trial. Allah's Messenger ﷺ and Abu Bakr thus began their long and unsafe journey to Yathrib (the old name of Madeenah). They avoided the usual route as much as possible. Their expert guide was remarkably useful in this regard. They had to ride fast for almost all the night and most of the day. The Quraysh were still searching for them.

Suraaqah ibn Maalik al-Mudlijee was a Bedouin of the Kinaanah tribe of Banu Mudlij. He was a warrior and poet who mostly lived in his tribal village near Makkah. Having learnt of the whereabouts of the Prophet ﷺ from a traveller, Suraaqah stole out of Makkah in pursuit of the Prophet ﷺ with the intention of capturing the Prophet ﷺ and Abu Bakr himself so that he would not be obliged to divide the reward with anyone else. When Suraaqah was in sight of the Prophet ﷺ, his mare fell twice, but he continued the chase. As he drew still closer, his mare fell so badly that its forelegs sank up to the knees into the ground, and he was thrown off. He then urged the animal by shouts, and it pulled up, dragging out itsforelegs with difficulty. When it could stand again, there arose from the holes which its forelegs had made dust into the sky, like smoke. Suraaqah was very frightened. It became clear to him that the Prophet ﷺ and his party were protected from him by divine force.



He called out loudly and named himself, vowing that he intended no harm. Suraaqah remounted his mare and rode towards them. When he saw how he had been withheld from harming them, it came to his mind that the Prophet's

cause would definitely triumph. He said to the Prophet ﷺ that the Quraysh leaders had put a price on his head and informed him of their plans regarding him. He offered them provisions and utensils, but they accepted nothing from him. The Prophet ﷺ simply requested him to keep their whereabouts secret. Suraaqah asked him to write a warrant of security, and the Prophet ﷺ ordered ʿAamir ibn Fuhayrah to do so. He wrote it on a piece of tanned leather. Then the Prophet ﷺ went his way. Suraaqah embraced Islam after the Conquest of Makkah and died in 24 AH.



Gradually the landscape began to change as Yathrib drew closer. At length, it appeared on the horizon. But it was not until noontime that the Prophet ﷺ reached the southern end of the city, a suburb called Qubaa'. He set out on 1st of *Rabeeʿ al-Awwal*, 1 AH and reached Yathrib on 12th of the same month (September 24, 622 CE.)

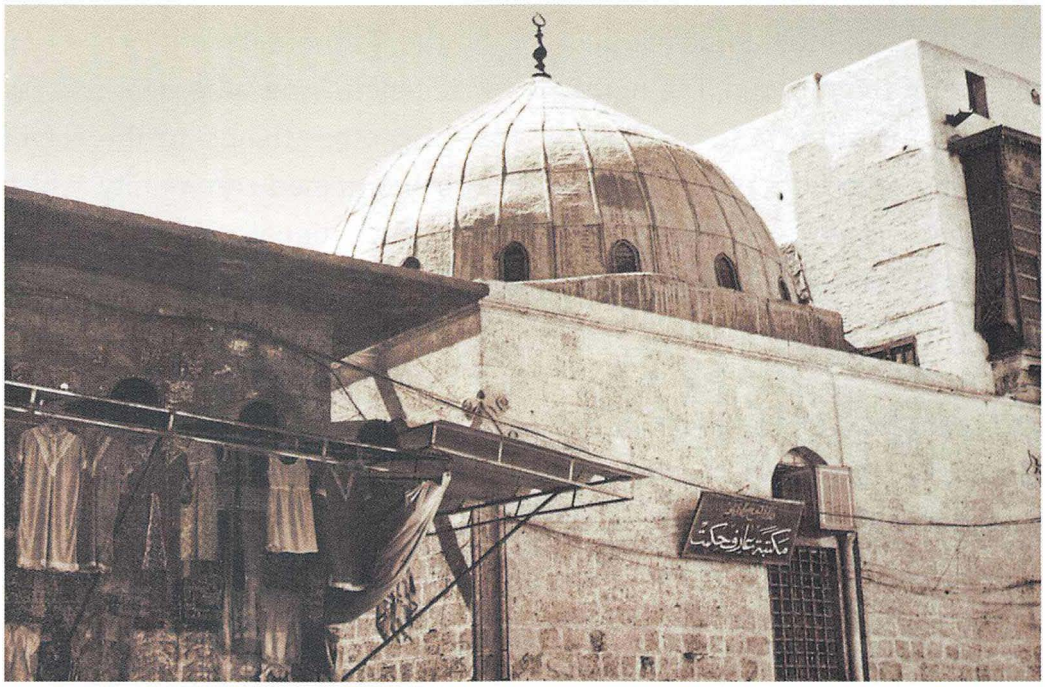
Several days previously news from Makkah of the Prophet's absence and the reward for him had reached the oasis. The people of Qubaa' were expecting him daily. The time of his arrival was now overdue. Every morning, after the dawn prayer, people would go out to look for him. Crowds of chieftains, men, women and children, had been gathering on the outskirts of the city ever since news of his setting out from Makkah had reached them. They would go out beyond the fields and palm groves and would stop and wait until the sun became intense, then they would return to their homes.

They had gone out one morning but returned by the time the Prophet ﷺ and his fellow travellers had begun their descent down the rocky slope. A Jew who happened to be on the roof of his house at that time caught sight of them. Realizing who they were, he called out at the top of his voice that Muhammad ﷺ and his companions had appeared. The call was immediately taken up. Men, women and children hurried from their houses. But they had not far to go. Allah's Messenger ﷺ and his fellow travelling companions had by now reached the outlying palm grove. It was the noon of great delight on all sides. The Prophet ﷺ stopped in the suburb of Qubaa', two miles south of Yathrib. He spent four days there and built Qubaa' Mosque which exists to this day. The Qur'an highly commends that Mosque because it was built on the foundation of piety from the first day. (9:108)

On Friday morning, he set off again. At noon, he stopped among the Banu Saalim ibn ʿAwf, where he offered the *Jumuʿah* prayer. This was the first Friday prayer that he offered in the city that from now on was to be his home. After the prayer, he mounted al-Qaswaa', and the others also mounted their camels and set off for the city. Upon his arrival Yathrib was renamed *Madeenat-un-Nabiy* (The City of the Prophet ﷺ) – Madeenah, for short.

Review

- What is meant by the words *Israa'* and *Mi'raaj*? What special incidents did the Prophet ﷺ experience during the Night Journey?
- How did Madeenah become an ideal place for the Muslims' emigration?
- Give two reasons why the Prophet ﷺ asked 'Ali ﷺ to stay behind.
- Why and for how long did the Prophet ﷺ stay in the cave at Mount Thawr?
- Who were 'Abdullaah and Asmaa'? What roles did they play in the Prophet's *hijrah*?
- How did Suraaqah realize that it was divine intervention that prevented him from reaching the Prophet ﷺ?
- Write a brief paragraph on the Prophet's stopover at Qubaa'.



3.35. The House of Abu Ayyoob al-Ansaaree

In Madeenah, The Prophet ﷺ was greeted warmly by its people. They all asked him to stay with them. They grabbed the halter of his she-camel he was riding but he said, 'Let her go her own way, for she is under the command of Allah.' This happened several times. Many eager invitations were offered. Eventually, the Prophet's she-camel halted in the middle of a large and open plot of land and knelt down. The nearest house to where she knelt down was that of Abu Ayyoob al-Ansaaree, who immediately stepped forward and invited Allah's Messenger ﷺ, pointing to his two-storey house, only a few metres away. The Prophet ﷺ accepted the invitation and got off his she-camel.

Abu Ayyoob lost no time in moving their luggage into his house. In this way, the problem

of the Prophet's stay in Madeenah was settled without creating any feelings of favour or disfavour among the various clans of Madeenah, to whom playing host to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ was a high honour. The Prophet ﷺ then asked about who owned the large and open plot of land, and he was informed that it belonged to orphan boys. So he asked them if they would sell him the courtyard and told him to name their price. They said, 'No, we give it to you, Messenger of Allah.' The Prophet ﷺ would not, however, take it as a gift. He insisted on paying the price and the deal was concluded. Within a few days, the building of the Mosque (*Masjid an-Nabawee*) was well underway.

The Prophet ﷺ himself took an active part in the construction of the mosque. The house of Abu Ayyoob al-Ansaaree was, naturally, the centre of all the attention and emotions which the Prophet's presence attracted, and it remained so for the full seven months of his stay.

Abu Ayyoob ﷺ and his wife were greatly delighted with their guests. Only two incidents marred the happiness of the hosts. The first was when an earthen pot of water broke and a great deal of water spilt onto the floor. Afraid that it might drip down to the floor below, where Allah's Messenger ﷺ was staying, Abu Ayyoob used the whole of his bed sheet in an attempt to soak up the water. Then he went down to the Prophet ﷺ and requested yet again that he move to the upper floor. Seeing his anxiety, the Prophet ﷺ agreed.

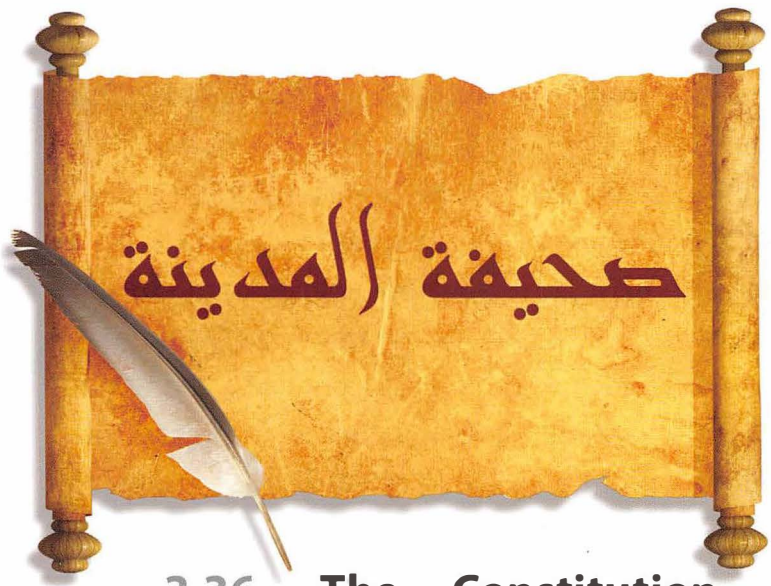
The second incident took place when the Prophet ﷺ once returned the food Abu Ayyoob had prepared for him untouched. Deeply upset, Abu Ayyoob rushed upset and asked the Prophet ﷺ, 'Messenger of Allah, did you not like the food tonight?' The Prophet ﷺ replied, 'No, Abu Ayyoob! But I found in it a strong smell of garlic and onions. You may eat it, if you wish. I speak to one, to whom you do not speak,' referring to Angel Jibreel. The *hijrah* of the Prophet ﷺ and his companions heralded an entirely new era in the history not only of Islam but also that of the world. Thanks to the support offered by the *Ansaar* (literally Helpers – the Madinan Muslims), the Prophet ﷺ was able to realize the aim for which he had up till then been striving: the establishment of an Islamic society, the first of its kind in the world.

With the *hijrah*, suddenly it became clear that Islam aimed at much more than a mere moral reorientation of man. With the migration of the Prophet ﷺ and his Companions to Madeenah, it became clear that Islam aspired, among other things, to the establishment of a self-contained community, which cut across the conventional divisions of tribe and race. The fire of persecution, endured for more than a decade, had purified and steeled the minds of the Muslims. It had helped them realize that tribal kinship ties were of no importance as compared with higher loyalty towards an idea. The new conception of a brotherhood of men, united not by bonds of blood-relationship but by the awareness of common outlook on life and common objectives, found its expression in the principle of the *Ummah*.

Ummah – an organization open to everyone – of whatever race or colour one may be! The emigration of the Prophet ﷺ and his Companions to Madeenah became the living symbol of this development. Years later, 'Umar ibn al-Khattaab, the second of the four Rightly-guided Caliphs, would recognize the significance of the *hijrah* and declare 622 to be the first year of the new Islamic era. The first thing Allah's Messenger ﷺ did after settling

down in Madeenah was to tie the Emigrants (*al-Muhaajiroon*) and their hosts called the Helpers (*al-Anṣaar*) into one brotherhood.

Still today, this brotherhood remains the hallmark of the believers. One person from the Emigrants was made the brother of one from amongst the Helpers. The Helpers offered to share equally all that they possessed with the Emigrants. Thus the Muslims were forged into a close-knit community of faith and brotherhood. At the same time, steps were taken and the needed institutions built to integrate the entire social life around the centre and heart of the worship of One God – Allah. For this purpose, five daily prayers in congregation were established.



3.36. The Constitution of Madeenah: *Saheefat al-Madeenah*

Next, the Prophet ﷺ drew up a document which detailed the relations primarily between the *Muhaajiroon* (the Emigrants) and the *Ansaar* and the Jews of Madeenah. This document is known in Arabic as *Saheefat al-Madeenah* (literally 'The Document of Madeenah, or as is more commonly translated into English as 'The Constitution of Madeenah). The document has been preserved in an early biography of the Prophet ﷺ composed by Ibn Ishaaq (d. 767), which is available to us now in the edition prepared by Ibn Hishaam (d. 833). Dr. Zakaria Bashier discusses this in great detail in his brilliant work entitled *Sunshine at Madeenah* published by the Islamic Foundation, UK. An English version of the *Saheefah* appears in this book on pages 104-8.

The Prophet ﷺ guaranteed for the Jews their religion and their property and conferred on them specific rights and duties. The historic significance of this constitution is considerable, for it gives us a very clear idea about the nature of society and of interfaith relations thought up in this early period.

3.37. The Command of Prayer and *Adhaan*

Although the Muslim five daily prayers were prescribed in Makkah, they were not fully put into action in their congregational form until after the *hijrah*. The command of these obligatory prayers was received by the Prophet ﷺ from Allah during the *Mi'raaj*, or ascension. Yet such was the disturbed state of life of Muslims in Makkah that they were not able to observe them fully. Now that Muslims were safe and secure in Madeenah, the duty of establishing all the congregational prayers as commanded by Allah became an absolute priority. There was, however, a problem concerning the best method of calling the Muslims to congregational prayers.

The Prophet ﷺ disliked the way the Jews and Christians used horns and bells to announce their calls to prayer. Then Allah honoured the believers with the *adhaan* (call to prayer). One of the Prophet's Companions saw the method in a dream. His name was ʿAbdullaah ibn Zayd. The Prophet ﷺ accepted ʿAbdullaah's dream as authentic. Thereafter, the *adhaan*, as it is known today, was called out loudly by Bilaal ibn Rabaah as seen in the dream by ʿAbdullaah ibn Zayd. Bilaal was chosen because of the wonderful qualities of his voice.

3.38. The Hypocrites: *Munaafiqoon* (sing. *Munaafiq*)

Islam began to spread rapidly throughout Madeenah, and some of the learned rabbis also embraced it. These rabbis included ʿAbdullaah ibn Salaam whose acceptance of Islam annoyed other Jews. They envied Islam and were, at the same time, frightened of it. A group of hypocrites, therefore, emerged. Their leader was ʿAbdullaah ibn Ubayy ibn Salool, whose control and authority were not questioned before the advent of Islam. But his people were now rapidly embracing Islam. He and others like him who were greedy for power and authority became open enemies of Islam, while others became hypocrites. The hypocrites represented the 'internal' unseen enemy.



3.39. The Change of the *Qiblah*: The Direction of Prayer

Until the time he was in Makkah, the Prophet ﷺ and his Companions used to offer the prayer in a manner that he would be facing both the Kaʿbah and Jerusalem. The Prophet ﷺ prayed, as a rule, before the southern wall of the Kaʿbah, towards the north, so as to face the Kaʿbah and Jerusalem. This was, however, not prompted by any specific revelation. After his migration to Madeenah, this was no longer possible on account of a change in directions to face the Kaʿbah as before in prayer. This separation from the Kaʿbah was naturally very painful for him, and he anxiously waited for guidance in this regard.

For some eighteen months, after his arrival at Madeenah, the Prophet ﷺ and the Muslims turned their face in prayer towards Jerusalem (*Bayt-ul-Maqdis*), just as the Jews used to do. About eighteen months after his arrival at Madeenah, he received a revelation (*Surat al-Baqarah*, 2:142-150) which definitely established the Kaʿbah as the *qiblah* of the followers of the Qur'an. This abandonment of Jerusalem obviously displeased the Jews of Madeenah.

The wisdom of maintaining Jerusalem as the *qiblah* in this interim period and then changing it to the Kaʿbah as described by the Qur'an was to test the believers in

order to distinguish the true among them from the false. This was necessary to sort the raw and weaker elements that had joined the Muslims' ranks from among the People of the Book. It was expected that after going through this test, they would wholeheartedly embrace Islam or would clearly be separated from sincere Muslims. The change in *qiblah* was indeed a hard test. With the announcement of the *qiblah*, the Prophet ﷺ and the Muslims rejoiced greatly and felt relieved and honoured. But the Jews were annoyed with the Prophet ﷺ and the Muslims.

This historic episode signalled the formation of a Muslim community, charged with the mission of Allah's guidance and following the most ancient message of Prophet Ibraaheem عليه السلام, turning towards the most ancient House of Allah, built by him. The Jews questioned the causes and grounds of the sudden change and expressed their disapproval of it.

Review

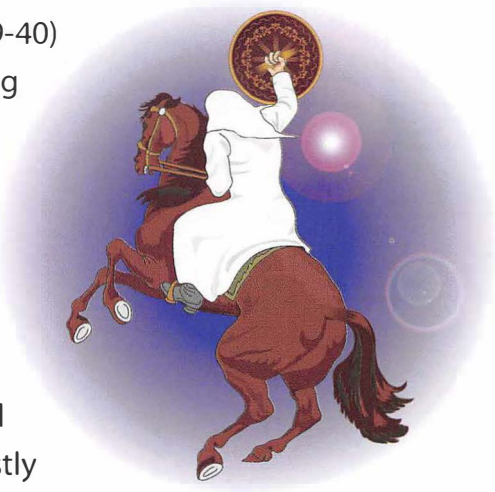
- How was the issue of the Prophet's stay in Madeenah solved with divine wisdom?
- How did the Prophet's *hijrah* to Madeenah sow the seeds of Islamic brotherhood and Muslim unity? Can we still achieve this unity, and how?
- Why was the Constitution of Madeenah drawn up?
- What role did *salaat* play in the life of the Muslims in Madeenah?
- Who were the *munaafiqoon*?
- Why was the change in *qiblah* an acid test to distinguish between the Muslims and non-Muslims and non-Muslims/ hypocrites?

3.40. War and Peace

As has already been mentioned, after the Prophet ﷺ arrived in Madeenah, he formed an alliance with the Jews. Next, he approached all the nearby tribes and tried to persuade them to make an alliance or at least enter into a no-war pact. Many tribes did. Thus the small group forced to leave Makkah assumed strategic importance. But the Makkans who had earlier plotted to kill the Prophet ﷺ were now determined to wipe out this budding community of Islam.

In the roughly thirteen years of the Prophet's Makkan phase, resistance to the Makkan establishment and defence against Makkan persecution was conducted through peaceful means: through the peaceful spread of the message of Islam, freeing of slaves and other acts of charity, and migration at first to Ethiopia for some and then to Madeenah. But the situation changed dramatically after migration to Madeenah.

The Prophet ﷺ had already received a revelation (*Soorat al-Hajj*, 22:39-40) permitting the Muslims to resort to armed combat, for the Muslims had been wronged and unjustly persecuted by the Quraysh for over thirteen years. At the end of the period, they were forced to migrate and leave their homes, families, wealth, lands and

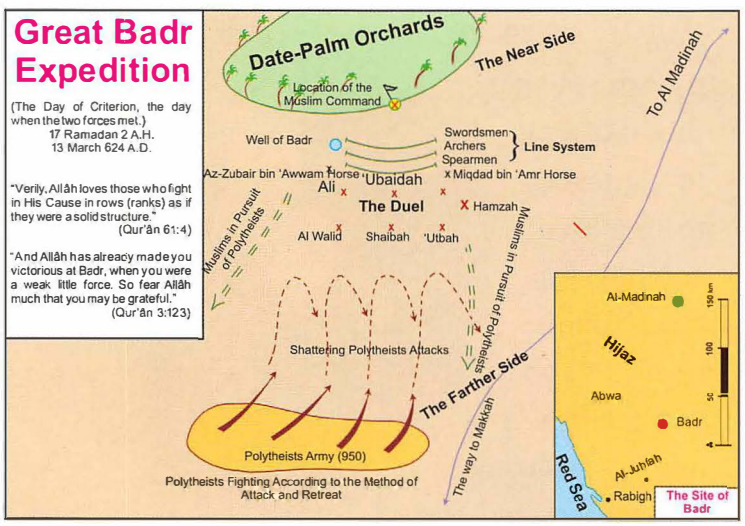


property and their means of livelihood. It is very important to note that the Quraysh pagans persecuted the Muslims merely because they said that 'Allah Alone is our Lord'. The verse quoted above calls the effort to fight against religious oppression.

3.41. Campaigns and Expeditions

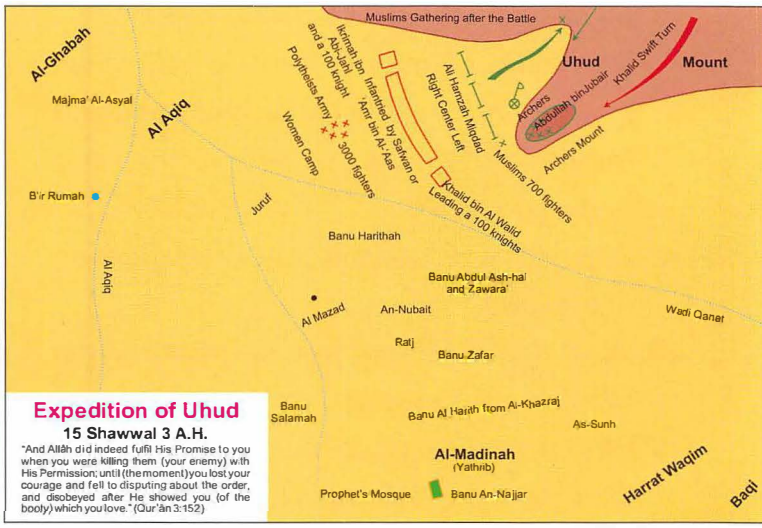
The Prophet ﷺ now began sending out military expeditions against his enemies. Several such expeditions were sent before the Battle of Badr, which took place on 17th *Ramaḍaan*, 2 AH (634 CE).

A close look at the Prophet's expeditions before Badr shows that the real object was not to obtain booty. These expeditions were merely meant to compel the Makkan Quraysh to give open battle. The Prophet ﷺ understood that the position of the Muslim community at Madeenah could never become secure unless the Quraysh were made to realize, by means of a crushing defeat, that an entirely new period had begun in the history of their country.



At the beginning of *Ramaḍaan* 2 AH, the Prophet ﷺ set out from Madeenah at the head of some 313 Companions, for the first time assisted by warriors from the *Anṣaar*, seemingly with the intention of attacking the great Makkan caravan led by Abu Sufyaan, now on its way home from Syria. A heavily armed Makkan force marched towards Madeenah, on the pretext of protecting their trade caravan. The Prophet ﷺ, despite his community's small number and lack of arms, decided to face their threat boldly. On 17th *Ramaḍaan*, at Badr, the two forces met and fought a battle in which 313 believers defeated the 1000-strong well-equipped Makkan army.

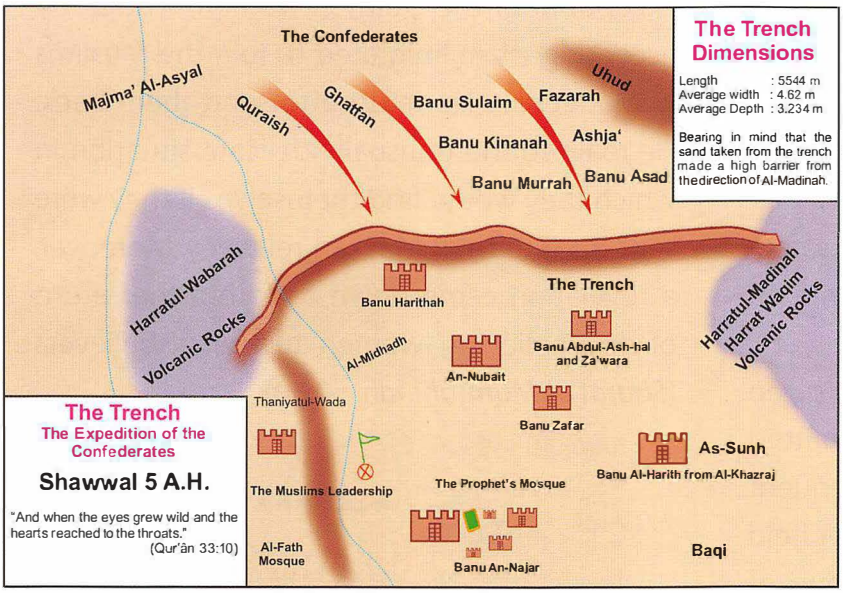
Seventy of the Makkan chiefs who had been most active and violent in persecuting the Muslims were killed. Many others were taken prisoner and were later released for ransom. For the first time, prisoners of war were treated humanely and kindly. They were fed and housed in the same way as their captors ate and lived. In the third year after the *hijrah*, a 3000-strong Makkah force again marched on Madeenah both to avenge the defeat at Badr and to make another attempt to wipe out the Muslims. 700 of them were chain-mailed and 200 mounted. The Muslims numbered only 700. The two armies met just outside Madeenah near Mount Uḥud.



At first the Muslims were gaining ground in this battle, but the tide turned against them when a large contingent of Muslims archers, sensing victory at hand, deserted their posts in

the hope of being able to collect their booty. The Makkan cavalry led by the brave Khaalid ibn al-Waleed, who later rose to fame as a stalwart warrior in the Muslim armies, saw his chance and swooped down on the Muslim flank and rear. In the resulting fight, some seventy Muslims, including the Prophet's uncle Hamzah, were martyred. The Prophet ﷺ himself was wounded. The remaining Muslim forces at the last minute rallied, causing the Makkans to quit fighting instead of pursuing their earlier partial victory.

As for the polytheists, twenty two of them were killed. They failed to pursue their advantage and clinch the victory.



The next major battle known as *al-Khandaq* (the Battle of the Trench) took place in the month of *Shawwaal*, in the year 5 AH (627 CE). The Makkans now planned to make a final attack on Madeenah to settle the matter once and for all. The Makkans' resolve to break the back of the Muslims had hardened, and a huge army of about 10,000 soldiers was amassed against them.

The Jewish tribe of Banu an-Nadeer played a considerably evil role in the formation of the Makkan confederacy. The Banu an-Nadeer by that time had been exiled to Khaybar from Madeenah by the Prophet ﷺ for the following reasons: **(1)** for non-payment of their contribution to the blood money they owed to the tribe of Banu 'Aamir on account of tribal alliances; and **(2)** the Qur'anic revelation to the Prophet ﷺ warning him against Banu an-Nadeer Jews' plot to kill him. Another Jewish tribe, the Banu Qaynuqaa' had previously been expelled from Madeenah after some of its men put to death a Muslim man, who in defending the honour of a Muslim woman, had killed a Jewish man who had dishonoured her.

At the beginning of the Battle of the Trench, the Banu an-Nadeer shamelessly came out against the Muslims and succeeded in arousing the Banu Ghatafaan tribe to join the Makkan confederacy by promising to offer them half the date harvest of Khaybar, on the anticipation that they would regain their former lands if the Muslims were defeated. A third Jewish tribe, the Banu Quraydhah, openly pretended neutrality while hatching a secret conspiracy with the Quraysh and the Banu Ghatafaan against the Muslims. These actions of the Jewish tribes were in utter violation of the terms of the Constitution of Madeenah.

The Battle of the Trench gained its name from the trench (*khandaq*) that was dug around the city of Madeenah, a strategy attributed to the Companion Salmaan al-Faarisee, who knew it as defensive plan from his native Iran. The pagan Makkans tried vainly to cross the trench for several days, but they finally gave up. The siege lasted for over 25 days. Internal differences, lack of supplies, the deep trench, the cold weather and the high winds forced the Makkan army to withdraw. This was the

turning point in the history of conflict with the Makkans. Madeenah was never to be attacked again.

The Prophet ﷺ now moved swiftly against the treacherous Banu Quraydhah and demanded their unconditional surrender. He realised the threat they posed and decided that their fate should be judged by a member of one of their allied tribes, to which plan the Jews agreed; and all present, accepted to abide by the decision. Sa'd ibn Mu'aadh was selected as the judge from the Aws tribe, which was allied with the Banu Quraydhah. Sa'd decided that all the men of Banu Quraydhah should be put to death, their women and children made captive and their property divided. The Prophet ﷺ said to him, 'You have judged with the judgement of Allah from above the seven heavens.' It is significant to realize, however, that these Jewish tribes were punished on account of their particular acts of treachery, which threatened the safety of the Muslim Community, and certainly not on account of their being Jews.

From the beginning the Jews were given full rights of citizenship. Yet they committed acts of treason and deception. Subsequent generations of Jews, however, were never held responsible for the evil deeds of the Jews of Madeenah. On the contrary, Muslims always treated them justly and kindly.

In the sixth year after the *hijrah* (628 CE), the Prophet ﷺ decided to set out with about 1400 or 1500 of his Companions to perform the lesser pilgrimage (*'Umrah*) at Makkah. They were unarmed, but the Quraysh chiefs, against all established and standard traditions, refused them admission. The Prophet ﷺ learnt of this and encamped at a place called al-Hudaybiyah just outside the sanctuary at Makkah. The Makkans sent emissaries to the Prophet ﷺ, informing him that they would not be permitted to enter Makkah that year to perform the lesser pilgrimage. Negotiations took place between the two sides. Finally a treaty known in Arabic as *Sulh al-Hudaybiyah* was agreed upon by the two sides which promised the ending of hostilities for ten years. Some of the conditions of the treaty of al-Hudaybiyah were unfavourable to the Muslim side, such as the one which required that if an individual from the Quraysh were to come over to the Muslims without permission from his guardian, he was to be sent back to his people. On the other hand, a Muslim defector to the Quraysh would not be returned. The Prophet ﷺ later made an exception for the Quraysh women, who upon accepting Islam, migrated to join the Muslims in Madeenah. He refused to send them back. He realized the unusually delicate situation in which they would find themselves if they were sent back to their Makkan relatives. Moreover, a revelation came down to forbid the return of any believing women to the disbelievers (*Soorat al-Mumtahinah*, 60:10).



According to the terms of the treaty, permission was given to the Muslims to perform the lesser pilgrimage the following year. While the negotiations were in progress,

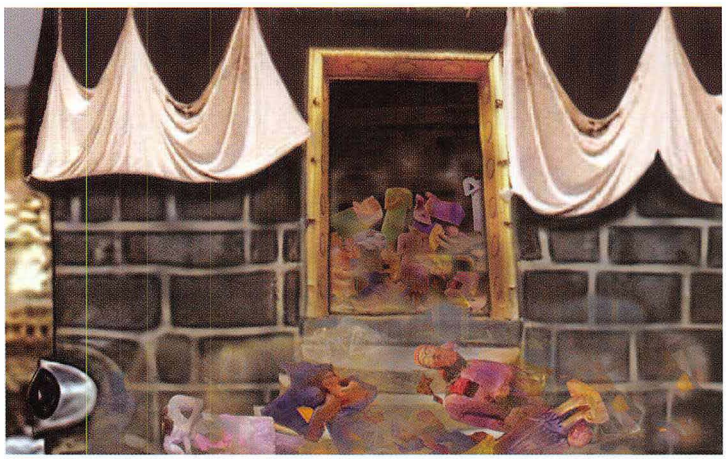
Muslims swore a pledge to the Prophet ﷺ, which is known as *Bay'at ar-Ridwaan* (the Pledge of Good Pleasure). It is also referred to as the Pledge of the Tree, (*Bay'at ash-Shajarah*) on account of having sat under a tree while making the pledge. Then the Prophet ﷺ broke camp and returned to Madeenah. On his journey back, Allah revealed to the Prophet ﷺ that the truce of al-Hudaybiyah was not a setback but rather a victory (*Soorat al-Fath*, 48:1-3). Al-Hudaybiyah treaty gave the idol worshippers and believers an opportunity to mix. The idol worshippers soon came to appreciate the good qualities of the Muslims. Many of them embraced Islam during this period. The pledge appears prominently in accounts of the life of the Prophet ﷺ and his Companions. It was a test of faith for the Muslims in those sorely stressful circumstances. The high estimation of those who swore the pledge under the tree reflects in a *hadeeth* in which the Prophet ﷺ is reported as having said, 'No one of those who pledged their allegiance under the tree will enter the Fire.' (Muslim and Abu Daawood)

Although the terms of the truce appeared highly unfavourable, even insulting, for the Muslims, they made enormous gains by virtue of the treaty. Those who were expelled out of Makkah and attacked several times were now recognized as an equal force, to be treated respectfully and taken seriously. The result was that many Makkans and Arab tribes either accepted Islam or made peace with the Prophet ﷺ.

As soon as al-Hudaybiyah truce was signed, the Prophet ﷺ sent letters to various neighbouring Arab and non-Arabs rulers and kings including Chosroes of Iran and Heraclius, the emperor of the Byzantine Empire, inviting them to Islam. He assured them that he was not interested in their kingdoms or wealth. They could keep these for themselves only if they worshipped Allah alone, the only true God.



Within two years, however, in the year 8 AH (630 CE), the Makkans broke the treaty. It was now time to deal with their never-ending hostility. The Prophet ﷺ reacted firmly to this turn of events. He mobilized an army of about 10,000 men and set out for Makkah. The Quraysh had by now become quite demoralized; they were aware that they had broken the terms of the treaty. They no longer wished to put up a resistance. The Prophet ﷺ captured the city and declared a general amnesty for all those inside Makkah who would surrender without resistance. The Prophet ﷺ forgave all those who had been his bitterest enemies all his life, persecuted him and planned to kill him, driven him and his Companions out of Makkah and had marched thrice to Madeenah to destroy the Muslims. This signal event is referred to as *al-Fath*, literally 'the Opening', or the 'Opening of Makkah'.



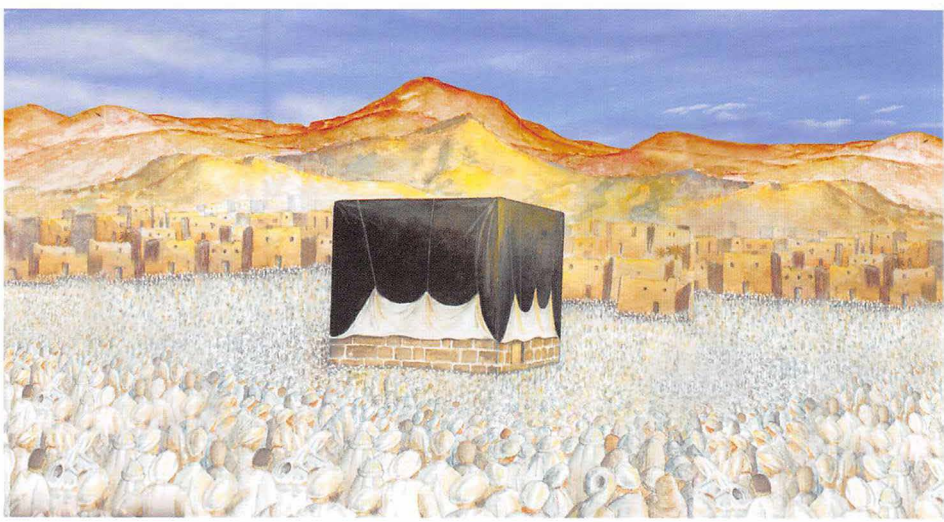
The Ka'bah was cleansed of the 360 idols which had been housed within it. An icon of the Virgin Mary with the Christ child in her arms and a painting of the patriarch Abraham (Ibraaheem) were also destroyed. Taking his cue from the words spoken by Prophet Joseph (Yoosuf) to his errant brothers, the Prophet ﷺ told those who had earlier shown merciless hostility towards him or his family and towards Islam in general, 'There shall be no reproach this day. May Allah forgive you, for He is the Most Merciful of the merciful.' (*Soorat Yoosuf*, 12:92)

Hind, the wife of Abu Sufyaan, who had caused the death of Hamzah, the Prophet's uncle, at the Battle of Badr, was forgiven. Habbaar ibn al-Aswad, whose chase of the Prophet's daughter Zaynab while attempting to migrate from Makkah to Madeenah had caused her to have a miscarriage, was also pardoned.

The neighbouring Roman Empire now made ready to attack and wipe out the Muslims in Madeenah. However, when the Prophet ﷺ marched to Tabook on the northern border, his determination, courage and timely action made the enemy lose heart and withdraw. The Tabook Expedition took place in the year 9 AH.

After the Prophet ﷺ had subdued Makkah, returned victorious from Tabook, and the Thaqeef tribe of at-Taa'if embraced Muslim, Arab delegations started pouring into Madeenah from all directions to profess their acceptance of Islam, or at least to express their acknowledgement of the Prophet's political authority. The year 9 AH (630-631 CE), therefore, came to be known as the Year of Deputations. The total number of delegations mentioned by scholars was more than seventy.[5]

There was also a delegation of sixty men from the Christians of Najraan which the Prophet ﷺ kindly received. He concluded with its members a pact according to which Muslims would grant full protection to their churches and possessions in return for the payment of protection taxes.

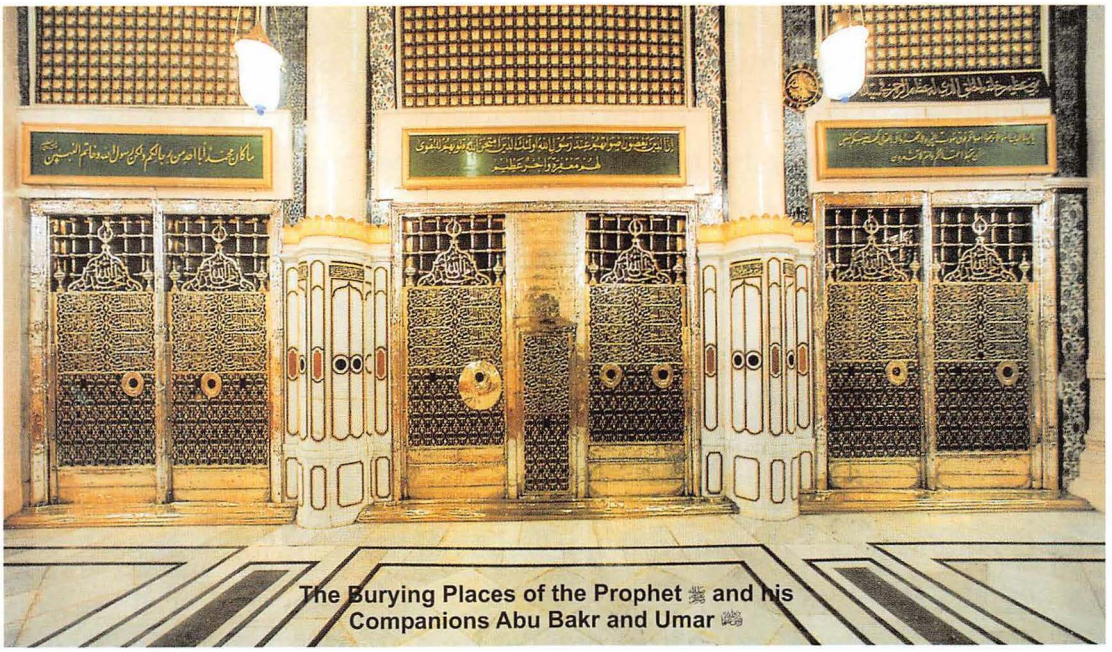


In the year 10 AH (632 CE), the Prophet ﷺ set out to perform the pilgrimage (*Hajj*) in Makkah. This was the only pilgrimage he ever performed. In the plain of 'Arafaat, he gave a sermon of supreme beauty and lasting value, which is much cited by the Prophet's biographers. Shortly after returning from the pilgrimage, the Prophet ﷺ contracted an illness from which he did not recover. His prophetic

5- Safi-ur-Rahman al-Mubarakpuri, *The Sealed Nectar*, Darussalam, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia 2002.

mission had achieved success and was nearing its end. During the last few days of his illness, he appointed Abu Bakr to lead the congregational prayers. His sickness lasted ten days.

On Monday, 12th *Rabee' al-Awwal*, in the year 11 AH (Monday, June 8, 632 CE), the Prophet ﷺ breathed his last in his home in Madeenah. He was sixty-three years and four days old when he died. The Companions now disagreed as to where he should be buried. Abu Bakr ﷺ recalled having heard him say, 'No prophet dies but is buried where he has died.' So the grave was dug in the floor of 'Aa'shah's apartment near the couch where he was lying. Then all the people of Madeenah visited him and prayed over him. He was laid in his grave by 'Ali and others who had prepared him for burial. Later, Abu Bakr and 'Umar too were buried in the same apartment. With the passing away of the 'Seal of the Prophets' (*Soorat al-Ahzaab*, 33:40), the age of prophets and revelation came to a close.



The Burying Places of the Prophet ﷺ and his Companions Abu Bakr and Umar ﷺ

Review

- How did the political strategy of the Muslims differ in Madeenah, as compared to that in Makkah?
- What was the purpose of the expeditions prior to the Battle of Badr?
- How, in your opinion, should prisoners of war be treated?
- What was the reason behind the Muslims' near-defeat at Uhud?
- How can you say that the action meted out to the Jewish tribes was apt?
- What is *as-sulh*? Why was it drawn up? How did it prove to be a blessing in disguise?
- What is *al-fath*? In what way was it a bloodless conquest?
- What is the Year of Deputations?
- Briefly write on the 'Farewell Pilgrimage'.

3.42. The Issue of Succession to the Prophet ﷺ

When the earthly life of the Prophet ﷺ had come to an end, news of his death fell on the Companions like a flash of lightning. They were stunned because of their intense love for him. Every one of them thought that the Prophet ﷺ was more gracious and considerate to him than to any other Companion. Some of them could hardly believe the news of his death. ʿUmar ibn al-Khattaab ﷺ rebuked the man who told him about the Prophet's death. He went to the mosque and warned the audience that he would cut off the hands and legs of those who claimed that the Prophet ﷺ was dead.

When ʿUmar ﷺ was speaking thus, Abu Bakr ﷺ arrived from as-Sunh, where he lived. The news had quickly spread over the whole oasis. Without pausing to speak to anyone, he went straight to his daughter's apartment and drew back from the Prophet's face the mantle with which he had been covered. He kissed him between his eyes and said, 'Dearer than my father and mother, you have tasted death which Allah had decreed for you. No death shall ever come to you after this death.'

As for the Caliphate of Abu Bakr as-Siddeeq, he came about through the unanimous agreement of the Helpers (*Ansaar*) and the Emigrants (*Muhaajiroon*). In the hall of Banu Saaʿidah, Muslims paid homage to Abu Bakr ﷺ as the successor of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. They were determined that the Prophet ﷺ would leave the world with the Muslims united and under a strong leader who could take charge of their affairs.

Then Abu Bakr gave thanks to Allah and addressed the people, saying, 'I have been given the authority over you, and I am not the best of you. If I perform my duty well, help me; and if I should deviate, correct me. You must be God-fearing. Piety is the most intelligent practice and immorality is the most foolish. The weak among you will be strong in my sight until I secure his rights, if Allah wills. The strong among you will be weak in my sight until I wrest the right from him, if Allah Wills. Obey me so long as I obey Allah and His Messenger ﷺ. If I disobey Allah and his Messenger ﷺ, you owe me no disobedience.' Abu Bakr's inaugural address as the first caliph ranks as one of the most important speeches in the records of Islamic history.

3.43. Remembering the Prophet ﷺ: The Most Beautiful Model

One must always remember that Prophet Muhammad ﷺ never claimed to possess any superhuman qualities: 'I am only a man like you. It has been revealed to me that your God is One God.' (*Soorat as-Sajdah*, 41:6)

When the Makkans challenged him to provide proof for his prophethood by performing miracles he said that the only miracle he had was that he had received the divine revelation in clear Arabic language, which was proclaimed through him, in the form of the Noble Qur'an:

> Say, "If all the people and all the *jinn* were to come together to produce the like of this Qur'an, they would not produce its like even if they back up one another with help and support." (*Soorat al-Israa'*, 17:88)

No matter how eloquent the Arabs were and how perfect their highly refined traditional poetry was, they could not produce something similar in form and content to the Glorious Qur'an. The Qur'an challenged them to produce ten *soorahs* but they could not:

> Do they say, 'He has fabricated it?' Say, 'Bring then ten *soorahs* like it, and call all those whom you can besides Allah, if you are truthful.' (*Soorat Hud*, 11:13)

The Qur'an also challenged them to produce one single *soorah*, but they again failed:

> And if you are in some doubt, concerning what We sent down upon Our servant, then bring one chapter like it, and call upon all your helpers beside Allah, if you are truthful. (*Soorat Al-Baqarah*, 1:23)

The Prophet ﷺ knew that he was only a human being, and was repeatedly reminded in the Qur'an that he was only a man whose only privilege was that he was granted revelation. As the Qur'an cautions him,

> Say, 'I do not say to you that Allah's treasures are with me, nor that I know the unseen, nor do I say to you that I am an angel. I only follow what has been revealed to me.' (*Soorat al-An'aam*, 6:50)

He was also reminded that only Allah the Almighty is able to guide mankind:

> Indeed, you cannot guide all those whom you love [to Islam]. Rather it is Allah alone who guides whomever He wills so.' (*Soorat al-Qaṣaṣ*, 28:56)

Thus he was called to preach the message of uncompromising monotheism (*Tawheed*), of absolute surrender to One God who alone is the Creator, the Sustainer and the Judge.

When the Makkans ridiculed him, asking persistently when the Hour of Judgement would come, he had to repeat again that he too was not informed about its time, and that he was only a clear warner.' (*Soorat al-'Ankaboot*, 29:50); awakening the heart of those who are in fear of this 'Hour' (See, for instance, *Soorat Taa Haa*, 20:15; *Soorat an-Naazi'aat*, 79:42, among other verses of the Qur'an).

Yet there are several verses in the Qur'an that point to the Prophet's exceptional role. The Prophet ﷺ was sent as a mercy to all the creatures: *rahmatul-lil-'aalameen* (*Soorat al-Anbiyyaa'*, 21:107); Allah and His angels invoke peace and blessings upon him.' (*Soorat al-Ahzaab*, 33:56) 'He is most surely of an outstanding character.' (*Soorat al-Qalam*, 68:4) In several places one finds the divine command 'Obey Allah and obey the Messenger' or similar commands. Such Qur'anic guidance formed the basis of a veneration of the Prophet ﷺ. Even now Muslims will never mention anything belonging to or relating to the Prophet ﷺ without uttering the formula *sallallaahu 'alayhi wasallam* (Upon him be Allah's peace and blessings of Allah).

The obedience due to the Prophet ﷺ plays a central role in the development of Islamic piety. In *Soorat Aal 'Imraan*, 3:31 we read, 'Say, "If you love God, then follow me. Allah will love you and forgive you your sins"'.

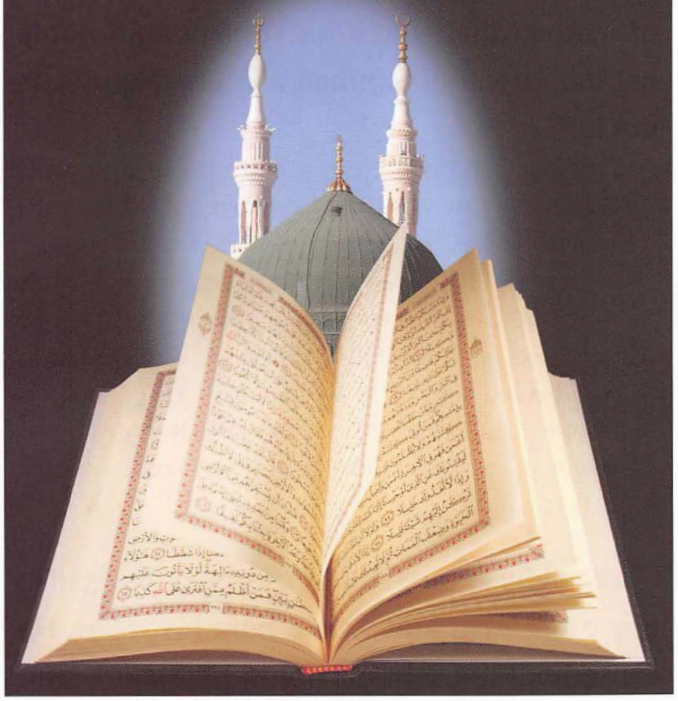
In the twofold profession of faith '*Laa ilaaha ill-Allaah, Muhammadur-Rasoolullaah*' (There is no god worthy of worship except Allah, and Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah), the second half defines Islam as a distinctive religion. The Prophet ﷺ is singled out by Allah the Almighty. He is truly the chosen one, *al-mustafaa*, and for this reason his *Sunnah*, his way of life, emerges as the uniquely valid rule of conduct for the Muslims. If you wish Allah to love you, you must love His Messenger ﷺ by following his *Sunnah*, for the Prophet ﷺ is, indeed, as the Qur'an declares, "*uswatun hasanatun*" (an excellent model) (*Soorat al-Ahzaab*, 33:21). The Prophet's *Sunnah* consists of his statements, actions, tacit approval, physical appearance, inner qualities and biography; and because of the great significance of the Prophet's beautiful example, the science of *hadeeth* came to occupy a central place in Islamic studies.

For Muslims, the Prophet ﷺ is the moral exemplar of piety and ethical conduct for all time and the best of mankind. His *Sunnah* represents the realization of the Qur'anic ideals and commands and it is second only to the Qur'an. When 'Aa'ishah ﵂, the Prophet's wife, was asked about his character, she replied simply that his character was the Qur'an itself, that is, he translated the Qur'an's commands into reality.

Various *ahaadeeth* from standard compilations detail the Prophet's daily conduct in the domestic field, in the mosque, in all worldly matters, among other things. The love nursed by Muslims for the Prophet ﷺ remains undeniable and visible to this day and will remain so forever. Such devotion to the Prophet ﷺ has inspired a scholarly genre in Islamic lands known as *shamaa'il*, or characteristics of the Prophet ﷺ, which detail, for instance, the Prophet's inward and outward beauty and nobility of character. One such work is al-Qaadee 'Iyaad's *As-Shifaa*, which was translated into English by Aisha Abdarrahman Bewley

under the title *Muhammad, Messenger of Allah*. Every student of Islam must read it. The book praises in detail the Prophet's specific attributes, such as his fortitude in the face of trials and tribulations, the gentleness of his temperament, his humility, aversion to showiness and his physical handsomeness, which are to be used as role models by all generations of believers. At this point, we wish to present only some aspects of these qualities that people nowadays badly stand in need of emulation.

3.44. His Character was the Qur'an Itself



As we have observed above, 'Aa'ishah ﵂, the Mother of the Believers, described the Prophet ﷺ in this way in an authentic *hadeeth*, 'His moral was the Qur'an itself.' (Muslim) The Qur'an itself says about him, 'And indeed, you are most surely on an outstanding standard of character.' (*Soorat al-Qalam*, 68:4)

The Prophet ﷺ was sent as a mercy to all mankind. He was sent solely for the purpose of perfecting good morals. The moral qualities mentioned in the Qur'an and the injunctions revealed by Allah, were all harmonized in his person. He lived up to all the principles he brought and to which he called, in private as well as in public. Throughout human history, great men have always sought to keep their private lives and personal behaviour secret. This is not the case with Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, as is evident from the detailed record of the *Sunnah*.

He was the very pattern of excellence and the noblest exemplar. His own people used to call him the "the truthful and trustworthy" even before he received revelations from his Lord. When Heraclius asked Abu Sufyaan, 'Have you ever accused him of lying before the Qur'an was revealed to him?' Abu Sufyaan replied, 'Never.'

He never drank wine, nor worshipped idols, nor sought amusement in an improper manner. He was affectionate to the poor and tender-hearted to the weak. He would never deny anything he was asked for. He gave assistance and support to the oppressed and never took revenge for himself unless one of Allah's laws was violated.

He devoted himself completely to the worship of Allah. He fasted so much that it sometimes seemed that he never went a day without fasting. He would also spend long stretches of the night in optional prayers until his feet would swell. When 'Aa'ishah ﵂ once asked him why he would spend so much time in prayer when Allah had forgiven him all his past and future sins, he replied, 'Should I not be a grateful servant?'

He shunned all forms of showiness and appearances of pride that commonly characterize holders of high offices and heads of states. 'Aa'ishah ﵂ once said, 'The family

of Muhammad ﷺ never had their fill of barley bread for two consecutive days until he died.' (al-Bukhaaree and Muslim)

The mattress on which the Prophet ﷺ slept was made of leather stuffed with palm tree fibre. According to al-Bukhaaree and Muslim, the Prophet ﷺ died in such a condition that his armour was pledged to a Jew for some food which he bought for his family. He always practised what he preached and never broke an agreement with any of his enemies or acted treacherously even if he feared treachery from them. He did not engage in falsehood in order to gain victory in any of his battles.

The Prophet ﷺ commanded his followers to show kindness not only to humans but also to animals and insects. Abu Hurayrah ﷺ narrated that the Prophet ﷺ said, "A traveller who was thirsty saw a well on the way. He got inside the well and when he came out he saw a dog licking mud because of thirst. The man thought to himself that the dog should be as thirsty as he was, and so he got into the well again, filled his leather sock with water and carried it out holding it with his teeth. And thus he quenched the dog's thirst. Allah was pleased with this act of kindness and pardoned his sins." The Companions asked, "Messenger of Allah, is there also a reward in the matter of beasts and wild animals?" The Prophet replied, "There is recompense in regard to every creature that has a living heart."

He prohibited all types of abuse and tormenting a person under sentence of death. However, in spite of his extreme tenderness, he commanded severe retribution for criminals and offenders.

He had enormous charm and a great sense of humour. He used to joke on occasion though he uttered nothing except the truth. He used to exchange good-natured fun in order to amuse and delight them. In fact, he would bend down so that his grandsons, al-Hasan and al-Husayn could ride on his back.

He was very brave. More than once fearless men fled away, him alone, while he stood with full composure facing the enemy without turning his back. 'Ali ibn Abee Taalib ﷺ, who was known for his valour, once said that when fighting became intense on the battlefield, the Prophet ﷺ would be seen in positions nearest to the enemy. (Muslim)

He was always at great pains to look and act human. He ate and worked, slept and entered into conjugal relationships. He was involved in trade, war, affairs of the state and the wide range of matters that suited his sublime and noble nature. As Safi-ur-Rahman al-Mubarakpuri has put it:

> Ill-manners and indecency are two qualities completely alien to him. He was decent and did not call anybody names. He was not the sort of person who cursed or made noise in the streets. He did not exchange offences with others. He pushed back an offence or an error by forgiveness and overlooking. Nobody was allowed to walk behind him (i.e. as a bodyguard). He did not feel himself superior to others not even to his slaves (men or women) as far as food or clothes were concerned. (p. 321)

When he entered his house, he behaved like any other man and would help his wives. He carried out household chores. He never stood up or sat down without the name of Allah being on his lips. He gave all those who sat with him such attention that they believed that he paid more attention to them than to anyone else. When someone asked for help, he would either give him what he needed or speak kindly to him. He would never name a person whom he had heard ill-news about which he hated. Instead he would say, 'Why do certain people do such-and-such a thing?'

The Prophet ﷺ lived for twenty-three years after the beginning of his mission. This period of his life was the busiest and most fruitful. He fulfilled his mission of calling mankind to the worship of the One True God—Allah. Throughout this period, he strove hard against arrogance, evil and unbelief. He taught and educated those who followed him. He succeeded in establishing Islam in the world, made it reign supreme and built, on its basis, a state which was founded on the principles of the worship of Allah and brotherhood among the faithful.

He often advised his Companions to treat their wives kindly. He would say, 'The best among you are those who are the best to their wives, and I am the best amongst you to my wives.' (at-Tirmidhee) He was once seen placing his knees on the ground for his wife Safiyyah رضي الله عنها to help her step on and mount a camel.' (al-Bukhaaree)

In a word, his character was the Qur'an itself.

Review

- How did the Muslims react towards the death of the Prophet ﷺ?
- How was Abu Bakr رضي الله عنه the best candidate as a successor to the Prophet ﷺ?
- Write a paragraph on the status of the Prophet ﷺ and the lofty position that he enjoys with the Muslims.
- Explain ʿAa'ishah's statement, 'His character was the Qur'an itself.'

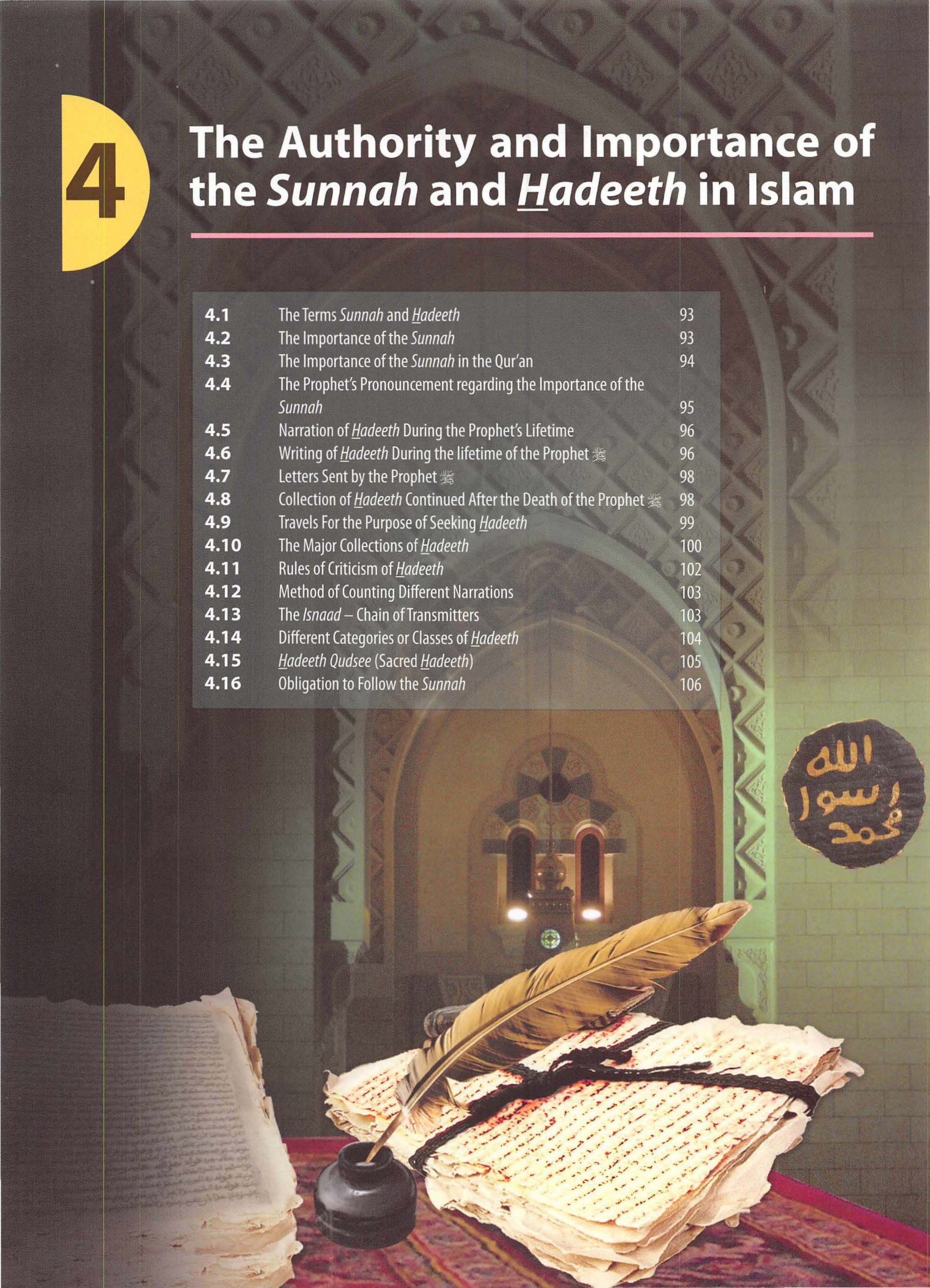


For Further Study

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4 The Authority and Importance of the *Sunnah* and *Hadeeth* in Islam

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The Authority and Importance of the *Sunnah* and *Hadeeth* in Islam

4

4.1. The Terms *Sunnah* and *Hadeeth*

Sunnah or *hadeeth* is undoubtedly the second source from which the teachings of Islam are drawn. Linguistically, *Sunnah* means 'a way, rule, manner of action or mode of life', whereas, the word *hadeeth* signifies information, utterance, or announcement, a thing or matter that it talked of told or narrated. Hence, the Qur'an is also spoken of as *hadeeth*. (18:6; 39:23)

Technically, a *hadeeth* is basically any report of the Messenger of Allah's sayings, actions, tacit approval, manners, physical traits, or biographical facts. Thus, *Sunnah* indicates the doings and the *hadeeth* the sayings of the Prophet ﷺ. But in fact both cover the same ground and are applicable to his actions, practices and sayings.

There are three kinds of *Sunnah*. It may be a *qawliyyah*, an utterance of the Prophet ﷺ, which has a bearing on religious matters; a *fi'liyyah*, an action or a practice of his; or a *taqreeriyyah*, his tacit approval of the actions of his companions.

4.2. The Importance of the *Sunnah*

Any student of the Glorious Qur'an will see that the Qur'an deals with the broad principles, commands, or essentials of religion—going into detail in very rare cases. The details are provided by the Messenger of Allah ﷺ himself, either by showing through his practice how a command must be carried out, or by giving an explanation in words.

Now consider this: the most important religious institutions or pillars of Islam, for instance, are the prayer (*salaah*) and the purifying dues (*zakaat*). Yet when the commands relating to *salaah* and *zakaat* were delivered, both in Makkan and Madeenan revelations, no details were supplied. *Wa aqeemus-salaata* 'and duly establish the prayer' (2:43) is the Qur'anic injunction, and it was the Prophet ﷺ himself who, by his own actions, gave the details of its performance. In reality, the revelations came down to the Prophet ﷺ and Angel Jibreel عليه السلام supplied him with the *Sunnah*, which explains it. A man once claimed that there is no need for the *Sunnah* and that the Qur'an is sufficient, but he was told, 'You are a stupid man. Do you find in the Book of Allah that the *Dhuhr* prayer consists of four *rak'ats* and recitation is not aloud in it? Does the Qur'an specify the number of prayers and the number of *rak'ats* in each one of them? Does it specify the amount of *zakaat* to be paid? Do you find this explained in the Qur'an?'

Likewise, the verse: *wa aatuz-zakaata* 'and give the *Zakaat*' (2:43) is again a command frequently repeated in the Glorious Qur'an, yet it was the Messenger of Allah ﷺ who gave the rules and regulations for its payment and collection. Another example of this nature is *zakaat-ul-fitr*, the *zakaat* that is paid at the end of the month of *Ramadaan*.

Al-Bukhaaree and Muslim record on the authority ʿAbdullaah Ibn ʿUmar ﷺ that Allah's Messenger ﷺ made it obligatory for the Muslims to pay *zakaa-tul fiṭr* at the end of *Ramaḍaan*. Based on this narration and other similar reports, there is consensus that *zakaat-ul-fiṭr* is obligatory (*waajib*). There is absolutely no reference to *zakaat-ul-fiṭr* in the Qur'an, but there is still consensus that it is obligatory.

These are but three examples, but since Islam covers the entire sphere of human activity, for hundreds of points had to be explained by the Messenger of Allah ﷺ through his example in words and deeds. The man, therefore, who claims to be a Muslim or embraces Islam, stands in need of both the Noble Qur'an and the *Sunnah* of the Prophet ﷺ. No one can claim to be able to understand the Qur'an and know all its rulings without the assistance of the *Sunnah*.

The *Sunnah* clarifies what is undefined in the Qur'an, such as the religious obligations which are unspecified in the Qur'an. It provides the details and times and shows when the general is meant to be general in the Qur'an, and when Allah means a particular category by a general expression. The *Sunnah* adds, by divine inspiration, rulings to obligations confirmed by the text of the Qur'an, which are a consequence of them or connected to them. It provides rulings which are not in the Qur'an and are not additions to it. It should be remembered that the clarity of the Qur'an is general and universal. The *Sunnah* fleshes out the details and adds more information to the generality of the Qur'an.

4.3. The Importance of the *Sunnah* in the Qur'an

There are many verses in the Glorious Qur'an that point to the importance of the *Sunnah*. In reality, many verses give a clear indication that it is obligatory for a person who believes in Allah to follow the *Sunnah*. Muslim scholars state that the position of the *Sunnah* has been confirmed in over forty places in the Qur'an. The following are but a few just a few of these verses:

'O you who believe, obey Allah and obey the Messenger.' (*Soorat an-Nisaa'*, 4:59)

'Say [O Muḥammad, to them]: If you truly love Allah, then follow me and Allah will love you and forgive your sins; for Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.' (*Soorat Aal-ʿImraan*, 3:31)

'Whoever obeys the Messenger has thus obeyed Allah, but as to whoever turns away, We have not sent you [O Muḥammad], to watch over [their evil deeds].' (*Soorat an-Nisaa'*, 4:80)

'And obey Allah and the Messenger so that you may be shown mercy.' (*Soorat Aal-ʿImraan*, 3:132)

'And whatever the Messenger gives you, take it; and whatever he forbids for you, desist from it. And be ever conscious of Allah; for Allah is strict in punishment.' (*Soorat Al-Ḥashr*, 59:7)

Thus, it is Allah Himself who commands the Muslims to follow and obey the Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ. If anyone claims to follow the Qur'an, then he must also follow the *Sunnah* of the Prophet ﷺ, as the Qur'an itself commands the Muslims to follow the Prophet ﷺ. Therefore, it would be contradictory to claim to follow the Qur'an while denying one's obligation to follow the *Sunnah*.

4.4. The Prophet's Pronouncement regarding the Importance of the *Sunnah*

Apart from the above Qur'anic verses that point to the obligation of obeying the Prophet ﷺ and the importance of the *Sunnah*, the Prophet ﷺ himself clearly declared the importance of his own *Sunnah* and warned against abandoning it.

In *Saheeh al-Bukhaaree* and *Saheeh Muslim*, Allah's Messenger ﷺ is recorded to have said, 'Whoever obeys me actually obeys Allah; but whoever disobeys me actually disobeys Allah.' Hence, not following the *Sunnah* or the commands of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ is tantamount to not following the commands of Allah ﷻ. This proves that anything that comes from the Messenger ﷺ as a matter of fact originates with Allah.

Allah's Messenger ﷺ is also reported as having said, 'I have left behind among you [two] matters; if you adhere to them, you will never be misguided: the Book of Allah and the *Sunnah* of His Prophet ﷺ.' (al-Haakim)

Allah's Messenger ﷺ also said, 'All [members of] my *ummah* will enter Paradise except those who refuse to do so.' His Companions asked, 'Who would refuse?' He replied, 'Whoever obeys me will enter Paradise, but whoever disobeys me has refused to do so.' (al-Bukhaaree)

These reports make it abundantly clear that a Muslim must follow the Prophet's *Sunnah* in order to be rightly-guided.

4.5. Narration of *Hadeeth* during the Prophet's Lifetime

The narration of the excellent practices and sayings of the Prophet ﷺ from one person to another thus became essential during the lifetime of the Prophet ﷺ. In fact, he himself used to give instructions with regard to conveying what he had taught. On the occasion of the Farewell Pilgrimage, he said, 'Let those who are present here carry [this message] to those who are absent.' (al-Bukhaaree)

4.6. Writing of *Hadeeth* during the lifetime of the Prophet ﷺ

The need of the *Sunnah*, its authority and its preservation are all traceable to the lifetime of the Prophet ﷺ.

It is generally known that the Prophet ﷺ discouraged recording his own sayings and the *Sunnah* at the early stages of his mission in order to preserve the purity of the Qur'an and prevent the possibility of confusing between the Qur'an and his *hadeeth*. He once said to his companions, 'Do not write what I say: If anyone has written anything which I have said other than the Qur'an, let him blot it out. You may speak about me and there is no objection to that, but whoever attributes a lie to me deliberately will have his place in Hell.' (Muslim)

But there are reports that during the latter part of his mission, that is, at a time when most of the Qur'an had been revealed and recorded, the Prophet ﷺ responded positively to the requests of some of his Companions to write down his utterances. Therefore, by the time when much of the Qur'an was received, memorized and documented, the Prophet ﷺ permitted documentation of his sayings.

Al-Bukhaaree and several other traditionists (*muhaddithoon*) have recorded that in the year 8 AH, on the occasion when the Prophet ﷺ victoriously returned to his native city of Makkah, Allah's Messenger ﷺ delivered a sermon on the rights and duties of Muslims and other important matters. A man from Yemen, Abu Shaah, who was present at the time said, 'Messenger of Allah! Have this written out for me.' The Prophet ﷺ commanded, 'Write it down for Abu Shaah.'

The Prophet ﷺ is also reported as having said, 'May Allah make radiant the face of a man who has heard what I said and has preserved it in his memory until he conveys it to another. Perhaps the person he conveyed it to has a better understanding than him.' (at-Tirmidhee)

Abu Daawood and at-Tirmidhee have also reported that ʿAbdullaah ibn ʿAmr ibn al-ʿAas ﷺ used to write down the Prophet's sayings with his knowledge and permission so that he might not forget them. Some people told him not to do so, saying that the Prophet ﷺ was a human being after all who may be angry at times and pleased at times and that it would not be right to record anything he said. ʿAbdullaah went to the Prophet ﷺ and asked, 'May I write down whatever I hear from you?' The Prophet ﷺ replied, 'Write [it down]. By the One in whose Hand my soul is, nothing comes out of it except the truth,' pointing to his mouth. This means that he always spoke the truth whether he was angry or pleased.

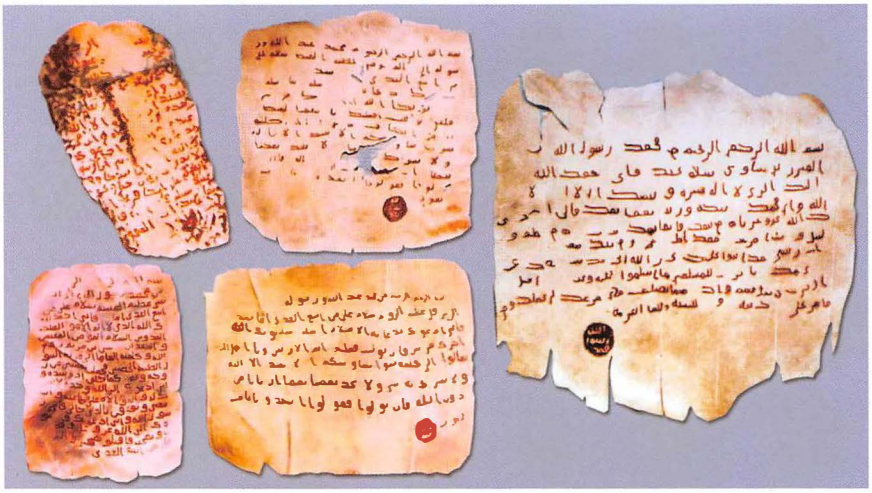
Al-Bukhaaree has also reported in his *Saheeh* that Abu Hurayrah ﷺ said, 'None of the companions of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ has narrated more *hadeeth* than I have, except 'Abdullaah ibn 'Amr, because he used to record the *hadeeth* but I did not do so.' Arabs, Arab poets and genealogists were renowned for the performance of amazing feats of memory and relied on this a great deal, and these traditional skills were employed in the cause of Islam.

Abu Hurayrah ﷺ had a photographic memory. He came to Madeenah in the year 7 AH when the Prophet ﷺ was at Khaybar. He followed him there and accepted Islam. From that time onward he never left the Prophet ﷺ and was day and night in his attendance as his most faithful servant. This accounts for the great number of traditions (*ahaadeeth*) attributed to him. His belly was easily satisfied. He ate no leavened bread (the Arabic word used by al-Bukhaaree is *al-khameer*) and wore no showy garments. He did not pursue any trade but preferred to remain in attendance on the Prophet ﷺ. Abu Hurayrah ﷺ related some 5374 *ahaadeeth*. There is nothing to be surprised about this. There were Arabs in the past who memorized a total of 5000 long poems, and there are many examples of this throughout Arab history.

Abu Hurayrah ﷺ used to ascribe the strength of his memory to the Prophet's blessing on him. Hearing the fame of his memory, Marwaan ibn al-Hakam, the governor of Madeenah, on one occasion, decided to test his memory. He sent for him, and after having talked to him about several matters, he began to ask him about the *hadeeth* of the Prophet ﷺ. Behind a curtain was a scribe, who was writing down everything that Abu Hurayrah ﷺ said, while Abu Hurayrah was totally unaware of the arrangement. The scribe relates, 'Marwaan went on asking and I went on writing, and the *hadeeth* grew considerable in number. After the lapse of a year, Marwaan sent for Abu Hurayrah again, and I was seated once more behind the curtain. He went on questioning him on the same traditions, and I was comparing what he said now with what he had narrated before.' This establishes not only the truth of Abu Hurayrah's strong memory but also the fact that, by Marwaan's orders, a number of *ahaadeeth* that Abu Hurayrah ﷺ narrated were documented and that they were also verified by way of comparison with the original. (See Dr. Hamidullah in his classic work entitled *An Introduction to the Conservation of Hadeeth*; p. 51)

It should be remembered that according to the Islamic belief, the Noble Qur'an is Allah's final revelation, Muhammad ﷺ is Allah's final messenger ﷺ and that Allah commands the Muslims to follow the *Sunnah* of the Prophet ﷺ. If the *Sunnah* was not preserved, this would not be consistent with Allah's mercy, wisdom and justice.

The Companions of the Prophet ﷺ were fully aware of their responsibility for conveying the *hadeeth* of the Prophet ﷺ and they did this with great accuracy. Certainly, in general, one of the ways of preserving something is to record it. And the recording of the *hadeeth* of the Prophet ﷺ actually began during the Prophet's lifetime. The Prophet ﷺ made the Companions realize that it was their responsibility to learn what he said and to convey it to others just as they heard it.



4.7. Letters Sent by the Prophet ﷺ

It is significant to note that Allah's Messenger ﷺ himself sent hundreds of letters to several kings, emperors and tribal chiefs. In reality, these were nothing more than the Prophet's *hadeeth*.

The first steps for the preservation of *hadeeth* were thus taken in the lifetime of the Prophet ﷺ and continued after his death.

In his monumental work *Studies in Early Hadeeth Literature*, Dr. Muhammad Mustafa A'zami has listed some fifty companions of the Prophet ﷺ who had recorded *hadeeth* (A'zami p. 34-60). In fact, Dr. A'zami has compiled a list of more than 400 scholars who had documented *hadeeth*, all of whom lived and died before the year 250 AH. Many of them are from before the time of 'Umar ibn 'Abdul-Azeez, who is inaccurately credited, by some modern scholars, with having been the first person to ask for the compilation of *hadeeth*. 'Umar ibn 'Abdul-Azeez ruled towards the close of the first century. He died in the year 101 AH.

Recent research has established that almost all the *ahaadeeth* of the Prophet ﷺ were written down in the life of the Companions, which stretched to the end of the first century. One may then ask: What happened to these early works? This is a perfectly genuine question. Dr. A'zmi says, 'These books were not destroyed, nor did they perish, but were absorbed into the works of later authors. When the encyclopaedia-type books were produced, scholars did not feel the necessity to keep the early books or booklets, and so slowly they disappeared.' (*Studies in hadeeth Methodology and Literature*, p. 75)

4.8. Collection of *Hadeeth* Continued after the Death of the Prophet ﷺ

With the Prophet's death, the collection of *hadeeth* yet entered another stage. Every case that came up for decision had now to be referred either to the Noble Qur'an or to some judgement or saying of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. The Prophet's judgements thus gained a wide circulation. There are plenty of cases on record in which a right was claimed on the basis of a judgement or saying of the Prophet ﷺ, and evidence was demanded as to the authority of the saying or *hadeeth*. Thus there was a twofold process at work. Not only the trustworthiness or authenticity of the particular *hadeeth* was established beyond doubt, but the *hadeeth* also gained a wide circulation from being the knowledge of a few; it passed on to that of many.

Yet this was not the only factor that gave a spark to the spread of the knowledge of *hadeeth*. There was another factor of the utmost importance. To the Companions of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, the religion which he had brought was a priceless diamond; a

thing which they valued above everything else. For its sake they had given up their business, their relatives and their very homes. They had laid down their lives to defend it. To carry the divine blessing, this greatest gift of Allah to other people had become the supreme goal of their lives.

Hence the spread of its knowledge was their first and foremost concern. They were faithful to the great obligation, which was laid on them. They went eastwards and westwards and northwards. In whichever direction they went, and to whichever country they travelled, they carried with them the message of the Qur'an and the *Sunnah*. Every one of them who had but the knowledge of one-incident relating to the Prophet's life considered it his duty to deliver it to others. Their places of residence, in fact, became institutions for the spread of the knowledge of *hadeeth*. Abu Hurayrah ﷺ alone had eight hundred disciples. 'Aa'ishah's house, too, was resorted to by hundreds of ardent pupils. The reputation of 'Abdullaah ibn 'Abbaas ﷺ was equally great. In spite of his youth, he had a foremost place among the counsellors of 'Umar ibn al-Khattaab on account of his knowledge of the Qur'an and the *Sunnah*.

4.9. Travels for the Purpose of Seeking *Hadeeth*

The zeal of the new generation for the acquisition of religious knowledge was such that the students regularly travelled from one place to another to complete their knowledge of the *Sunnah*. Some would journey long distances to obtain firsthand knowledge about one *hadeeth* only.

It is reported that Jaabir ibn 'Abdullaah ﷺ travelled from Madeenah to Syria for the sake of a single *hadeeth*. It was a month's journey as Jaabir himself states in a report (al-Bukhaaree). Al-Bukhaaree's famous commentary *Fath al-Baaree* relates several incidents of this type. Abu Ayoob al-Ansaaree ﷺ for instance, is related to have undertaken a long journey to hear a saying of the Prophet ﷺ from 'Uqbah ibn 'Aamir ﷺ. He travelled all the way to Egypt. He told 'Uqbah that only he and 'Uqbah were left who had heard that particular *hadeeth* directly from the Prophet ﷺ. After hearing the *hadeeth*, his purpose was over in Egypt and thus returned to Madeenah. Sa'eed ibn al-Musayyab is reported to have said that he used to travel for days and nights in search of a single *hadeeth*.

This establishes beyond doubt that documentation of *hadeeth* became a major preoccupation of the scholars, which they pursued as a form of service to Islam and a means of gaining the pleasure of Allah. In the second century of *the Hijrah*, *hadeeth* began to assume a more permanent shape, and written collections began to see the light of day. Hundreds of *hadeeth* students were engaged in the work of learning it in various centres. But with every new teacher and student the work of preserving the names of the transmitters along with the *hadeeth* itself was becoming difficult.

As time passed, the chains of transmitters (*asaaneed*; singular. *isnaad*) grew longer and the details of names, places, and dates in them became burdensome for memory. Written collections of *hadeeth* had thus become essential. The third century of the *Hijrah* marked, yet again, a new phase in the documentation of *hadeeth*. This great work reached its peak in the third century of the *Hijrah*.

Review

- Define the terms *hadeeth* and *Sunnah*. What is the basic difference between them?
- Show the importance of *Sunnah* in Islam. Give a few references from the Qur'an and *hadeeth* to support your answer.
- Write a note about Abu Hurayrah's amazing memory and how it was, along with other Companions' memories, the key to preserving the *hadeeth* of the Prophet ﷺ.
- Aside from relying on memory, how else was the Prophet's *hadeeth* preserved?
- What did the Muslims do after the death of the Prophet ﷺ with regard to the compilation of *hadeeth*?

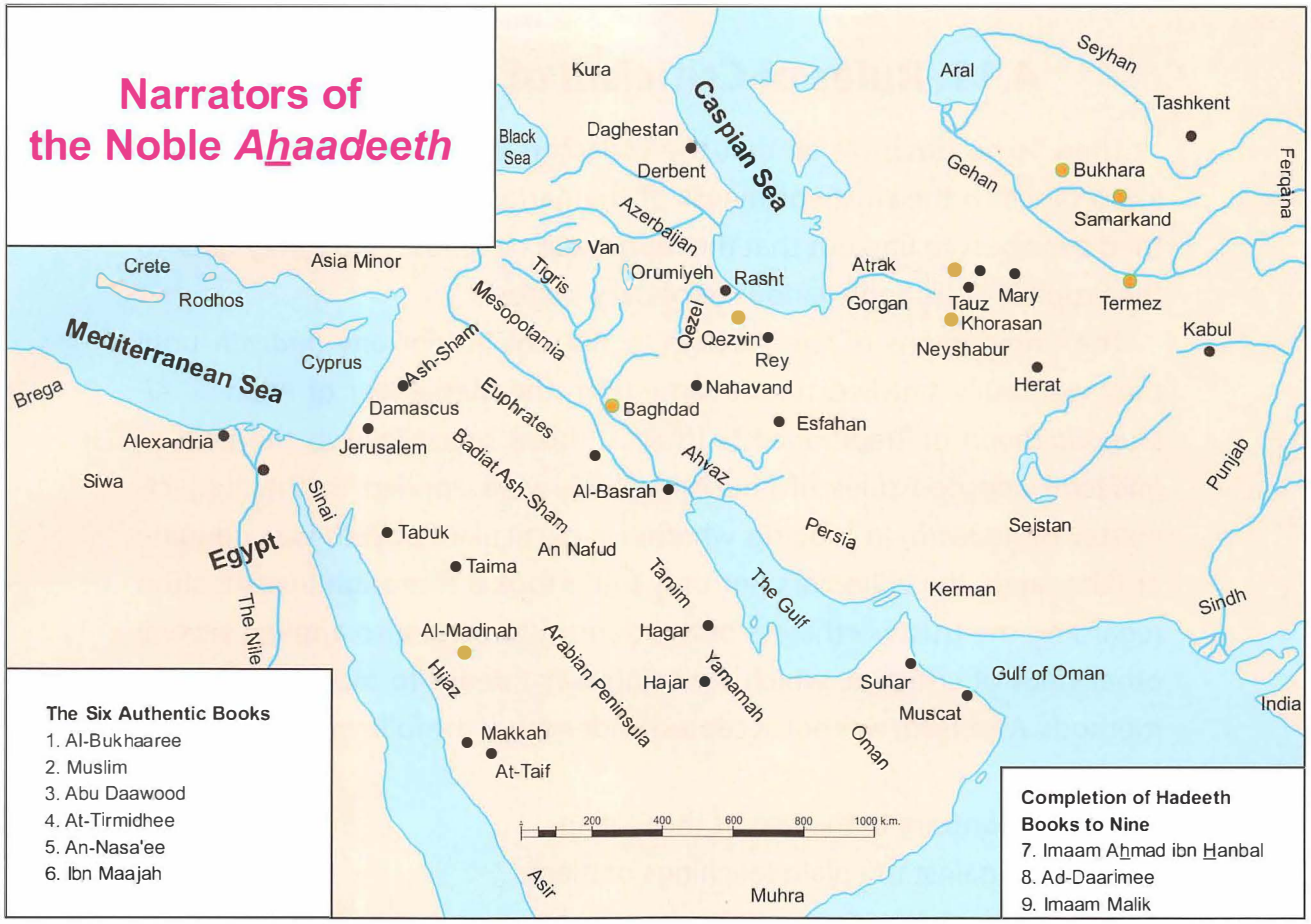
4.10. The Major Collections of *Hadeeth*

Imaam Maalik's *Al-Muwatta'*

Imaam Maalik's *Al-Muwatta'* is often described as the pioneering work among the *hadeeth* collections, even preceding in some ways that of al-Bukhaaree. The classification of its contents is organized in an order that is typical of the works of jurisprudence, or *fiqh*. That is why *Al-Muwatta'* is sometimes identified as the work of both *hadeeth* and *fiqh*. *Imaam* Maalik revised and strengthened his work many times and it is said to have taken him forty years to complete it. As far as reliability is concerned, *Al-Muwatta'* stands in the first rank with al-Bukhaaree and Muslim. *Imaam* Maalik died in 179 AH. *Al-Muwatta'* has been translated into English.

The *Musnad* of *Imaam* Ahmad ibn Hanbal

The term *musnad* is derived from *sanad*, meaning authority, and the *isnaad* of a *hadeeth* means the tracing of it back through various transmitters to the Companion of the Prophet ﷺ on whose authority it is rested. The collections of *hadeeth* known as *masaaneed* (plural of *musnad*) are arranged, not according to the subject-matter of the *hadeeth*, but under the name of the Companion on whose final authority the *hadeeth* rested. The most important of this class is the *Musnad* of *Imaam* Ahmad ibn Hanbal, which contains about 30,000 reports. *Imaam* Ahmad was born in 164 AH and died in 241 AH, and is one of the four recognized *Imaams* of *hadeeth*.



The Six Well-established Collections of *Ḥadeeth*

The most famous collections of *ḥadeeth*, however, are **(1)** the *Ṣaḥeeḥ* (the sound or authentic) of Muḥammad ibn Ismaa'eel al-Bukhaaree (d. 256 AH/870 CE), usually called al-Bukhaaree, **(2)** the *Ṣaḥeeḥ* of Abul-Ḥusayn Muslim ibn al-Ḥajjaaj (d. 261 AH/875 CE), usually called Muslim. These two *Ṣaḥeeḥs* or as-*Ṣaḥeeḥayn* (the Arabic dual of the word *ṣaḥeeḥ*) are the most authentic of the six well-established collections. The other four are **(3)** those of Abu Daawood (d. 261 AH/875 CE); **(4)** at-Tirmidhee (d. 279 AH/892 CE); **(5)** an-Nasaa'ee, and **(6)** Ibn Maajah (d. 273 AH/886 CE). These make up the Six Books or *al-Kutub as-Sittah*.

Mainly the works of al-Bukhaaree and Muslim are referred to as *aṣ-Ṣaḥeeḥayn*, or the two sound collections. But it is very important to realize that no one may call a *ḥadeeth* unreliable or weak merely because it has not appeared in al-Bukhaaree or Muslim. Almost all the other major collections contain many authentic *aḥaadeeth*. Some of them, however, also contain a number of weak *aḥaadeeth*.

A detailed discussion concerning these Six Compilers of *ḥadeeth* is forthcoming.

4.11. Rules of Criticism of *Hadeeth* as

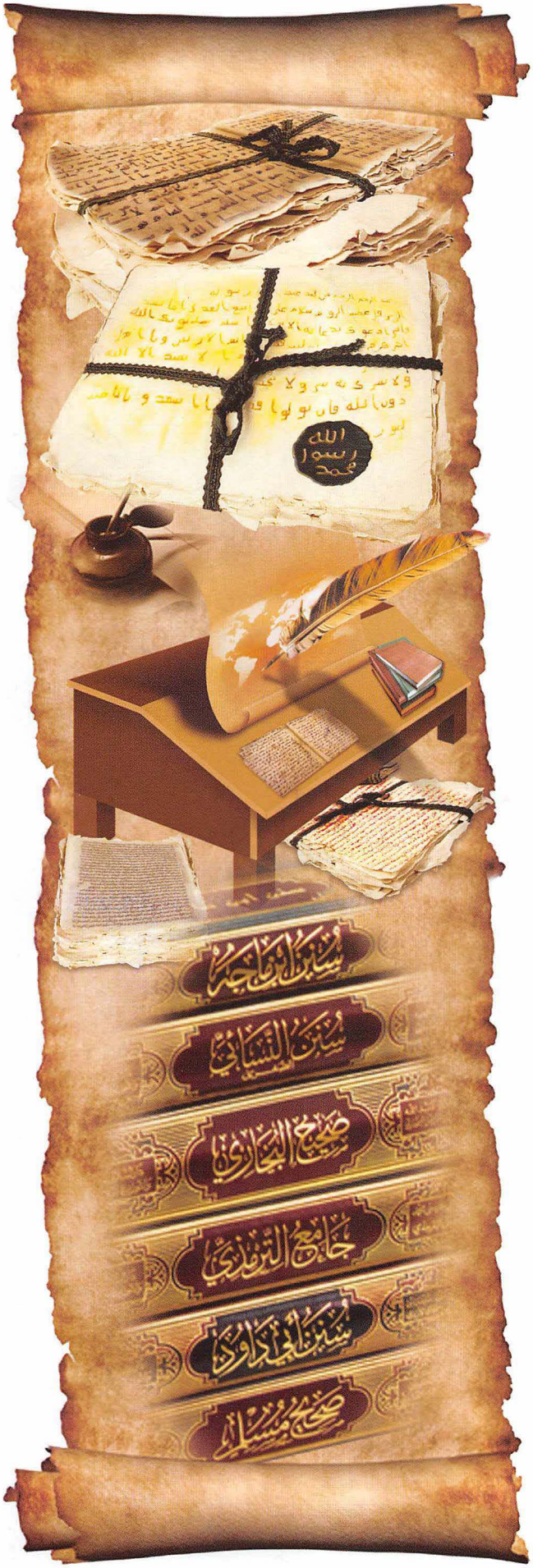
There is no doubt at all that the collectors of *hadeeth* attached great importance to the trustworthiness of the narrators. Apart from this, they tried their best to find out that the report was traceable all the way back to the Prophet ﷺ, through various necessary stages.

The Companions of the Prophet ﷺ did not accept any *hadeeth* until they were fully satisfied that it came from the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. *Al-Muhaddithoon* or Traditionalists (that is, those specialized in the field of *hadeeth*) adopted rules of criticism which were applied to the subject-matter of *hadeeth*. In judging whether a particular *hadeeth* was genuine or fabricated, the collectors not only undertook a thorough investigation regarding the trustworthiness of the transmitters but also applied several other rules of criticism, which are in no way inferior to modern scientific methods. A *hadeeth* was not accepted under any of the following conditions:

- If it was contrary to the text of the Qur'an
- If it was against the plain teachings of Islam
- If the subject-matter or words were unsound or incorrect; for example, the words were not in accordance with the Arabic medium, or the text was unbecoming to the dignity of the Prophet ﷺ
- If it contained threatening of heavy punishment for ordinary sins or promises of mighty reward for slight good deeds
- If the time and conditions of its narration contained evidence of forgery
- If it was opposed to any recognized historical fact

This list is, however, not comprehensive. Many other criteria are also employed to determine the genuineness of a certain *hadeeth*. In fact, a complete science has been evolved, the sole objective of which is the research into the meaning, the form and the way of transmission of the Prophet's *ahaadeeth*. In our own times, ʿAbdul-Qaadir al-Arnaa'oot, Shuʿayb al-Arnaa'oot, Muhammad Naasirud-Deen al-Albaanee and several other scholars have done a great deal to help revive the study of *hadeeth*.

Shaykh al-Albaanee's works in which he discusses the status of *hadeeth* in the greatest details are his own collections of authentic *ahaadeeth*, which run into many volumes. Besides, *Shaykh* al-Albaanee has sorted weak *ahaadeeth* and put them in several volumes. *Shaykh* Naasirud-Deen al-Albaanee died in 1999, in Amman, Jordan. He was 88 years old.



4.12. Method of Counting Different Narrations

Those who were engaged in the spread and study of *hadeeth* looked upon every report as a different *hadeeth* when even a single narrator of the *hadeeth* was changed. Consider, for example, a *hadeeth* whose original narrator is Abu Hurayrah ﷺ. Now Abu Hurayrah ﷺ had 800 disciples, and the same *hadeeth* might have been reported by ten of his disciples with or without any change. Each of these reports, according to *hadeeth* collectors, forms a separate *hadeeth*. Thus the number would go on increasing as the number of reports increase. That this was the method of Al-Bukhaaree's counting of narrations is clear from his work *Saheeh al-Bukhaaree*, which with the change of even one narrator in chain of, say, four or five, considers the report to be different or separate.

4.13. The *Isnaad* – Chain of Transmitters

Every *hadeeth* consists of two parts. Here is a *hadeeth* quoted from Al-Bukhaaree:

Al-Bukhaaree said that Sulaymaan Abu ar-Rabee' informed him saying that Ismaa'eel ibn Ja'far said that Naafi' ibn Maalik informed him on the authority of his father that Abu Hurayrah ﷺ related that the Prophet ﷺ said, 'The signs of a hypocrite are three: Whenever he speaks, he tells a lie; whenever he makes a promise, he breaks it; and whenever he is entrusted with something, he proves to be dishonest.'

This *hadeeth* contains a series of names of narrators and then the actual subject relating to the Prophet ﷺ arrives.

The first portion is called *isnaad*, while the

actual statement or information relating to the Prophet ﷺ is called *matn* (literally, text). The *isnaad*, according to the Arabic lexicography, means something on which something else relies. As we rely on the narrators for the knowledge of the statement of the Prophet ﷺ, this chain is called *isnaad*. Its plural is *asaaneed*. Sometimes, the term *tareeq* is used instead of *isnaad*, and sometimes the term *wajh* is used for the same purpose.' (*Studies in Hadeeth Methodology and Literature*: M. M. A'zami; p. 32)

4.14. Different Categories or Classes of *Hadeeth*

The most important division of *hadeeth* is into *saheeh* (authentic), *hasan* (acceptable, good), and *da'eef* (weak).

The *Saheeh Hadeeth*

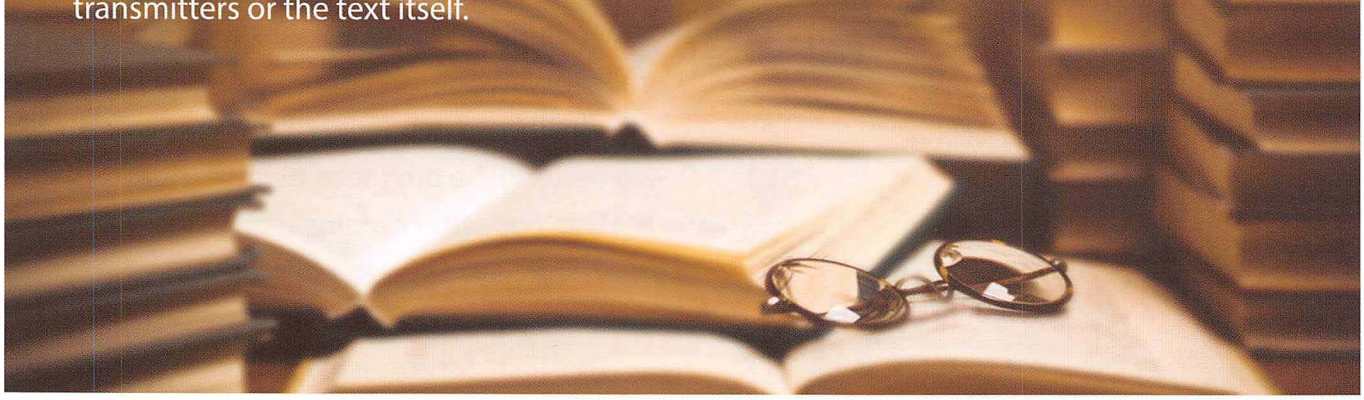
A *hadeeth* that is categorised as *saheeh* is one with a continuous chain of transmitters (*isnaad*) all the way back to the Prophet ﷺ, or a Companion, consisting of persons who also possess good memories and whose narration is not outlandish or odd (*shaadhdh*), while it is, at the same time, free of both obvious and hidden defects. A *saheeh hadeeth* must not be outlandish in the sense that it does not contradict a reliable *hadeeth* that is reported by a large number of transmitters, or even by one transmitter of higher authority and ranking.

The *Hasan* Narration

A *hadeeth* that is categorised as *hasan* is one that falls between the *saheeh* and *da'eef*, and although its narrators are known for their truthfulness, they have not attained the highest degree of reliability and prominence.

The *Da'eef Hadeeth*

A *hadeeth* that is categorised as *da'eef* is one that fails to qualify the conditions of *saheeh* and *hasan*. The weakness in *da'eef* may be due to the chain of transmitters or *isnaad*, or in the text (*matn*), or in both. There are many varieties of *da'eef* narrations, and each is named according to the cause of weakness, whether it stems from the chain of transmitters or the text itself.



4.15. *Hadeeth Qudsee (Sacred Hadeeth)*

This is a kind of *hadeeth* in which Allah's Messenger ﷺ speaks to his community and relates what he says directly from Allah Most High. Such *hadeeth* generally takes one of the following forms: (1) The Prophet ﷺ says from among the sayings he related from his Lord…, (2) Allah Most High has said…, or (3) Allah's Messenger ﷺ said that Allah has said…'

A hadeeth qudsee is also known as *hadeeth Ilaahee* and *hadeeth rabbaanee*. It is called *hadeeth qudsee* because the speech is attributed to Allah Most High in which case the Messenger of Allah ﷺ merely acts as a conveyer of the divine message. The term *qudsee* means 'sacred, divine or pure'. *A hadeeth qudsee* is so named because, unlike the majority of *ahaadeeth* which are Prophetic *ahaadeeth*, their authority (*sanad*) is traced back not to the Prophet ﷺ but to Almighty Allah.

The Glorious Qur'an is the real Word of Allah, Most High, and the Messenger of Allah ﷺ had only to receive it and then to teach it to the people, explain it to them and act upon its dictates. It is very important to realize that other *ahaadeeth* which are not called *hadeeth qudsee* cannot be said to be uninspired by Allah. The important point is that a *hadeeth qudsee* is not part of the Qur'an although its wording comes directly from Allah. Allah's Messenger ﷺ narrated such sacred *ahaadeeth* as Allah's words. This indicates that they are words from Allah, but it was made clear to the Prophet ﷺ that they did not form part of the Qur'an.

In reality, the *Sunnah* or *hadeeth* is a revelation from Allah: It is unrecited revelation. It is the Prophet's exposition of the Qur'an, or the Qur'an interpreted. It is important to realize that the Qur'an says about the Prophet ﷺ: 'He does not speak of his own desire.' (*Surat an-Najm,* 53:3)

4.16. The Obligation to Follow the *Sunnah*

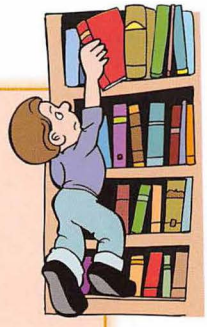
It is obligatory for a person who believes in Allah to follow the *Sunnah*. In fact, the *Sunnah* is the iron framework of the House of Islam. If you remove the framework of a building, it will break down like a house of cards. Not following the *Sunnah* or the teachings of the Prophet ﷺ is the same as not following the commands of Allah ﷻ. Hence, accepting the Prophet's commands, decisions and rulings is part and parcel of faith. Following the Prophet ﷺ is the key to Allah's love, guidance and real life. The *Sunnah* of the Prophet ﷺ is, therefore, next to the Qur'an, the second source of Islamic Law. Denial of the *Sunnah* is in reality tantamount to denial of the Glorious Qur'an. Anyone who refuses to follow the *Sunnah* as embodied in the authentic *ḥadeeth* has left the fold of Islam.

Jamaal ad-Deen Zarabozo observes,

'By the grace of Allah, unlike the Messengers who preceded the Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ, Allah has preserved for Muslims the actual statements and actions of His last Prophet. The Prophet's statements, actions and even his physical appearance are all captured in the body of literature known as the *ḥadeeth* literature. Virtually nothing has been lost from his life. A Muslim can know exactly how he prayed, fasted, engaged in sport and participated in daily matters with his fellow Companions. He can visualize how he ate, drank and sat. Such a miraculous and complete record cannot be found for any other historical figure since man's creation. This is actually another sign of the truth of the Prophethood of Muḥammad, peace be upon him.' (*Towards Understanding Our Religion*, vol. 1 p. 282-3)

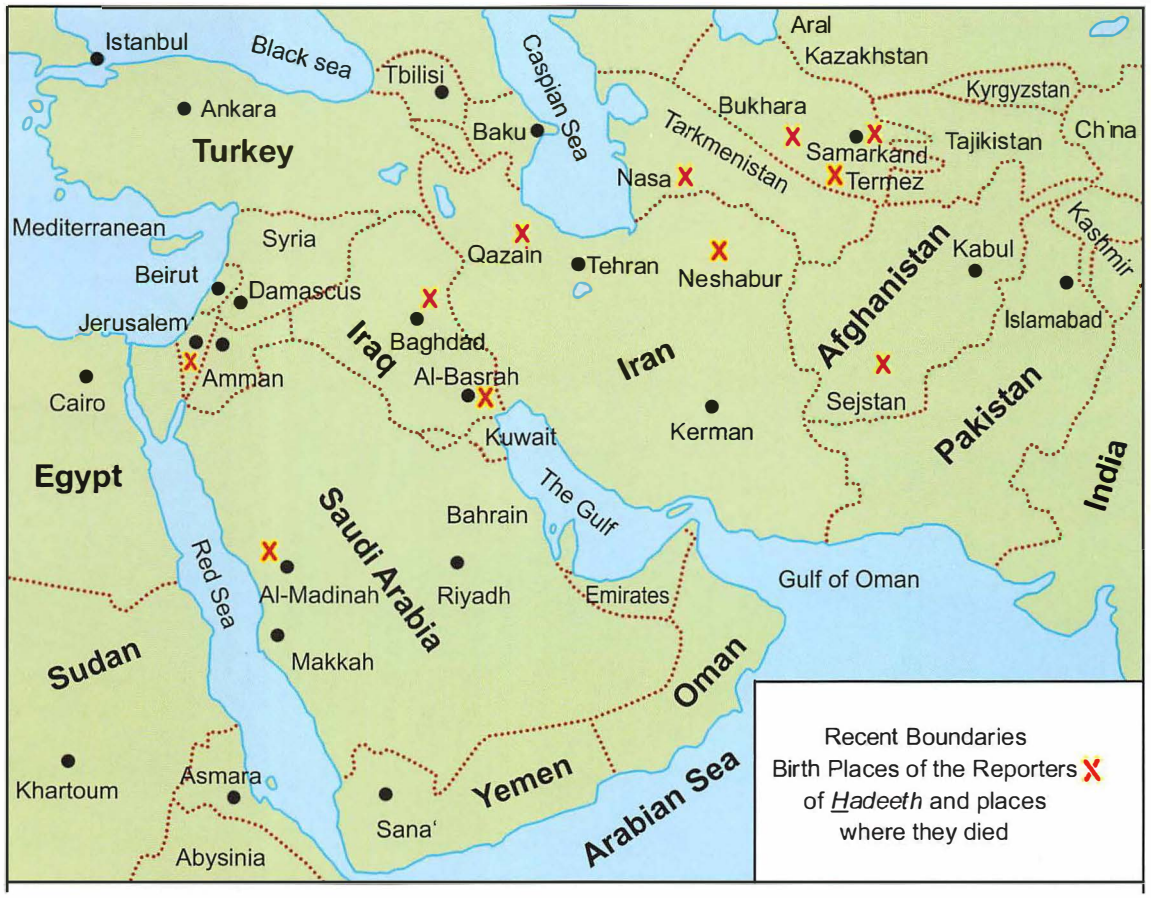
Review

- Name the major collections of *ḥadeeth*.
- Under what general conditions was a *ḥadeeth* not accepted?
- What is an *isnaad* and *asaaneed*? What two other names is the *isnaad* known by?
- What are the various classes/categories of *ḥadeeth*? Describe each class.
- What is a *ḥadeeth qudsee*? How is it different from the Prophetic *ḥadeeth*?
- Why is it obligatory to follow the *Sunnah*? What would happen if one decides to follow only the Glorious Qur'an?



For Further Reading

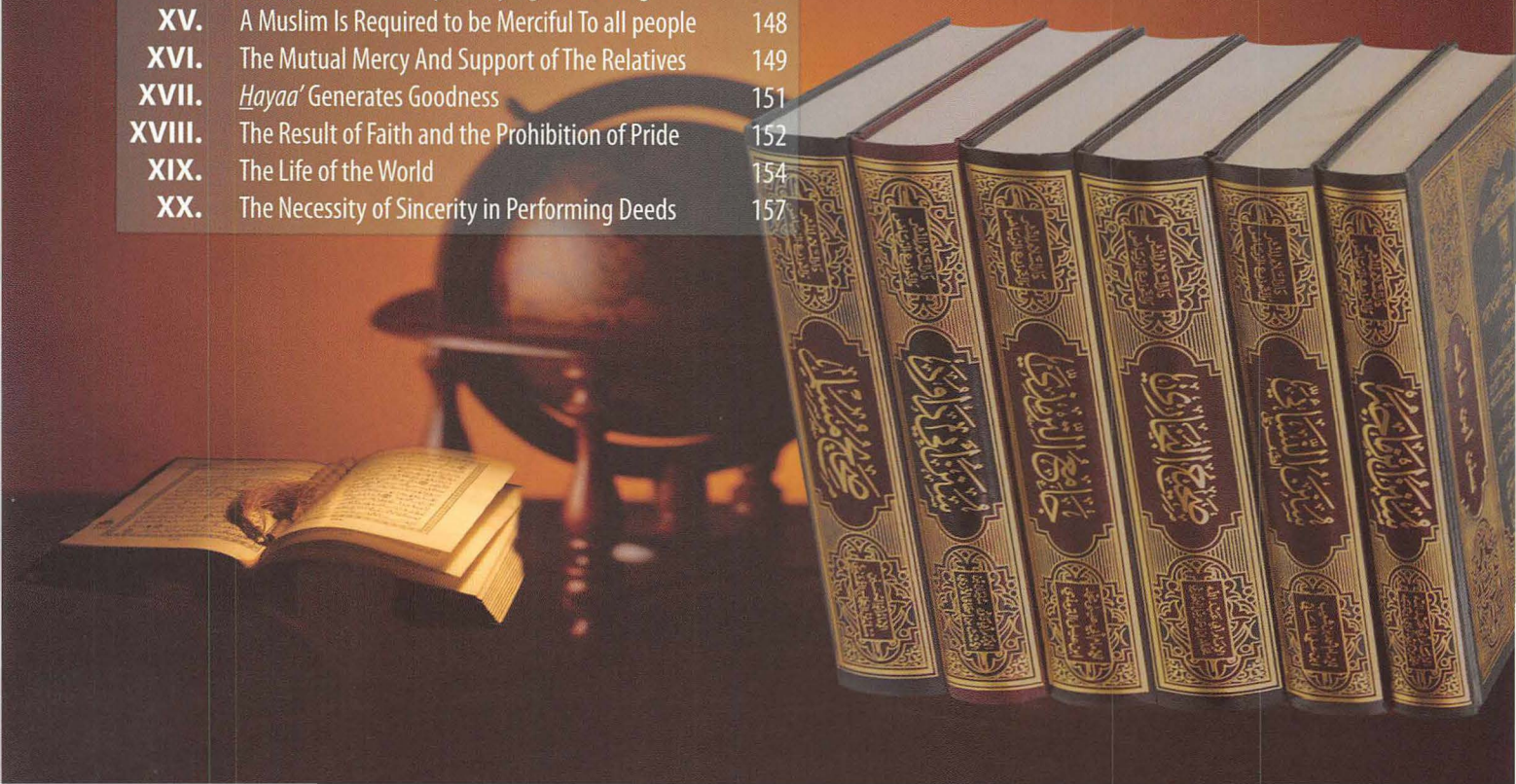
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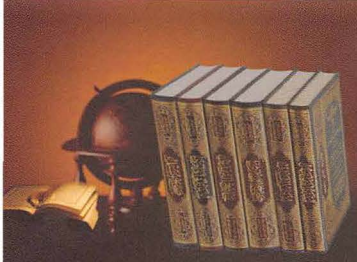


5 The Six Books of *Hadeeth* and their Compilers

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The Six Books of *Hadeeth* and their Compilers 5

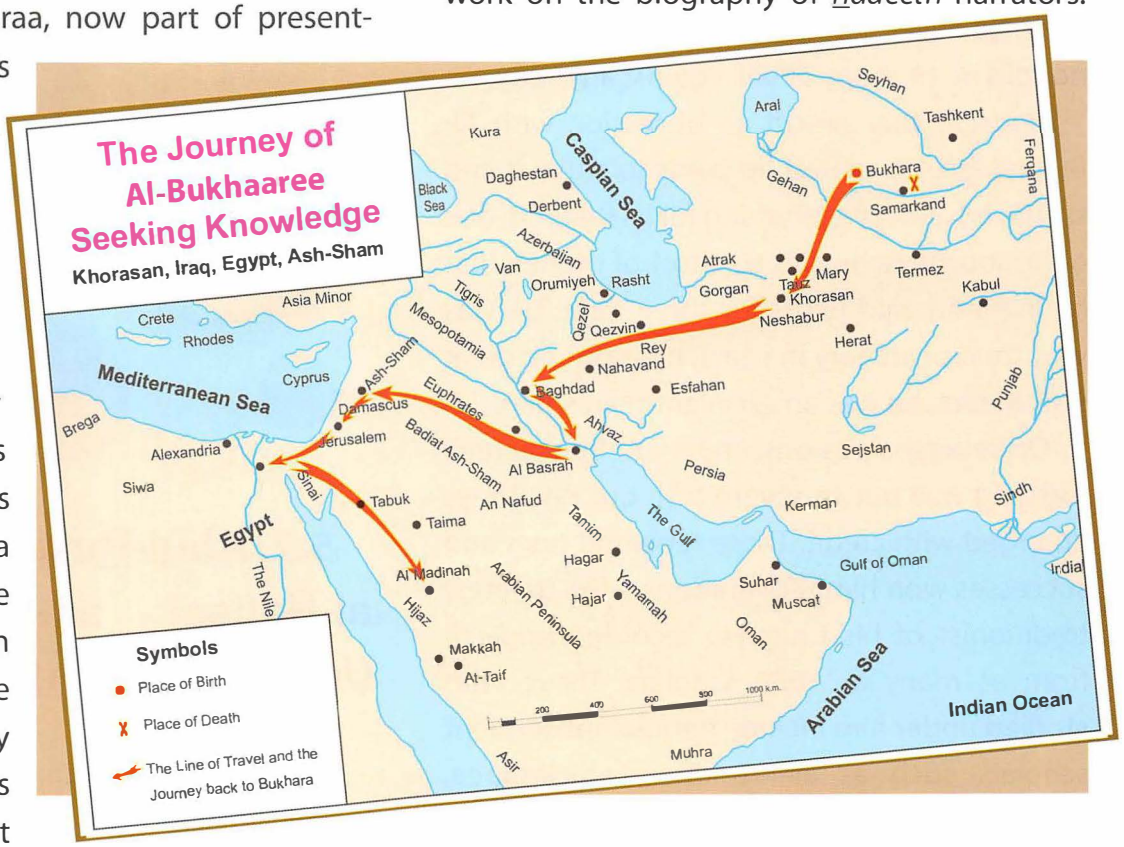


5.1. Abu ʿAbdullaah Muhammad ibn Ismaaʿeel Al-Bukhaaree

Abu ʿAbdullaah Muhammad ibn Ismaaʿeel al-Bukhaaree was born in 194 AH (810 CE) in the city of Bukhaaraa, now part of present-day Uzbekistan. His father Ismaaʿeel was a well-respected scholar. He died when his son was still young.

Al-Bukhaaree began the study of the Prophet's traditions (*ahaadeeth*) at a very young age. He was well-known for his retentive memory. Many Muslim scholars have stated that he would simply look at a book just once and would memorize it. Almighty Allah endowed him with great intellectual powers. Completing his elementary studies at the young age of eleven, he immersed himself in the study of *hadeeth*. Within six years, he had mastered the knowledge of all the traditionists (*muhaddithoon*, scholars of *hadeeth*) of Bukhaaraa. He used his God-given intellectual powers in the service of Islam and the *hadeeth* of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ.

In his sixteenth year, al-Bukhaaree made the pilgrimage (*hajj*) and attended the lectures of the most famous lectures of *hadeeth* in Makkah and Madeenah. He was hardly eighteen years old when he wrote *at-Taareekh al-Kabeer*, which has remained to this day a standard work on the biography of *hadeeth* narrators.



He then started a series of journeys in quest of *hadeeth*. He passed through all the important Islamic centres of Islamic learning and stayed in each place as long as he needed. He met the traditionists, learnt all the *ahaadeeth* they knew and communicated his own knowledge to them. He travelled to Egypt twice and to Koofah and Baghdad many times.

Imaam Al-Bukhaaree's travels continued for some four decades. In the year 250 AH/864 CE, he came to the great Central Asian city Nishapur (also spelt Nisapur) where he was given a grand welcome suitable to a *muhaddith* of his rank. From Nishapur, he travelled to Khartank, a village some ten kilometres away from Samarqand, at the request of its inhabitants. He settled there and died in the year 256 AH/870 CE. His grave is situated in Khartank.

Throughout his life, *Imaam* Al-Bukhaaree, was the character of sincere and saintly Muslim scholar. He rigorously performed his religious obligations. A good deal of his income, in reality, was spent in helping students and the poor. He never showed an ill-temper to anyone, nor did he bear any ill-will against anybody.

Hadeeth was almost an obsession with Al-Bukhaaree. He spared no pains to study it and sacrificed almost everything for its sake. On one of his journeys, he was so short of money that he lived on wild herbs for three days. He was very fond of archery in which he acquired great skill. In fact, he was an excellent marksman.

On several occasions, *Imaam* Al-Bukhaaree's learning was put to severe test, but he always emerged with credit. These repeated tests and successes won him recognition as the greatest traditionist of his time. He recorded *hadeeth* from as many as 1080 scholars. Those who studied under him include famous subsequent scholars such as at-Tirmidhee, an-Nasaa'ee, Muslim, and many others.

Saheeh al-Al-Bukhaaree

Among the Six Collections of *hadeeth*, which are popularly known as *as-Sihaah as-Sittah* (the Six sound collections of *hadeeth*), Al-Bukhaaree holds the first place in several respects, while Muslim comes second, and the two together are known as the *saheehayn* (the two authentic books of *hadeeth*). *Imaam* al-Al-Bukhaaree travelled widely and devoted sixteen years to the compilation of *saheeh al-Al-Bukhaaree*. *Saheeh* al-Al-Bukhaaree has remained to this day the most authentic of all collections. Al-Bukhaaree collected a vast number of *ahaadeeth* from which he then selected 9,082 *ahaadeeth*. He repeated *ahaadeeth* which had more than one chain of narrators (*isnaad*). Discounting all repetitions, al-Bukhaaree contains 2602 *ahaadeeth* and is divided into 106 books and a total of 3450 chapters.

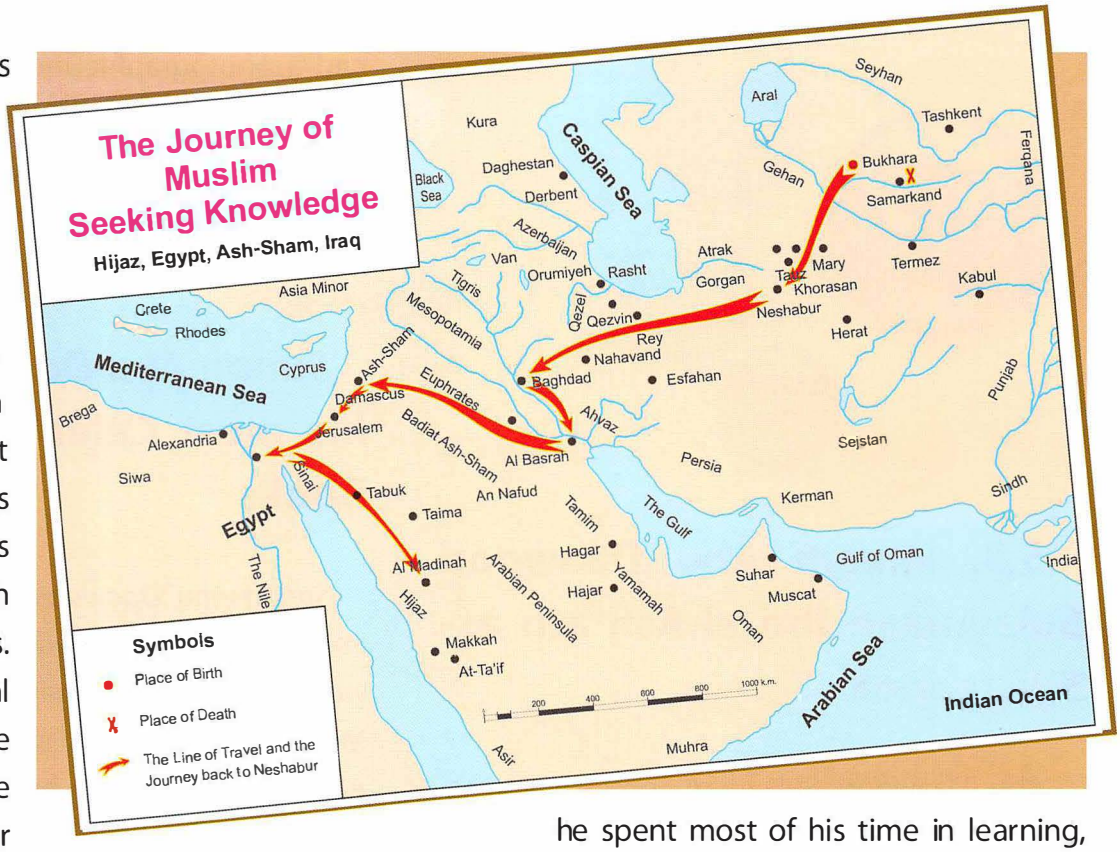
Saheeh al-Bukhaaree has been translated into English by Dr. Muhammad Muhsin Khan.



5.2. Abul-Husayn Muslim ibn al-Hajjaaj an-Naysaabooree (*Imaam* Muslim)

The full name of *Imaam* Muslim is Abul-Husayn Muslim ibn al-Hajjaaj an-Naysaabooree

(Nishapuri). He was born in Mishapur in 204 AH/817 CE, a city in Khuraasaan, now in Iran. His parents were religiously minded persons and as such he was brought up a righteous man and he always adhered to the path of righteousness. His excellent moral character can be judged from the fact that he never indulged in backbiting, a very common human weakness. *Imaam* Muslim travelled widely to collect traditions in Arabia, Egypt, Syria and Iraq, where he attended lectures of some of the prominent traditionists of his time.



After completing his studies, he settled down in Nishapur where he came into contact with *Imaam* al-Bukhaaree. Apparently, he met al- Bukhaaree in the year 250 AH when the latter came to Nishapur. It cannot be denied, however, that he might have met al- Bukhaaree even earlier than this during his travels. *Imaam* Muslim was so impressed by al-Bukhaaree's vast knowledge of *hadeeth* and his deep insight into it that he kept himself attached to him up to the end of his life. He was thus a true disciple of *Imaam* Al-Bukhaaree.

Imaam Muslim lived for about fifty-seven years. Of this short span of his life, he spent most of his time in learning, collecting, teaching and transmitting *hadeeth*. He was buried in the suburbs of Nishapur. Although he compiled a number of works, *Imaam* Muslim is best known for his *Saheeh*. He died in Nishapur in 261 AH/875 CE.

Saheeh Muslim

Saheeh Muslim ranks, along with *Saheeh* al-Bukhaaree, as the most authentic book after the Glorious Qur'an. Yet, most scholars give preference to the compilation of al-Bukhaaree. Not counting repetitions, *saheeh Muslim* contains 4000 *ahaadeeth*; counting repetitions, it contains 7275 *ahaadeeth*. Any *hadeeth*, which is found in both the collections of al-Bukhaaree and Muslim carries great significance. Such *ahaadeeth* are called 'agreed upon', which means both al-Bukhaaree and Muslim have agreed that the traditions in them are authentic. *Saheeh Muslim* is available in English translation as well. It was first rendered into English by ʿAbdul-Hameed Siddeeq. This work does not contain the Arabic text. The new English translation of *Saheeh Muslim* which is published by Darusalam, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, does have the Arabic text.



5.3. *Imaam* Abu Daawood Sulaymaan ibn al-Ashʿath as-Sijistaanee

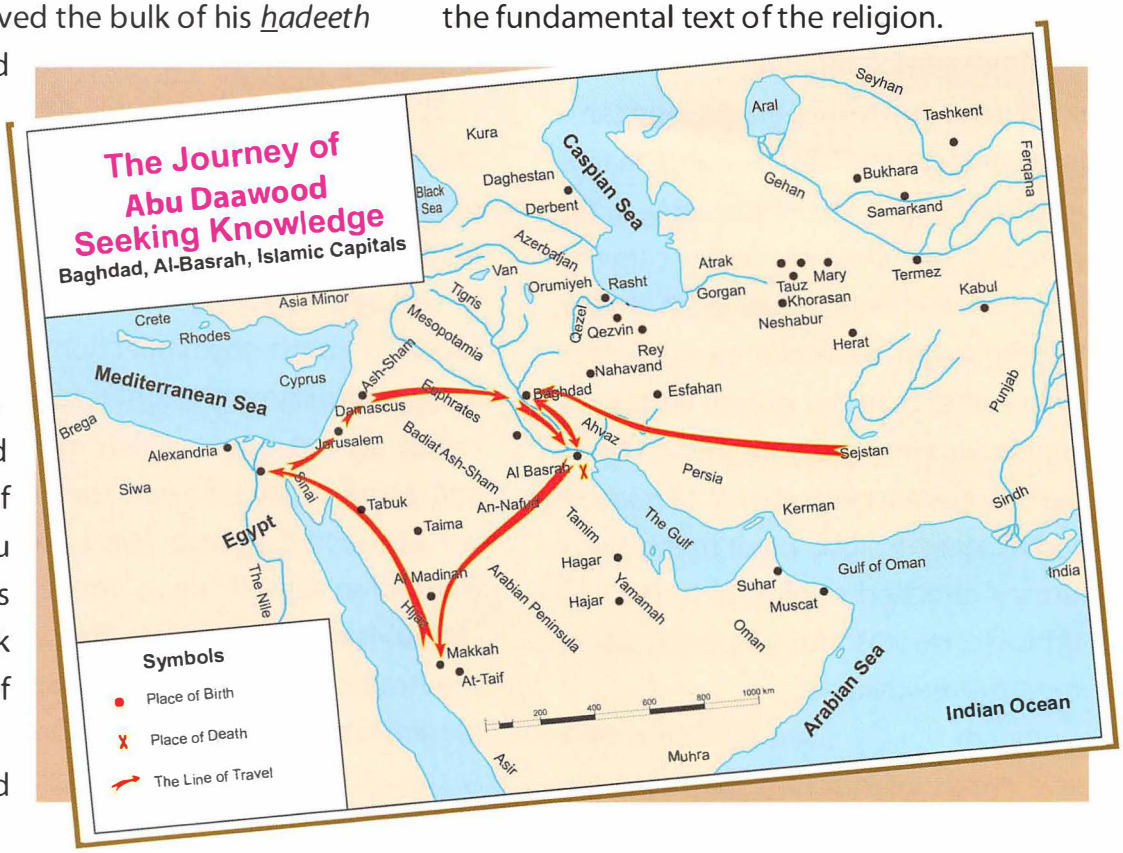
Abu Daawood Sulayman ibn Ashʿath as-Sijistaanee, commonly known as Abu Daawood, was born in the year 202 AH/817 CE, in Sijistaan, a region which today stretches from south eastern Iran to south western Afghanistan.

His elementary education took place in his native town. When he was ten, he joined a school in Nishapur. He then travelled to Basra, Iraq, where he received the bulk of his *hadeeth* training. He visited Koofah, Hijaz, Syria and Egypt. He met most of the prominent traditionists of his time, and he gained from them a profound knowledge of *hadeeth*. Abu Daawood's travels regularly took time to the city of Baghdad.

Abu Daawood had a photographic memory. His knowledge of the Prophet's traditions was very vast and deep. He was a man of upright character. Abu Daawood died in Basra in the year 275 AH/883 CE, at the age of 73.

Sunan Abu Daawood: One of his most Celebrated *Hadeeth* Books

Sunan Abu Daawood is among the most important of the *hadeeth* collections. This work occupied Abu Daawood for twenty years. Most of the scholars are agreed that *Sunan Abu Daawood* is the best of the four *Sunan* compilations (the other three being *Sunan at-Tirmidhee*, *Sunan an-Nasaa'ee* and *Sunan* Ibn Majaah). *Sunan Abu Daawood* is ranked as third in importance after *Saheeh al-Bukhaaree* and *Saheeh Muslim*. Some Muslim scholars have stated that if a person has the Book of Allah and the *Sunan* of Abu Daawood, then he has the fundamental text of the religion.



Sunan Abu Daawood is available in English. It has been recently rendered into English by Yasir Qadhi and Nasiruddin al-Khattab. It is published by Darussalam, Riyadh; Saudi Arabia. It contains the Arabic text and includes 5,274 narrations.



5.4. Abu ʿEesaa Muhammad ibn ʿEesaa at-Tirmidhee

Abu ʿEesaa Muhammad ibn ʿEesaa at-Tirmidhee was born in 209 AH (824 CE) in Tirmidh (sometimes spelt Termez), which is situated on the north bank of the river Oxus (Amu Darya) in the present-day Uzbekistan.

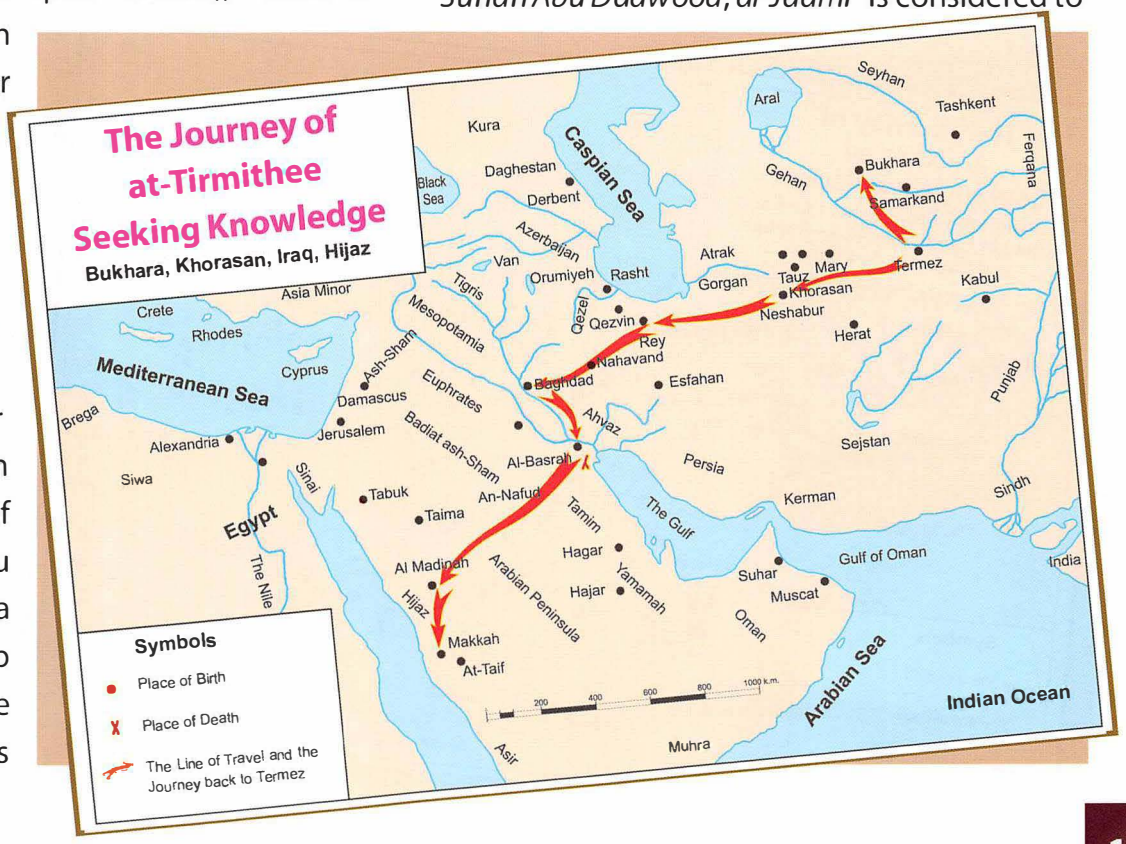
While he was young, he began learning in his own city and later travelled to learn from the scholars of various lands. Abu ʿEesaa possessed a remarkably sharp and retentive memory, which was put to severe tests many times. He travelled a great deal in search of traditions. He visited the great centres of Islamic learning in Iran, Khuraasaan and Iraq. There he was able to associate with prominent traditionists such as al-Bukhaaree, Muslim, Abu Daawood and several others. In fact, at-Tirmidhee was *Imaam* al-Bukhaaree's successor.

At-Tirmidhee was well-known for his knowledge and piety. One of his works was a compilation of the Prophet's character and manners, commonly known as *Shamaa'il at-Tirmidhee*.

Imaam at-Tirmidhee died in Tirmidh in the year 279 AH (892 CE).

At-Tirmidhee's *al-Jaami*ʿ

*Al-Jaami*ʿ or *Sunan at-Tirmidhee* is one of what is called 'the Six Books of *Hadeeth*'. It contains chapters on all the essential *fiqh* (jurisprudence) topics. It is one of the most important works on *hadeeth* literature. After *Sunan Abu Daawood*, *al-Jaami*ʿ is considered to



be the most authentic among the four *Sunan*. In fact, some scholars even considered *Sunan at-Tirmidhee* to be the best out of all the Six Books, not in terms of authenticity, but in terms of organisation, making it easy for an average person to find what he is looking for.

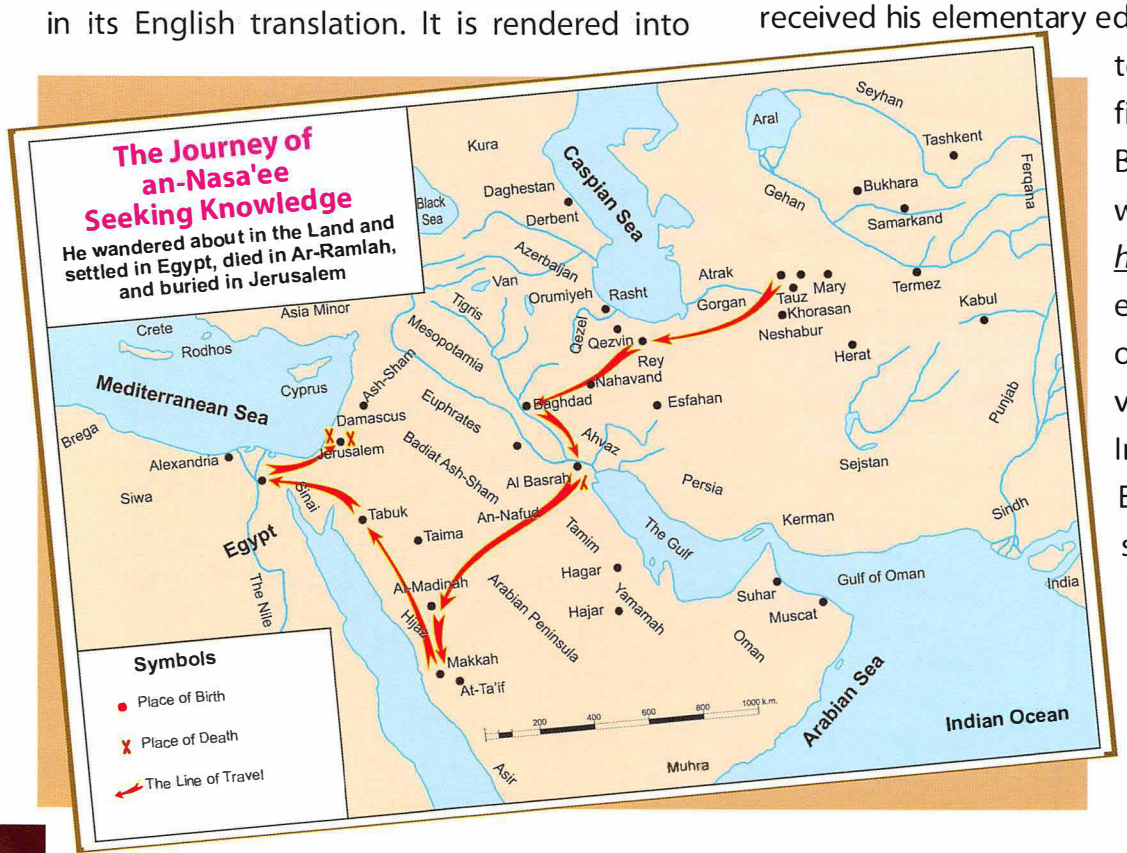
Imaam at-Tirmidhee categorizes *ahaadeeth* as either *saheeh* (sound), *hasan* (fair or good), *hasan saheeh* (good, sound), *saheeh hasan* (sound, good), *ghareeb* (rare), *da'eef* (weak) and *munkar* (undetermined). But perhaps the most significant trait of *al-Jaami'*, so far as assessments of authenticity is concerned, is the category of *hasan* (good). *Imaam* at-Tirmidhee defines a *hadeeth* that is *hasan* as one that has been related by narrators who are not accused of falsehood, provided it is handed down by more than one chain of transmitters, and is not opposed to what has been related by other reliable narrators.

Thus, *al-Jaami'* has enough virtues to ensure it a place as a distinctive work among *hadeeth* collections. *Jaami' at-Tirmidhee* is now available in its English translation. It is rendered into English by Abu Khaliyl and is published by Darussalam, Riyadh; Saudi Arabia. This edition runs into six volumes and contains 3956 *ahaadeeth*.



5.5. Abu 'Abdur-Rahmaan Ahmad ibn Shu'ayb ibn 'Ali an-Nasaa'ee

Abu 'Abdur-Rahmaan Ahmad ibn Shu'ayb ibn 'Ali an-Nasaa'ee was born in the year 215 AH/830 CE, in Nasaa, a town in Khuraasaan. He received his elementary education in his home territory. At the age of fifteen he travelled to Balkh, Afghanistan, where he studied *hadeeth*. He travelled extensively in search of *hadeeth* and visited Khuraasaan, Iraq, Arabia, Syria and Egypt. He was a great scholar of *hadeeth* and wrote many books. He died in Damascus in the year 303 AH/915 CE at the age of 88.



Sunan an-Nasaa'ee

Sunan an-Nasaa'ee is accepted as one of the Six Books of *hadeeth* collections. It has been translated into English by Nasiruddin al-Khattab, and is published by Darussalam. It runs into six volumes and includes 5,761 *ahaadeeth*.



5.6. Abu ʿAbdullaah Muhammad ibn Yazeed Ibn Maajah ar-Rabʿee

Abu ʿAbdullaah Muhammad ibn Yazeed ar-Rabʿee al-Qazweenee (commonly known as Ibn Maajah) was born in 209 AH/824 CE in Qazween, Iran. He was nicknamed Ibn Maajah. Some scholars hold that his mother's name was Maajah.

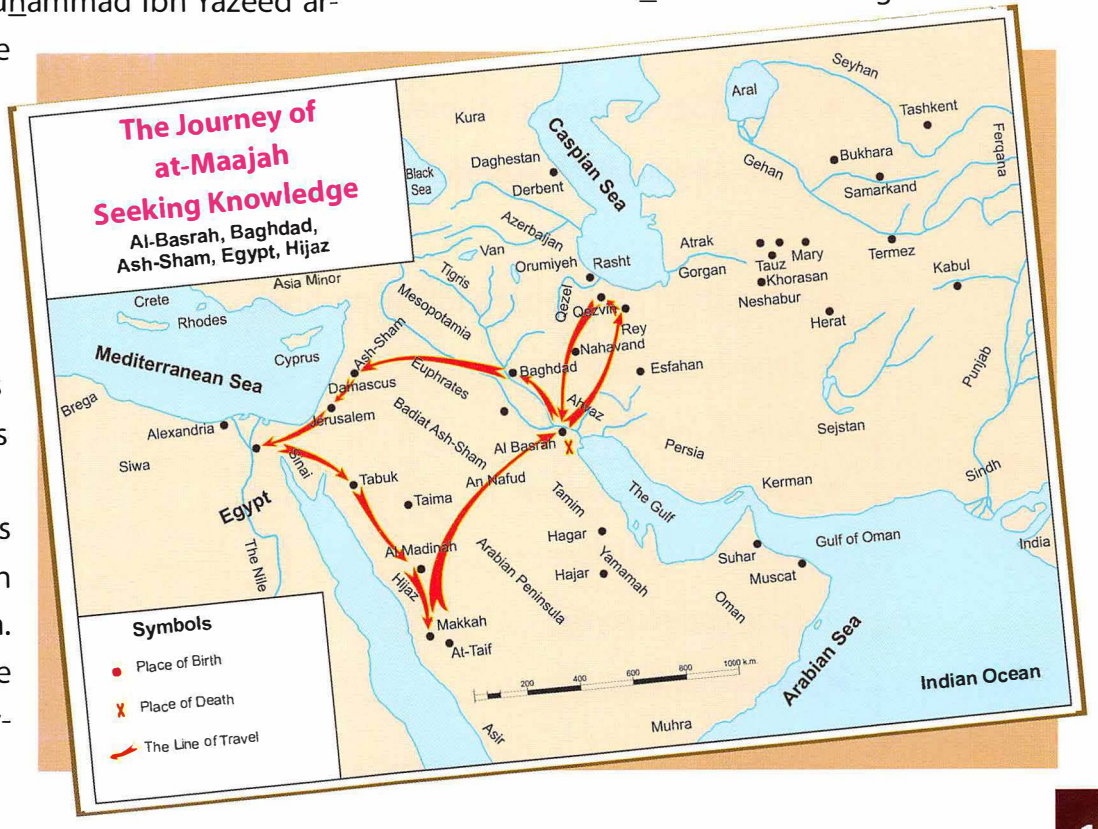
He received his elementary education in his own home town. In 230 AH, when he was about twenty-two years old, he began his travels to other countries to acquire more of *hadeeth* sciences. He travelled to Khuraasaan, Iraq, Arabia, Egypt and Syria and attended the gatherings of *hadeeth* scholars. He also travelled to Basra, Koofah and Baghdad and learnt *hadeeth* from the scholars of Makkah and Madeenah. He never paused but continued his travels in quest of knowledge.

Ibn Maajah is counted among the greatest and most high-ranking scholars of *hadeeth*. He has the honour of being one of the six leading scholars whose collections of *hadeeth* are widely popular among the Muslims. He achieved great fame for serving the *hadeeth* sciences and played an important role in recording *ahaadeeth*.

Ibn Maajah died in the year 273 AH/887 CE.

Sunan Ibn Maajah

Sunan Ibn Maajah is counted among the sound six or the Six Books. Ibn Maajah contains 4341 *ahaadeeth*. It is significant to



realize that out of these 4,341 *ahaadeeth* 3002 have been recorded by compilers of the other Five Books, either by all or one of them. The remaining 1339 *ahaadeeth* are collected by Ibn Maajah alone. They are not recorded by the other Five *hadeeth* collectors. Scholars place these traditions in the following ranks:

Out of 1339 *ahaadeeth*, 428 *ahaadeeth* are classified as '*saheeh*' (authentic); 199 are classified as '*hasan*' (fair or good); 613 are classified as '*da'eef*' (weak); while 99 are classified as '*munkar*' (denounced) and '*mawdoo'*' (fabricated). It is highly rewarding to note that the last *hadeeth* recorded by Ibn Maajah, namely *hadeeth* no. 4341, is one of those *ahaadeeth* or traditions that only Ibn Maajah has recorded. The other five collectors did not, and this *hadeeth* is '*saheeh*' (authentic).

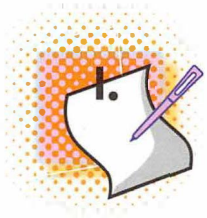
Sunan Ibn Maajah, which has been translated into English by Nasiruddin al-Khattab, is published by Darussalam, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia and runs into five volumes.

Review

- Write short notes on the following people's lives.
  - Abu 'Abdullaah Muhammad ibn Ismaa'eel alBukhaaree
  - Abul-Husayn Muslim ibn al-Hajjaaj an-Nishapuri
  - Abu Daawood Sulayman ibn al-Ash'ath as-Sijistaanee
  - Abu 'Eesaa Muhammad ibn 'Eesaa at-Tirmidhee
  - Abu 'Abdur-Rahmaan Ahmad ibn Shu'ayb ibn 'Ali an-Nasaa'ee
  - Abu 'Abdullaah Muhammad ibn Yazeed Ibn Maajah ar-Rab'ee
- Write short notes on the following works.
  - *Saheeh al-Al-Bukhaaree*
  - *Saheeh Muslim*
  - *Sunan Abu Daawood*
  - *Sunan at-Tirmidhee*
  - *Sunan an-Nasaa'ee*
  - *Sunan Ibn Maajah*



5.7. *Hadeeth* for Special Study



Religion is *an-Naseehah*

عَنْ أَبِي رُقَيَّة تَمِيم الدَّارِي(رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ) أَنَّ النَّبِيَّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ: « الدِّينُ النَّصِيحَةُ.» قُلْنَا: "لِمَنْ ؟" قَالَ : "لِلَّهِ ، وَلِكِتَابِهِ ، وَلِرَسُولِهِ ، وَلأَئِمَّةِ الْمُسْلِمِينَ وَعَامَّتِهِمْ «.(رَوَاهُ مُسْلِم)

Abu Ruqayyah Tameem ad-Daaree ﷺ narrated that the Prophet ﷺ said, 'The religion is sincerity (*an-naseehah*).' We asked him, 'To whom?' he replied, 'To Allah and His Book and His Messenger, and to the leaders of the Muslims and their common folk.' (reported by Muslim)

Religion is Sincerity (*an-Naseehah*)

This *hadeeth* contains great intellectual depth and understanding. If the Muslims act upon it, it will undoubtedly be sufficient to guide them. Some scholars have called this *hadeeth* one fourth of the religion, but in reality, its meaning embraces the whole of the religion of Islam.

The Word '*Deen*'

The word *deen* is used in several different ways in the Qur'an, but the most common use of it is for a system of beliefs or code of life or religion. It is usually translated as religion (as in this *hadeeth*), but this translation is inaccurate. The word 'religion', which is very common, has a very narrow and limited meaning. It usually refers to rites and rituals, whereas '*deen*' is a comprehensive term. It embraces all aspects of life. Thus, in Islam, *deen* is a keyword and a technical term to denote the whole array of meanings pertaining to the system of beliefs as well as to the complete code of life. Thus it is not possible to translate this into a single word in English.

In Islamic terminology, *ad-deen* is the way of life in which Allah is recognized as the Sovereign, the Master, and the Lord to whom human beings should surrender, submit, and humble themselves. He should be accepted as the Lord of reward and punishment in the afterlife. Islam is the name of this *deen*. Within the meaning of *deen*, obedience to Allah's Messengers is implied. This is because Allah's commandments are conveyed to human beings through His Books which he revealed to his Messengers. All the messengers of Allah, from Aadam ﷺ to Muhammad ﷺ, conveyed the same message: 'So fear Allah, and obey me.' (*Soorat ash-Shu'araa'*, 26:108) This was the message of all of Allah's messengers. However, detailed laws and regulations (*Sharee'ah*) changed as the human race went through the different stages of its history. (Abdur Rashid Siddiqui, *Qur'anic Keywords*, pp. 42-46)

The Meaning of the Expression *an-Naseehah*

The Arabic word *naseehah* is difficult to translate into English. It embraces sincerity, good advice and well-wishing. The word has two basic linguistic meanings. One meaning is to clean, to purify or to improve something; for example to purify honey from impurities. Hence, pure honey is called *naseehat al-'asal*. The other meaning is 'to unite or to join something together such as when sewing a garment'. The word *naseehah* is usually translated as giving sincere advice or a friendly reminder. Thus, it is a very comprehensive term and stands for all those virtues and deeds for which the advice is given. In fact, *naseehah* implies that a person loves for his brother what is good, invites him to it, makes it clear to him and encourages him to do it.

Ad-Deen or Religion is good advice or well-wishing

In this *hadeeth* Allah's Messenger ﷺ states that the religion of Islam is *naseehah*. This profound statement is full of meanings. In this one short sentence, the Prophet ﷺ describes the heart of Islam.

To Allah

When asked to whom this *naseehah* is due, the Prophet ﷺ first said, 'To Allah'. In this *hadeeth*, *naseehah* in respect of Allah means: believing in Him, denying any partners to Him, affirming all His attributes that are stated in the Qur'an and the *Sunnah*, fulfilling the obligatory duties, obeying His commands, keeping away from what He has prohibited, doing one's best to remember Him under all conditions, loving and hating for His sake, demonstrating absolute sincerity and devotion to him, and remaining grateful to Him for His blessings and thanking Him. This implies that a Muslim should strive hard to get as close to Allah as possible by performing the obligatory duties, doing voluntary deeds and remembering Him.

To His Book

Naseehah in respect of Allah's Book requires that one must believe that the Qur'an is the speech and the uncreated word of Allah. *Naseehah* in respect of the Book also requires that one must read and recite it properly, act upon its teachings, and calls others to believe in it. It also implies having respect for it and treating it in the proper manner.

To His Messenger ﷺ

Naseehah in respect to His Messenger ﷺ includes the following: to believe and accept him as the Last Messenger of Allah ﷺ, believe his message, believe in all that he brought as being divinely revealed, obey him, help and defend him, defend his honour and respect his status, and to accept him as the supreme guide and the true leader. Everyone else's opinions and utterances come after his statements.

To the Leaders of the Muslims

Among Muslims there are two kinds of leaders: religious leaders or scholars (*'ulamaa'*) and the worldly rulers or leaders. This *hadeeth* signifies both these kinds.

Naseehah in respect of the leaders of the Muslims includes: cooperating with them for the truth, helping them when they are following the truth, obeying them in what is right, and reminding them if they should err or forget. One should also pray for their guidance and righteousness, because this would ultimately benefit the Muslims in the first place, uniting the hearts of the Muslims in obedience to them and not revolting against their proper authority. Muslim leaders are human beings after all, and to err is human. Therefore, they are in need of sincere advice like any other Muslim. Part of the *naseehah* to the leaders also includes when the leaders appoint someone to a task or official position, that person should discharge his duties honestly, carefully and painstakingly. He should not cheat or defraud the authority in any way.

Muslim scholars are leaders in the sense that they guide the Muslim to the teachings of Islam. They are the ones who know how the teachings of the Qur'an and the *Sunnah* are to be practised in daily life. Their position is one of paramount significance for the Muslim society. If they make mistakes, one should correct them in an adequate manner. One may advise them directly if it is possible. Otherwise, one could write to them or get in touch with those who are in direct contact with them. It is not proper to search for their failings and shortcomings.

To the Common Folk of the Muslims

Naseehah in respect of the common folk of the Muslims includes: teaching them about Islam and guiding them to what is good for them in both this world and the hereafter. A Muslim should accept the sound advice that comes to him from any source. (For a brilliant and fuller commentary on this *hadeeth*, it is recommended to read *Commentary on the Forty Hadeeth of an-Nawawee* by Jamaal ad-Deen Zarabozo. This work, which falls in three volumes, is a mine of information and knowledge.)

Review

- Define the terms:
  - *ad-deen*
  - an-*naseehah*
- Explain the meaning of the *hadeeth*: "Religion is sincerity."
- Briefly write about what the Prophet ﷺ meant when he said "Religion is sincerity to:"
  - Allah
  - His Book
  - His Messenger ﷺ
  - The leaders of the Muslims
  - The common Muslim folk



The Sign of True and Complete Faith

عَنْ أَبِي حَمْزَةَ أَنَسِ بْنِ مَالِكٍ (رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ) عَنِ النَّبِيِّ (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) قَالَ: "لاَ يُؤْمِنُ أَحَدُكُمْ حَتَّى يُحِبَّ لِأَخِيهِ مَا يُحِبُّ لِنَفْسِهِ». (رَوَاهُ الْبُخَارِي وَمُسْلِم)

Anas ibn Maalik ﷺ narrated that the Prophet ﷺ said, 'None of you truly believes until he loves for his brother what he loves for himself.' (Reported by al-Al-Bukhaaree and Muslim)

This *hadeeth* fixes one of the most vital rules of behaviour in Islam. The significance of this standard is so great that some scholars consider this *hadeeth* one-fourth or one-third of Islam.

None of you truly believes until he loves for his brother what he loves for himself. This is the condition that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ announced for true faith. What the *hadeeth* stipulates is that a Muslim does not reach the reality of faith (*eemaan*) until he loves for others what he loves for himself.

It is, however, significant to realize that a person who does not love for his brother what he loves for himself does not become a disbeliever. What the *hadeeth* indicates is that for a person to have true and complete faith, he must love for his brother what he loves for himself. This *hadeeth* simply stresses the fact that this attribute is an essential pillar of true and complete faith. It should be kept clearly in mind that there is much more to faith than merely loving for one's brother what one loves for oneself.

True believers want good not only for themselves but also for each other. Describing the community of believers, Allah's Messenger ﷺ once said, 'The parable of the believers with respect to their mutual compassion, love and sympathy is like that of one body: if one of its limbs is ill, the whole body suffers from sleeplessness and fever.' (Reported by Muslim)

Thus, the true believers feel happy when they see that the other believers are happy, and they feel sad when they see that they are unhappy. But this can come about when the person's heart is free of jealousy, grudges and envy. Envy is a sickness of the soul which disturbs the life of an individual and society as a whole. It is like the plague. When a society suffers from this psychological disease its foundations are shaken, people are divided, and the wellbeing of the whole community is affected.

Envy, as defined by scholars, is the pain felt when you see that another person has something good or good moral qualities, and you do your utmost to destroy his possession or qualities. It is said that envy was the first sin committed in heaven when Satan envied Aadam ﷺ. In fact, it was the first sin committed on earth when Cain envied Abel and killed him. Thus, an envious person is a mean enemy who cannot fulfil his wicked desire except by wishing harm to others. An envious person can never relax, and the corrupt person has no dignity. The envious person feels sad when he sees that someone has good fortune. Therefore, there is no such thing as a true believer who has such feelings in his heart for others. A true believer knows that everything comes from Allah. There is no need for him to feel any sort of envy or jealousy with respect to his fellow men.

According to some scholars, the principle stipulated in this *hadeeth* embraces both one's brothers in faith as well as one's non-Muslim brethren. It is, however, in the sense that one loves for one's disbelieving brother: his conversion to Islam, just as one loves for one's Muslim brother his remaining in Islam. This *hadeeth* proves the incompleteness of the faith of anyone who does not love for his brother what he loves for himself.

Review

- 'None of you truly believes until he loves for his brother what he loves for himself.' Does this mean that an envious person is not a Muslim? What does this *hadeeth* signify?
- Explain the meaning of envy and why Muslims must not be envious?



Three Traits of Believers

عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ (رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ) أَنَّ رَسُولَ اللهِ (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) قَالَ: " مَنْ كَانَ يُؤْمِنُ بِاللهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ فَلْيَقُلْ خَيْراً أَوْ لِيَصْمُتْ، وَمَنْ كَانَ يُؤْمِنُ بِاللهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ فَلْيُكْرِمْ جَارَهُ، ومَنْ كَانَ يُؤْمِنُ بِاللهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ فَلْيُكْرِمْ ضَيْفَهُ." (رَوَاهُ الْبُخَارِي وَمُسْلِم)

Abu Hurayrah ﷺ narrated that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, 'Let him who believes in Allah and the Last Day either speak good or keep silent, and let him who believes in Allah and the Last Day honour his neighbour, and let him who believes in Allah and the Last Day be generous to his guest.' (Reported by al-Al-Bukhaaree and Muslim)

'Let him who Believes in Allah and the Last Day...'

In this *hadeeth*, Allah's Messenger ﷺ mentions three traits of those who believe in Allah and the Last Day. These traits or deeds are parts of complete faith. This suggests that the person who does not possess these characteristics is not a true and complete believer.

It is important to note that the Prophet ﷺ mentions in this *hadeeth* only belief in Allah and the Last Day. This is because it will be on the Last Day that everyone will be held accountable for their actions. These actions include what the person ever uttered, how they treated their neighbours and how they treated their guests. Hence, the Last Day, which will be the Day of Judgment, is specifically mentioned so that it could serve as a reminder or encouragement, which should lead every believer to make sure that he truly has the traits that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ mentions in this *hadeeth*.

Speaking Good or Keeping Silent

The first trait that Allah's Messenger ﷺ mentions in this tradition concerns the tongue. Words have a far greater impact than one

might think. One might say a single word that is bound to ruin his life and destroy his prospects of success in the hereafter. On the other hand, he might say a single word or phrase, which is so meaningful in a positive sense that Allah raises him by many degrees. The Prophet ﷺ said, 'Indeed, a slave may utter a word without contemplating its consequences and because of it he slips into the Hellfire further than the distance between the East and the West.' (Reported by al-Bukhaaree and Muslim)

Therefore, a person who believes in Allah and the Last Day should be very cautious about their speech. Although some words might lead to misery and punishment, there are yet other words that can lead to happiness and a great reward. The Prophet ﷺ said, 'Indeed, a slave may utter a word that is so pleasing to Allah without giving it any importance, and because of that Allah will raise him to a number of degrees [of reward]. Conversely, a slave [of Allah] may utter a word carelessly without thinking of its gravity; and because of that he will be thrown into the Hellfire.' (Reported by al-Bukhaaree)

The Prophet ﷺ said in another *hadeeth*:

'When the son of Adam wakes up in the morning, his limbs humble themselves before the tongue, saying, "Fear Allah for our sake because we are with you (i.e. we will be rewarded or punished as a result of what you do). If you are straight, we will be straight; and if you are crooked, we will become crooked."' (Reported by Ahmad and at-Tirmidhee)

In fact, one's worth may be identified by a very small part of one's body: the tongue. Thus, whenever one intends to speak, it is wise to weigh one's words and dwell upon the worthiness of one's speech.

Good Speech embraces all sayings that are recommended and required by Islam. A good Muslim must engage only in good speech and try his best to avoid speech that is not good and that does not lead to goodness.

Observing Silence

This is the second choice for the believer. It is said silence is security. To say nothing at the proper time is a characteristic of true believers, just as to speak at the proper occasion is one of the noble qualities. Nothing is worthier of a stay in prison than the tongue. Allah has not made two doors for everything, but He has made four for the tongue: the two lips and the upper and lower teeth.

The list of negative or harmful kinds of speech is pretty long. People may easily get involved into anyone of them. They include backbiting, lying, giving false testimony, ridiculing others, spreading rumours, cursing, abusing, disclosing others' secrets, and breaking promises.

Honouring One's Neighbour

Honouring one's neighbour involves various displays of kindness and friendliness, such as making sure one's neighbour is doing well, extending greetings of peace (*salaam*), giving gifts, meeting one's neighbour with a smiling face, helping them when they need help, and so on. It also involves refraining from harming them in any way.

The word neighbour applies to both a Muslim and a non-Muslim, to a pious worshipper and an evildoer, to a friend and an enemy, to a relative and a non-relative, to a kind neighbour and one who causes harm, and to one whose house is near as well as one whose house is slightly away.

Neighbours vary in degrees. One's next door neighbour has more rights than a neighbour who lives a little away, such as a person who lives two houses down or on the next floor of an apartment building, as opposed to one who lives on the same floor. One should display goodness towards one's neighbour by helping them when they seek help and visiting them when they fall ill. One should not attempt to look into their private matters nor harm them by letting one's rubbish onto their property or at their doorsteps. These actions form part of the goodness that one is commanded to observe. Allah's Messenger ﷺ is reported as having said,

'By Allah, he is not a true believer; by Allah, he is not a true believer; by Allah, he is not a true believer.' It was asked, 'Who is that, Messenger of Allah?' He replied, 'The one whose neighbour is not safe from his evil.' (al-Bukhaaree)

A person can harm their neighbour in varying ways and degrees; the greatest degree being harm that involves having sexual relations with a neighbour's wife.

Honouring One's Guest



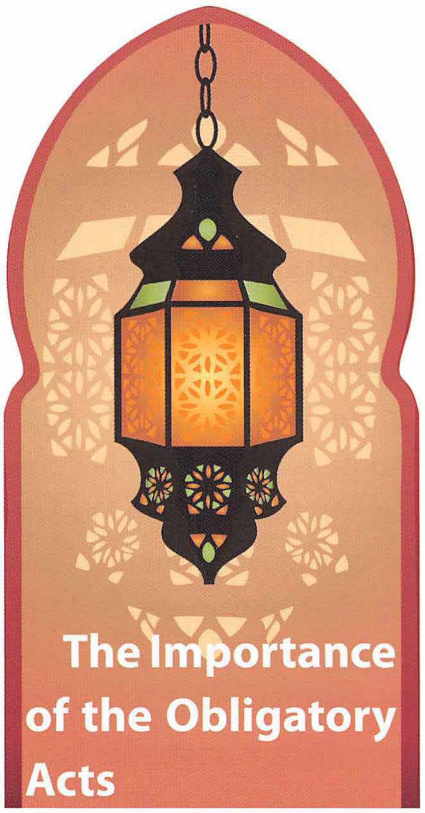
Allah's Messenger ﷺ then mentions that a person who truly believes in Allah and the Last Day is generous to his guests. Various authentic *ahaadeeth* encourage believers to be generous to their guests. Indeed, doing so is a *Sunnah* of the Prophet ﷺ, which is recommended but not obligatory, and the Prophet ﷺ considers doing so a sign of true faith in Allah and the Last Day. Some scholars maintain that hosting is an obligation, in particular for the first day and night, upon the person who has the means to do so.

In the present-day social setup, the function of entertainment and hospitality of guests has been taken over by hotels and restaurants. But in the past, hospitality had a special place in households. Even today, entertaining guests is an important part in Muslim society. Everyone, at one time or another, becomes a guest of another person. Allah's Messenger ﷺ said, 'Let anyone who believes in Allah and the Last Day honour his guest. His *jaa'izah* (special gift) is one day and night. He is to be entertained for three days. Whatever is beyond that is an act of charity. It is not lawful for a guest to stay with his host to the point that he makes it difficult for him.' (al-Bukhaaree)

Exploring the term *jaa'izah*, Muslim scholars state that a host should be extra generous on the first night, and then should give his guest, on the second and the third night what he normally has himself.

Review

- What is the significance of mentioning belief in 'the Last Day' in the above *hadeeth*?
- Why does Allah command us to either speak good or be silent?
- What does the Arabic word 'neighbour' signify in Islam? How are we supposed to treat our neighbours?
- What are the rights and responsibilities of a guest in Islam? Answer this question only with reference to the above *hadeeth*.



IV.

The Importance of the Obligatory Acts

عَن جَابِرِ بْنِ عَبْدِ الله (رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ) أَنَّ رَجلاً سَأَلَ النَّبِيَ (صَلّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) : "أَرَأَيْتَ إِذَا صَلَّيْتُ الصَّلَوَاتِ الْمَكْتُوبَاتِ وَصُمْتُ رَمَضَانَ ، وَأَحْلَلْتُ الْحَلاَلَ وَحَرَّمْتُ الْحَرَامَ ، وَلَمْ أَزِدْ عَلَى ذَلِكَ شَيْئاً، أَأَدْخُلُ الْجَنَّةَ ؟" قَالَ: "نَعَمْ." (رَوَاه مُسْلِم)

Jaabir ibn ʿAbdullaah ﷺ narrated that a man asked the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, 'Do you think that if I perform the obligatory prayers, fast *Ramaḍaan*, treat that which is lawful as lawful and treat that which is forbidden as forbidden, and do nothing further, shall I enter Paradise?' The Prophet ﷺ said, 'Yes.' (Muslim)

In this tradition, the questioner only mentioned the obligatory prayers and the fast of *Ramaḍaan*, but he did not mention the pilgrimage (*ḥajj*) and *zakaat* (the purifying dues). Why is that? Muslim scholars have provided two different answers to this question: first, these two acts may not have become obligatory by the time the questioner asked the Prophet ﷺ this question. Second, the questioner may not have been a rich man, because both the pilgrimage and *zakaat* require wealth.

'And do nothing further'

This tradition clearly indicates that performing optional or recommended acts are voluntary, not obligatory. If a person performs the obligatory acts and keeps away from the forbidden deeds, he is actually fulfilling the necessary requirements of his religion. However, for a person who truly desires to get closer to Allah and gains His good pleasure, he should not abandon the voluntary and recommended acts, as there is a great reward for performing them.

In fact, voluntary deeds include all the deeds that are not strictly obligatory. These deeds are also at different degrees of virtue. Some virtuous deeds were greatly stressed by the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, while others were not stressed. There is, however, a *ḥadeeth qudsee* in which Allah says, 'My servant does not draw near to Me with anything more beloved to me than the religious duties that I have imposed upon him, and My servant continues to draw near to Me with voluntary works such that I love him.' (Reported by al-Bukhaaree)

It is instructive to note that the term *naafilah* (plural: *nawaafil*) denotes, in its purely linguistic sense, an accretion or addition received, beyond one's due or 'something given in excess of one's obligation'.

It is significant to realize that most people will have some kind of failings in their obligatory deeds. The optional deeds will make up for any such shortcomings in the obligatory acts. Besides, if someone continually avoids the recommended acts, he will be losing a great deal of reward and an opportunity to get closer to Allah. In short, the obligatory prayers

and the fast of *Ramadaan* are two essential acts of Islam. Doing what is lawful and keeping away from what is unlawful is also an essential part of the religion.

If someone truly fulfils these essential aspects of the religion, he will enter Paradise, by the Grace and Mercy of Allah. (For a fuller discussion of this *hadeeth*, refer Jamaal ad-Deen Zarabozo's *Commentary of the Forty Hadeeth of an-Nawawee*)

Review

- Why did the man in this *hadeeth* not mention giving *zakaat* or performing the *hajj*?
- Explain what, according to this *hadeeth*, are the criteria to enter Paradise for a poor man?
- What if the man has enough money?
- What is the significance of voluntary/ optional good deeds?



Concept of Charity in Islam

عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ (رَضِيَ اللهُ تَعَالى عَنْهُ) قَالَ: قَالَ رَسُولُ اللهِ (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ): "كُلُّ سُلاَمَى مِنَ النَّاسِ عَلَيْهِ صَدَقَةٌ، كُلَّ يَوْمٍ تَطْلُعُ فِيهِ الشَّمْسُ تَعْدِلُ بَيْنَ اثْنَيْنِ صَدَقَةٌ، وَتُعِينُ الرَّجُلَ فِي دَابَّتِهِ فَتَحْمِلُهُ عَلَيْهَا أَوْ تَرْفَعُ لَهُ عَلَيْهَا مَتَاعَهُ صَدَقَةٌ، وَالْكَلِمَةُ الطَّيِّبَةُ صَدَقَةٌ، وَبِكُلِّ خُطْوَةٍ تَمْشِيهَا صَدَقَةٌ، وَتُمِيطُ الْأَذَى عَنِ الطَّرِيقِ صَدَقَةٌ." (رَوَاهُ الْبُخَارِي وَمُسْلِم)

Abu Hurayrah ﷺ narrated that the Messenger ﷺ said, 'Each person's small bones must perform a charity every day the sun comes up: to act justly between two people is a charity; to help a man with his mount, lifting him onto it or hoisting up his belongings onto it is a charity; a good word is a charity; every step you take to prayers is a charity and removing a harmful thing from the road is a charity.'

This tradition is a great reminder about how Almighty Allah has blessed mankind. It also indicates how we should react to the great blessings and bounties that our Creator has bestowed upon us.

Significance of the Arabic Word *Sulaamaa*

According to E. W. Lane, the term *sulaamaa* (translated in the *hadeeth* as 'small bones') signifies bones of the hands and of the feet: of the fingers and the toes. (*Arabic-English Lexicon*, vol. 1, p. 1416)

Commenting on this word, Zarabozo states,

'The word *sulaamaa* refers to the small bones in the hands and feet. These bones are put together in a magnificent manner. It is their interaction that allows the dexterity (skill in using your hands) that humans possess in their hands. They are also what give the feet proper balance to move about…These bones are some of the keys to the progress and civilization that humans have been able to achieve. It is these bones that allow humans to grasp, move, construct and build things. Therefore, they are a great blessing for which one must truly be thankful.' (*Commentary on the Forty Hadeeth of an-Nawawee*, Vol. 2, p. 996)

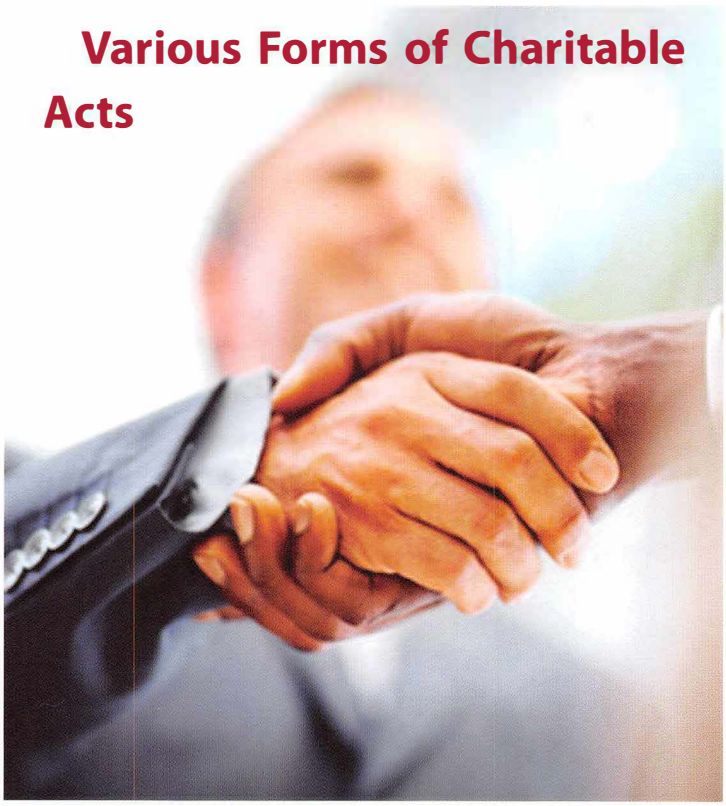
One can simply imagine how difficult so many daily chores would be without the use of these essential and important bones. When one takes the time to ponder over Allah's blessings upon us for having these bones, one feels that one must do something out of gratitude to Allah for such blessings.

At the same time, it is very important to note that apart from these small bones, Allah has also given humans several other organs: the heart, the brain, the lungs, the kidneys, the liver, the eyes and the ears. The faculties of hearing, seeing and thinking are the necessary forces behind the proper use of the bones in the hands and feet. Allah says in the Qur'an:

'It is He who has brought forth for [the faculties of] hearing, and sight, feeling and understanding. Little thanks you give.' (*Soorat al-Mu'minoon*, 23:78)

The small bones in our wrists, hands, and feet, are something that we hardly even pause to consider. In this *hadeeth*, Allah's Messenger ﷺ has brought our attention to them. We cannot possibly count or even realize all of the great blessings and bounties that Allah has given us. A person, therefore, should perform some acts of thankfulness for these blessings.

Various Forms of Charitable Acts



The Arabic word *sadaqah* used in this *hadeeth* contains a wealth of meanings. It is difficult to find an apt English equivalent for it, but it is usually translated as 'charity'.

Sadaqah in Islamic terminology is used for that gift or charity that is given with purity of intention and with a kind heart to gain Allah's pleasure. There should be no intention whatsoever of showing off, nor of putting

someone under an obligation so that they feel grateful. The essence of *ṣadaqah* is *ṣidq* (truth), from which this word is derived.

In a *ḥadeeth* reported by Muslim in his *Ṣaḥeeḥ*, Allah's Messenger ﷺ said, '*Ṣadaqah* is *burhaan* (a proof).' This refers to the fact that *ṣadaqah* is a sign of one's true belief. It is human nature to love wealth and possessions. Hence, to give up one's wealth for Allah's sake testifies to the truthfulness of one's faith. It is for this reason that withholding the necessities of life and small kindnesses (*maa'oon*) as *Soorat al-Maa'oon* (107:7) mentions, which specially indicates small acts of charity, is said to be against the spirit of prayer.

Charity can take several forms, and the *ḥadeeth* is very clear about it. Examples of other charitable deeds include extending the greeting of Islam to others, enjoining what is right and forbidding what is wrong, and refraining from doing evil to anyone. The circle of those towards whom an act of charity may be done is equally wide. To give food to one's wife or one's children is a charitable deed, and doing good to animals is also a charity. Whoever tills a field and birds and beasts eat of it, is a charity. The Glorious Qur'an also speaks of extending charity not only to all men including believers and unbelievers (*Soorat al-Baqarah*, 2:272), but also to dumb creation (*Soorat adh-Dhaariyaat*, 51:19). Charitable deeds may be done openly or secretly:

'The likeness of those who spend their wealth in the path of Allah is as the likeness of a grain that sprouts seven ears. In every ear are a hundred grains. Thus does Allah multiply reward for whomever He wills.' (*Soorat al-Baqarah*, 2:261)

To return to the *ḥadeeth* under discussion:

'To act justly between two people is a charity.'

This means reconciling and bringing peace between two people, judging justly between two people, and so on.

'To help a man with his mount, lifting him onto it or hoisting up his belongings onto it is a charity.'

This is one of the simple acts by which one may express his gratitude to Allah for the many bounties He has bestowed upon him. As Jamaal ad-Deen Zarabozo puts it,

'In modern times, of course, this portion of the *ḥadeeth* may be implemented in many ways. Acts of charity would include, for example, giving another brother a ride in one's car, helping another brother to jumpstart his car, helping his brother load his car, and so forth. The Muslim should think of all of these acts that he could face on a day-to-day basis and remember that they are all acts of charity that he should be happy to perform in gratitude to Allah for the blessings he has received.' (*Commentary on the Forty Uadeeth of an-Nawawee*, Vol. 2, p. 1001-2)

'A good word is a charity.'

A good word includes many things. It could be any word by which Allah is remembered or any word that benefits any of Allah's creation.

'Every step you take to prayers is a charity.'

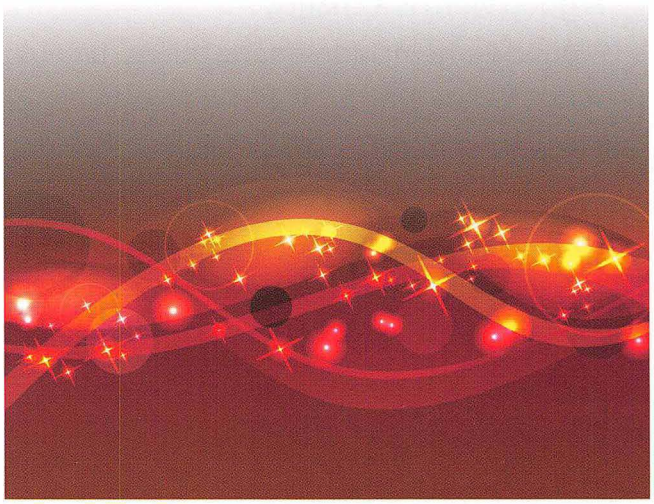
This shows the importance of attending the prayer in congregation in the mosque.

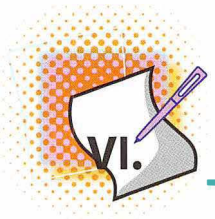
'And removing a harmful thing from the road is a charitable act.'

Fortunately, this is available to almost everybody. This is perhaps the easiest way to express one's gratitude to Allah.

Review

- What does the Arabic word *sulaamaa* mean?
- What does *sadaqah* mean? Give some examples of *sadaqah* that can be performed daily and with ease.
- 'To act justly between two people is a charity; to help a man with his mount, lifting him onto it or hoisting up his belongings onto it is a charity; a good word is a charity; every step you take to prayers is a charity and removing a harmful thing from the road is a charity.' Explain these five acts of charity in your own words.





One's Duty to Try and Stop Other People from Doing Wrong

عَنْ أَبِي سَعِيدٍ الْخُدْرِي (رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ) قَالَ: سَمِعْتُ رَسُولَ اللهِ (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) يَقُولُ: "مَنْ رَأَى مِنْكُمْ مُنْكَراً فَلْيُغَيِّرْهُ بِيَدِهِ، فَإِنْ لَمْ يَسْتَطِعْ فَبِلِسَانِهِ، فَإِنْ لَمْ يَسْتَطِعْ فَبِقَلْبِهِ، وَذَلِكَ أَضْعَفُ الْإِيمَانِ". (رَوَاهُ مُسْلِم)

Abu Sa'eed al-Khudree ﷺ narrated that he heard Allah's Messenger ﷺ say, 'Whoever of you sees an evil action, let him change it with his hand; and if he is not able to do so, then with his tongue; and if he is not able to do so, then with his heart; and that is the weakest form of faith.' (Reported by Muslim)

This *hadeeth* touches on one of the most essential issues for the rescue and growth of the Muslim community. The distinct quality of removing evil distinguishes the Muslim community from all other communities: past and present. In this *hadeeth*, Allah's Messenger ﷺ makes it clear that removal of evil or wanting to condemn it is an essential attribute of the faith of a Muslim.

The Word '*Munkar*'

Its Arabic root is *n – k – r*, which means not 'to know', to 'have no knowledge', to 'deny'. Hence, *munkar* means disagreeable, objectionable, and detestable acts which people generally dislike. Such acts include abusing others,

doing wrongful acts, practising fraud, pride, miserliness and shameful and lewd acts. Thus, *munkar*, in a general sense, is everything that is rejected, objectionable, false, untrue, blameworthy and unfair from *Sharee'ah* point of view. The word *munkar* occurs 16 times in the Qur'an.

'Whoever of You Sees an Evil Action'

In this tradition, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ specifically indicates the situation where a person sees the wrong that is being committed. Thus, if there is an open and obvious evil that is observed by Muslims, they must change it if they have the ability to do so.

A person has a duty to condemn only that which is manifestly wrong. To pry into that which is hidden involves the disclosure of what has been kept concealed. This is not allowed, according to the Sacred Law (*Sharee'ah*). As the Qur'an states, 'Do not spy.' (*Soorat al-Hujuraat*,49:12)

Three Approaches to the Condemnation of Evil: with the Hand, with the Tongue, and with the Heart

Once it has been established that the condemnation of an evil action(*munkar*) is an essential duty, it should be noted that those who discharge the duty are grouped, according to the *hadeeth* under discussion, into three distinct categories:

The first group includes those who are in a position to give effect to their condemnation through the use of force: literally 'by means of the hand'. It consists of the leaders of the community, the officers in authority, parents, teachers, principals, headmasters, husbands, as well as wives. It is, however, instructive to realize that this *hadeeth* is talking about 'the changing of evil' and not 'forbidding evil'. Forbidding of evil or wrong is a general concept. It has to do with preventive measures to keep an evil from happening. This *hadeeth* is referring to the condition where one is actually seeing an evil currently occurring.'

The second group consists of those who express their condemnation verbally rather than by using physical force, literally by means of the tongue, not the hand. This category includes, for instance, shouting for help, calling the authorities, the police, and other emergency agencies on phone, SMS, and so forth.

A Thing to Ponder:

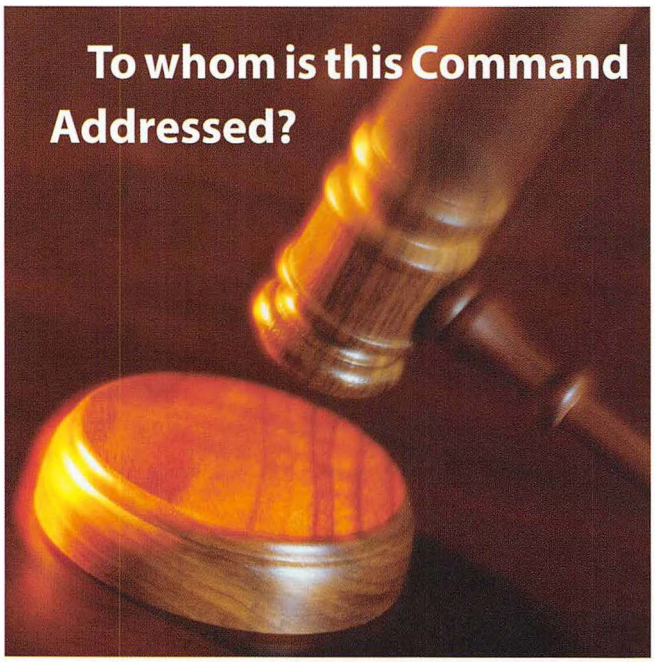
'In the early evening of Thursday 22 September 1988, a woman was raped at a local train station in Chicago in the presence of several people…' The salient feature of this incident in this account was that nobody had moved to help the victim, and her cries had gone unheeded – for all that the rape took place during the rush hour… several people



were looking and she asked for help, and no one would help.'

The above quote has been taken from Michael Cook's *Commanding Right and Forbidding Wrong in Islamic Thought*, a very large book, perhaps the largest book ever written in English on the subject. The book contains 702 pages and is published by the Cambridge University Press.

The third group consists of those who can express their condemnation only through their feelings, that is, with the heart. This group consists of the mass of ordinary people.



Allah's Messenger ﷺ said, 'Whoever of you.' This clearly shows that this command is directed to each and every Muslim. Everyone has the ability to condemn wrong if he has the means to do so. This leads to a very important point. Does this command extend to wrongdoers? Yes, the address in this *hadeeth* extends to everyone who can distinguish between right and wrong. One does not have to be pious and free of sins in order to command good and forbid evil. This is an important principle in Islam.

By condemning evil (*munkar*), we are able to correct our individual behaviour as well as that of the community as a whole. Anyone who criticizes and calls for reform and correction is not necessarily perfect himself. If we require perfection of any adviser, we should have to wait forever. Someone may argue, 'I am not perfect myself, so I cannot possibly advise anyone about morality.' But this is a dangerous and misleading notion. Islam has nothing to do with this.

Satan would certainly be happy if everyone thought like this, since nobody is perfect and without blemish, and that would leave nobody to preach, which will lead society to collapse into vice. Let us compare it with a society suffering from the plague. Do physicians not suffer along with their patients? Do they not continue to attempt to treat them? In fact, Islam does not compromise on the principle of condemning evil, promoting good and forbidding vice. But the criticism should be wise and well-intentioned.

'And that is the Weakest Form of Faith'

Jamaal al-Deen Zarabozo observes,

'This *hadeeth* is not talking about the ranks of faith and believers. Therefore, it is wrong to say, based on this *hadeeth,* that the one who removes evil by his hand is at a higher level of faith than the one who removes it by the tongue and so forth…Therefore, what is meant by faith here is actually the effect or fruit of faith.' (*Commentary on the Forty Hadeeth of al-Nawawee*, Vol. 3 p. 1232)

For a brilliant and lengthier explanation of this *hadeeth*, see Zarabozo's *Commentary on the Forty Hadeeth of an-Nawawee*. For specialists, this work is a feast; for non-specialists, it offers fresh insights into an entire range of central concerns about the *Sunnah* of the Prophet ﷺ. His analyses of *ahaadeeth* are consistently deep and often startling.

Review

- What does *munkar* mean? Name few things that are considered *munkar* in Islam.
- Why do you think Allah has made it compulsory for Muslims to stop evil actions that they see happening around him?
- What, according to this *hadeeth*, is the best thing to do if we see an evil action happening around us? And if we are not able to do that, what other reactions are at least expected of us as Muslims?
- One does not have to be pious and free of sins in order to command good and forbid evil. Elaborate.



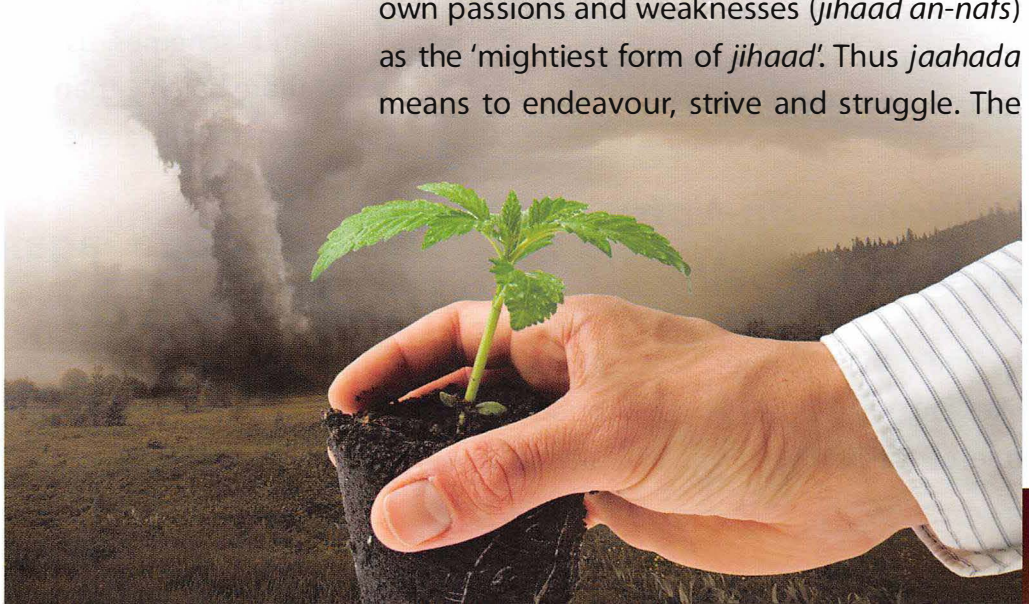
The Question of *Jihaad*

عَنْ أَبِي سَعِيدٍ الْخُدْرِي (رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ) قَالَ: قِيلَ يَا رَسُولَ اللهِ، أَيُّ النَّاسِ أَفْضَلُ؟ فَقَالَ: "مُؤْمِنٌ يُجَاهِدُ بِنَفْسِهِ وَمَالِهِ فِي سَبِيلِ اللهِ." (رَوَاهُ الْبُخَارِي)

Abu Sa'eed al-Khudree ﷺ narrated that someone asked the Prophet ﷺ, 'Messenger of Allah, who is the best among the people?' He replied, 'A believer who strives his utmost in the way of Allah with his person and his property.' (Reported by al-Bukhaaree)

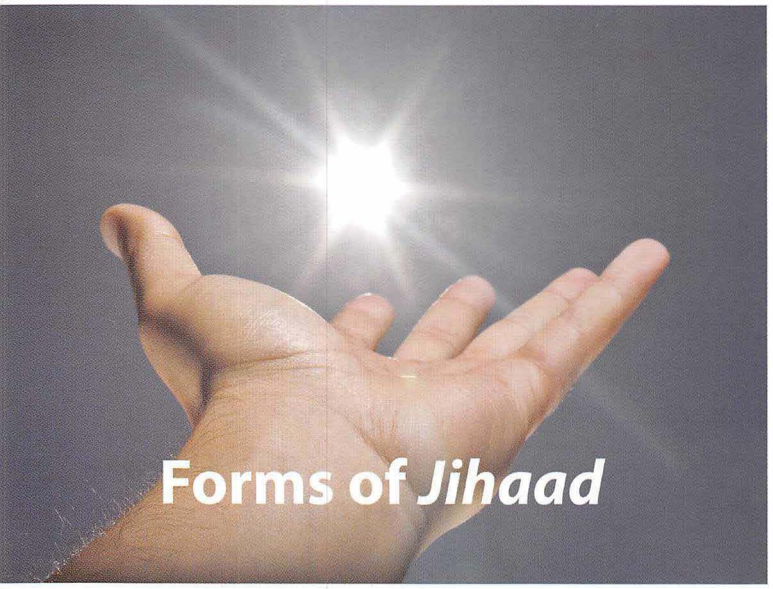
The Term *Jihaad*

Jihaad is the most abused or vilified word in Islamic vocabulary. If you are vilified by someone, they say or write very unpleasant things about you. So is the case with *jihaad*, which is commonly translated as 'holy war'. But this is simply not accurate. The term *jihaad* is derived from the verb *jaahada*, which means 'to strive or exert oneself', namely against anything that implies evil. The Prophet ﷺ, for example, described man's struggle against his own passions and weaknesses (*jihaad an-nafs*) as the 'mightiest form of *jihaad*'. Thus *jaahada* means to endeavour, strive and struggle. The



noun *juhd* means 'making one's utmost effort and struggle to achieve one's object'.

In the Qur'anic terminology, the term *jihaad* means investing one's capabilities and resources by the utmost striving – including fighting – in order to obey Allah's commands, to seek His pleasure and to establish the *deen*. The word *jihaad* is often used as a synonym for holy war, which is not accurate. When the Qur'an specifically means fighting in the way of Allah, it uses the words *qitaal* or *ḥarb*. The word *jihaad*, therefore, has several other aspects apart from war.



To Acquire and Absorb Islamic Values

The struggle one faces in acquiring and absorbing Islamic values in one's life is a mighty task, which takes three different forms.

Jihaad an-Nafs: Struggle against the Self

One's own desires, aspirations, passions, likes and dislikes have to be brought under the rule of the *Sharee'ah* or the Islamic Law. The struggle against the self is an inner struggle, for it is waged by the heart and the core of one's being and by faith. When one struggles against one's own self, their support and help is the All-Merciful: *ar-Raḥmaan*. *Jihaad* or struggle against the self, in fact, has no final limit or point of termination. It is perpetual and everlasting. It lasts until one's last breath. This is the reason why it is termed the most important and mighty form of *jihaad*.

Jihaad against Satan

Satan is dedicated to the destruction of human beings. He misses no opportunity to cheat, deceive or trick people. His snares are the lustful appetites, which tempt both the pious and the sinful. He lures people into sinful disobedience. His real purpose is to take them back home with him to Hell (*Soorat Faaṭir*, 35:6)

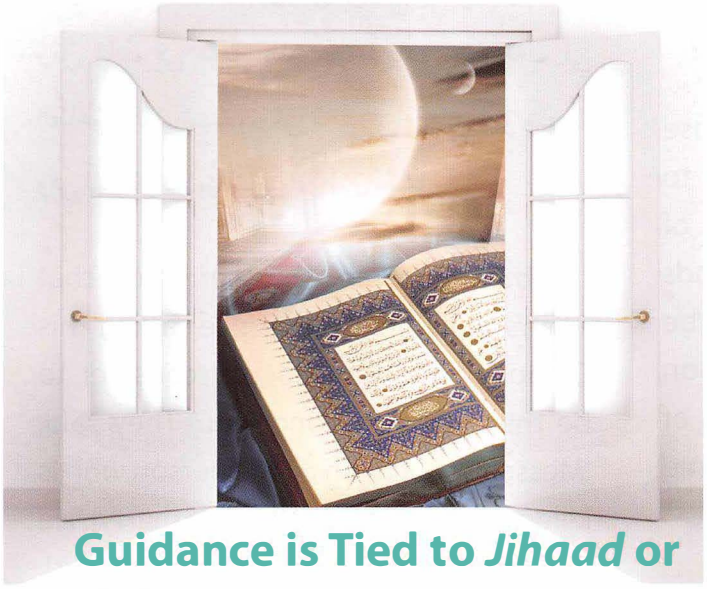
Once we truly recognized Satan in this capacity, it is therefore, incumbent upon us to wage an all-out war on him and engage in the sacred struggle of *jihaad* against him, with utmost intensity, in private and in public, outwardly and inwardly. We must pursue this without respite and spare no effort in our combat with him. We should seek refuge with Allah and ask Him for help in all our operations and schemes. No other creature treats us more harshly than Satan does. So beware! This constant awareness is *jihaad an-nafs*.

Jihaad against the Evil of Society

Apart from recognizing one's own desires and trying to protect oneself against evil

thoughts and actions, one sometimes faces opposition from one's own family and friends. The righteousness and religiousnes which are displayed in one's life sometimes causes friction as one is seen to be following a 'different path'.

The reason is that in some conditions the demand of one's family may conflict with one's moral and spiritual beliefs and duties. In such conditions, believers often have to endure hardships, opposition, oppression and persecution. Such form of *jihaad* or struggle against the evils of society is the outer form of struggle or striving.



Guidance is Tied to *Jihaad* or Striving

Allah says, 'As for those who strive for Our cause, we will certainly guide them to Our paths.' (*Soorat al-ʿAnkaboot*, 29:69) Thus, Allah connects guidance with striving in His cause. The forms of *jihaad*, which are obligatory upon us are *jihaad* against one's own self, *jihaad* against desires, *jihaad* against Satan and *jihaad* against getting overcome by this worldly life. Whoever strives hard against these for the sake of Allah, Allah will most certainly guide him to His paths that are pleasing to Him. These paths will lead him to Paradise.

Calling People to Islam:

If one is convinced that one is following the right path, then it is necessary upon them to call others to this path. Such a person is praised by Allah:

'There is no on who is better in speech than one who calls others to Allah, works righteousness, and says, "I am of those who bow in Islam."' (*Soorat Fussilat*, 41:33)

Thus *daʿwah*, or inviting others to Islam, is another form of *jihaad*, which must be undertaken with sincerity and wholeheartedness so that it can reach the heart of the recipient of the noble message of Islam. Of course when inviting others to the path of righteousness, one should be able to present a good model in one's own life. The Qur'an provides many instructions in this regard. (*Soorat an-Nahl*, 16:125; *Soorat Fussilat*, 41:34-36)

Applied to actual warfare, the term *jihaad* has been used in the Qur'an exclusively to denote a war of defence – defence of our freedom of religion, of our country and the liberty of our community. (*Soorat al-Hajj*, 22:39-40)

It is a form of *jihaad* in defence of Islam, in defence of religions, sacred places, honour and property. It does not contradict the kindness and generosity of Islam, as it is only resorted to when all other means fail.

Jihaad is the Highest Form of Obedience

Islam's summit or pinnacle is *jihaad*. It is the highest form of obedience because it is only through it that Islam becomes dominant. Therefore, it is the greatest act of worship. It is through *jihaad* that the religion is protected,

defended and preserved. It also protects the honour of the Muslims. Hence, *jihaad* is considered the most important deed after the obligatory acts. This is why the best among people is a believer who strives his utmost in Allah's cause with his life and property.

Misunderstandings about *Jihaad*

As we have noted above, *jihaad* is the most abused or vilified word in Islamic terminology. It is erroneously translated as 'holy war'. The other misunderstanding is that whatever war Muslims wage is termed *jihaad*. Not every armed conflict is *jihaad*.

A Word of Caution about *Jihaad*

A struggle is not called a *jihaad* in its true sense unless it is done for the sake of Allah, intending to make His word supreme and raise the standard of truth for Allah's good pleasure. If someone intends the pleasure of this world, then his efforts cannot be called *jihaad* in the true sense of the word. The person who fights to gain a position, to receive the spoils of war, to demonstrate his bravery, or to gain some fame will receive no reward whatsoever.

Review

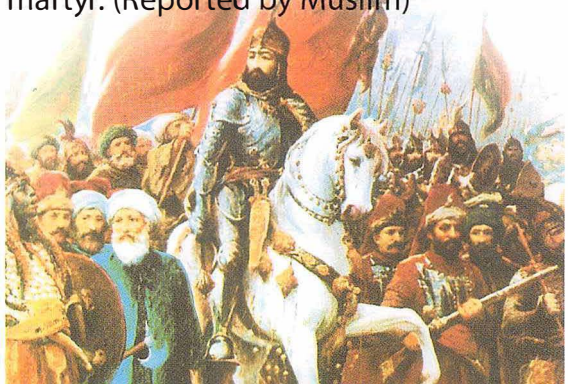
- What does the term *jihaad* mean? What does it signify in Qur'anic terminology?
- *Jihaad* towards acquiring and absorbing Islamic values takes on three forms. What are they? Explain each one of them.
- Write about *jihaad* in calling people to Islam, mentioning when *qitaal* becomes necessary.
- Why is *jihaad* considered the most important deed after the obligatory acts?



Martyrdom and its Various Kinds

عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ (رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ) قَالَ: قَالَ رَسُولُ اللهِ (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وسَلَّمَ): "مَا تَعُدُّونَ الشَّهِيدَ فِيكُمْ؟" "قَالُوا: يَا رَسُولَ الله! مَنْ قُتِلَ فِي سَبِيلِ اللهِ فَهُوَ شَهِيدٌ." قَالَ: "إِنَّ شُهَدَاءَ أُمَّتِي إِذاً لَقَلِيلٌ." قَالُوا: "فَمَنْ هُمْ يَا رَسُولَ اللهِ؟" قَالَ: "مَنْ قُتِلَ فِي سَبِيلِ اللهِ فَهُوَ شَهِيدٌ، وَمَنْ مَاتَ فِي سَبِيلِ اللهِ فَهُوَ شَهِيدٌ، وَمَنْ مَاتَ فِي الطَّاعُونِ فَهُوَ شَهِيدٌ، وَمَنْ مَاتَ فِي الْبَطْنِ فَهُوَ شَهِيدٌ، وَفِي لَفْظ (وَالْغَرِيقُ شَهِيدٌ)." (رَوَاهُ مُسْلِم)

Abu Hurayrah ﷺ narrated that Allah's Messenger ﷺ once asked his Companions, 'Who do you consider to be the martyrs among you?' They said, 'Messenger of Allah ﷺ, the person who is killed in the cause of Allah is a martyr.' He said, '[If this is the definition of martyr], then martyrs among my nation will be small in number.' They asked, 'Who are they then, Messenger of Allah?' He replied, 'A person who is killed in the cause of Allah is a martyr; a person who dies in the cause of Allah is a martyr; a person who dies of plague is a martyr; and a person who dies of cholera is a martyr.' (Reported by Muslim)



The Term *Shaheed*

The Arabic word *shaheed* means 'witness' as well as 'martyr'. *Shaheed* (plural: *shuhadaa'*) is the person who, by giving his life in the process of fulfilling one's religious obligations, bears witness to what he believes. (*Soorat Aal 'Imraan*, 3:140; *Soorat al-Ahzaab*, 33:23) The Qur'an instructs the believers not to call them dead. (*Soorat al-baqarah*, 2:154) 'Indeed, they are alive and are provided sustenance by Allah.' (*Soorat Aal 'Imraan*, 3:169) 'And those who are killed in the path of Allah, never will He waste their deeds. He will guide them and improve their condition and admit them into Paradise which he has made known to them.' (*Soorat Muhammad*, 47:4-6)

Martyrs, of course, do not live in the physical world. Due to their supreme sacrifice for the sake of Allah, they attain everlasting life.

A Person who is Killed in the Way of Allah is a Martyr

This is the first type of martyrdom mentioned by the Prophet ﷺ in the *hadeeth* under discussion. In this life, we do not know what type of life martyrs have, except for whatever the Prophet ﷺ has told us in authentic *ahaadeeth*. Nevertheless, the Qur'an is the true Word of Allah, who knows everything. It is enough as a basis for us to fundamentally change our views of life and death. It is sufficient to tell us that things need not be as they appear. Allah forbids us to think of them as dead. He assures us that they are with Him, well provided for. They receive His bounty in the same way as the living do.

Martyrs who seal their faith (*eemaan*) with their death in battle is *shaheed*. Great joys await them in Paradise. This is depicted in many *ahaadeeth* of the Prophet ﷺ. The Prophet ﷺ is reported as having said, 'A martyr is awarded seven favours by Allah: he is forgiven with the first gush of his blood, shown his place in Paradise, protected from the torment of the grave, saved from the Great Fear [on the Day of Judgment], adorned with the adornments of *eemaan*, married to maidens having beautiful eyes, and permitted to intercede for seventy of their relatives.' (Reported by at-Tirmidhee and Ibn Maajah and classified as 'authentic' (*saheeh*) by al-Albaanee)

One of the Companions asked, 'Messenger of Allah, why is it that all the believers are tried in their graves, except a martyr?' He replied, 'The clashing of swords over his head was a sufficient trial for him.' (*Saheeh al-jaami'*)

It is important to note that any Muslim who sincerely desires for martyrdom will be granted it, even if he does not die in the battlefield. The Prophet ﷺ is reported to have said, 'He who sincerely asks for martyrdom, Allah will grant him the levels of martyrs, even if he dies in bed.' (Muslim)

The Prophet ﷺ also said, 'The souls of the martyrs live in the bodies of green birds who have nests in chandeliers hung from the Throne of the Almighty. They eat of the fruits of Paradise from wherever they like and then nestle in these chandeliers.' (Muslim)

None of the dwellers in Paradise would ever like to come back to earth except the martyrs, for on account of the very special bounties which are granted them in Paradise, they wish to suffer martyrdom another ten times.

The Rest of the *Hadeeth*: Martyrdom of many Kinds

Besides this type of martyrdom – getting killed in the way of Allah – there are other types of deaths which merit one as a martyr.

A person who dies in the way of Allah is a martyr. This refers to one's total dedication to Islam. Peaceful moral duties are all deeds in the way of Allah and may enable one to share in the rewards, otherwise promised to a *shaheed* or martyr. Thus anyone who dies of a disease like the plague or a stomach disease is considered a *shaheed*. Likewise, those who die as a result of drowning, being buried alive, burning are martyrs. A mother who dies in childbirth is also a martyr.

Review

- What does the Arabic word *shaheed* mean?
- Write a note on a person who is killed in the way of Allah i.e. a martyr.
- Aside from being killed in the way of Allah, what other types of death are considered as martyrdom by Allah?



On Earning a Livelihood by Lawful Means (*al-Kasb min-al-Halaal*)

عَنِ الْمِقْدَامِ بْنِ مَعْدِ كَرِب (رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ) عَنْ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) قَالَ: «مَا أَكَلَ أَحَدٌ طَعَامًا قَطُّ خَيْرًا مِنْ أَنْ يَأْكُلَ مِنْ عَمَلِ يَدِهِ وَإِنَّ نَبِيَّ اللَّهِ دَاوُد عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ كَانَ يَأْكُلُ مِنْ عَمَلِ يَدِهِ.» (رَوَاهُ الْبُخَارِي)

Al-Miqdaam ibn Ma'd Karib narrated that Allah's Messenger ﷺ said, 'No one has ever eaten better food than that which he eats from the work done by his own hand, and Prophet Daawood used to eat from the work done by his own hands.' (Reported by al-Bukhaaree)

This *hadeeth* provides us with excellent guidance on the subject of earning a livelihood.

Dignity of Labour

Some people consider certain kinds of jobs as contemptible. However, Islam denounces the validity of this erroneous notion, and the Prophet ﷺ teaches us that the whole of a human being's dignity is tied up with their work – any sort of work. Real disgrace and humiliation actually lies in depending on other people's aid.

The Prophet ﷺ once observed, 'It is better for one of you to take his rope, bring a load of firewood on his back and sell it, God thereby preserving his self-respect, than that he should beg from people whether they give him anything or refuse him.' (al-Bukhaaree)



Every profession is, therefore, considered honourable in Islam even that of cutting wood. Among all means of livelihood, trade occupies the most important place, and the honest merchant being one of the righteous servants of Allah. The seller is requested to be just in weighing and generous in dealing. If there is a defect in a thing sold, he must make it clear to the buyer. Deceiving a purchaser through a third party offering a higher price is strictly forbidden in Islam.

Al-Bukhaaree mentions a number of professions in the headings of his chapters, such as that of butchers, goldsmiths, blacksmiths, tailors, weavers and carpenters and mentions traditions showing that the Prophet ﷺ considered such jobs honourable. Those who followed them were treated on a basis of perfect equality with other members of the Muslim community. The humblest work thus carries with it a dignity. For further details, see *Kitaab al-Buyoo'* (Book of Buying and Selling) in *Saheeh al-Bukhaaree*.



A Muslim may earn his livelihood by agriculture, trade, industry, or by any other profession or employment as long as it does not involve doing, supporting or promoting anything which is unlawful. In fact, Islam considers obtainment of wealth or property to be one of the fundamental laws regulating human society. No limitation is placed upon the wealth or property which an individual, male or female, may acquire or give away. But Islam guides people to the proper balance between this life and the life to come. It is quite natural for people to find the good things of this life attractive and alluring, but a true believer does not make the goods of this world their ultimate goal. The worldly needs and pleasures never penetrate their hearts, nor do they become their foremost and main preoccupation and goal.

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, 'O people! Fear Allah and be moderate in seeking a living, for no person will die until they have received all their provision, even if it is slow in coming. So fear Allah and be moderate in seeking provision, take that which is permissible and leave that which is forbidden.' (Ibn Maajah, *hadeeth* no. 2144; graded 'authentic')

The Noble Qur'an denounces all unlawful means of acquiring wealth:

'O you who believe! Do not consume one another's wealth by false means. But rather, let there be free trade with consent among yourselves.' (*Soorat an-Nisaa'*, 4:29)

'Consuming one another's wealth by false means' in any way that is not permitted by the Islamic Law. This includes theft, cheating, misappropriation, usury, gambling, and the like.'

The Glorious Qur'an urges Muslims to engage in trade and commerce and to undertake journeys for what the Qur'an calls 'seeking the bounty of Allah.' (See, for example, 73:20; 35:12; 30:46; 2:164 and 28:57)

According to Islam, the true believers are not those who remain in the mosque all the time without bothering to earn their livelihoods, nor the recluses or mystics in their places of retreat. Rather, the true believers are people of action.

Forbidden Kinds of Trades

Islam prohibits those trades which involve injustice, cheating, making inordinate profits, or the promotion of something which is unlawful or *haraam*.

Islam forbids doing business in alcoholic beverages, intoxicants, drugs, swine, idols, statues or anything of this sort whose use and consumption Islam has prohibited. Honesty and trustworthiness in such businesses will not be counted as praiseworthy. Any earnings from such businesses are sinful earnings.

Earning through other Lawful Means

In several verses of the Qur'an, there is encouragement for Muslims to engage in agricultural activity, for it has been made for them as a divine favour. (See, for instance, 15:19-22; 55:10-13; 71:19-20 and 80:24-28)

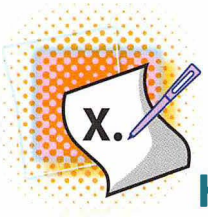
Islam, however, does not want people to limit their economic activity solely to agriculture. Islam gives dignity to many occupations, which people considered lowly and degrading – for example, the occupation of shepherding. Allah did not send a prophet without his having tended sheep. (al-Al-Bukhaaree)

Prophet Daawood ﷺ was a maker of coats of mail and shields. Prophet Aadam ﷺ was a farmer; Nooh ﷺ was a carpenter, Idrees ﷺ was a tailor, and Moosaa ﷺ was a shepherd. (Reported by al-Haakim)

Islam, however, forbids certain professions and industries to its followers, because they are harmful to the beliefs, morals, honour and good manners of members of society. Prostitution, for example, is legal in many countries. Permits and licenses are issued to those who practise this trade. Islam strictly rejects and condemns this practice. Islam forbids any woman to earn money by selling her body. Islam also forbids sexually exciting dances, and other exotic activities, such as obscene songs and provocative dramas.

Review

- All lawful jobs are honourable and must not be treated with contempt. Explain this with reference to the above *hadeeth*.
- What kinds of trades/jobs are forbidden in Islam?
- All lawful types of jobs deserve equal respect, but what professions does Allah encourage us to undertake? Answer this question by giving reference of the prophets' professions.



The Virtue of Helping Widows and the Poor

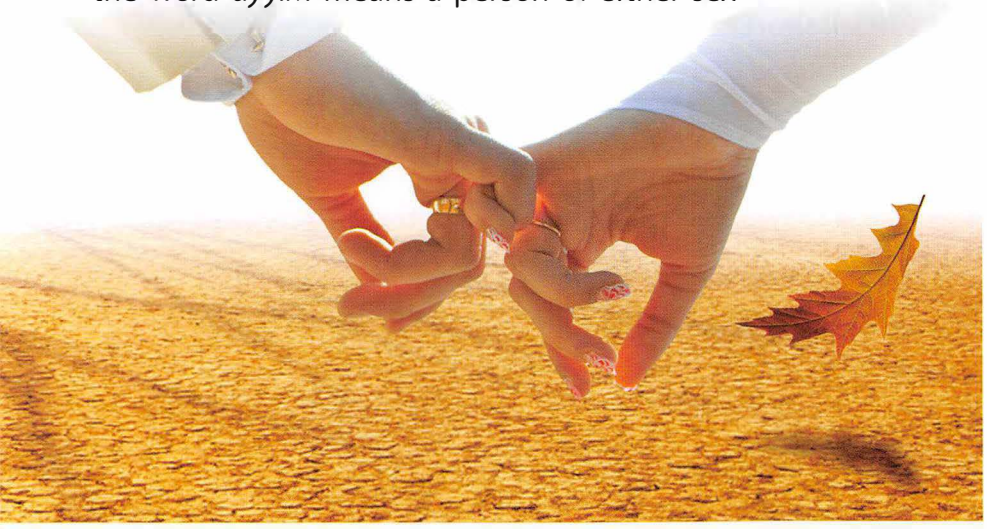
عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ (رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ) قَالَ: قَالَ النَّبِيُّ (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ): "اَلسَّاعِي عَلَى الْأَرْمَلَةِ وَالْمِسْكِينِ كَالْمُجَاهِدِ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ أَوْ الْقَائِمِ اللَّيْلَ الصَّائِمِ النَّهَارَ." (رَوَاهُ الْبُخَارِي)

Abu Hurayrah ﷺ narrated that the Prophet ﷺ said, 'The person who strives hard to help widows and the poor is like a *mujaahid* who fights for Allah's cause, or like someone who performs prayers all the nights and fasts all the day.' (reported by al-Bukhaaree)

The person who strives to help widows:

A widow is a woman whose husband has died and who has not married again. The Qur'an states, 'And marry the single (*ayaamaa*) from among you.' (*Soorat an-Noor*, 24:32).

The word *ayaamaa*, which is the plural of the word *ayyim* means a person of either sex who has no spouse, irrespective of whether he or she has never been married, divorced or widowed.



In pre-Islamic Arabia, widows suffered a great deal of injustice at the hands of their own families, their in-laws and society in general. When a husband died, his widow would be confined to an inferior part of the house and she would be made to wear the shabbiest clothes. She would also be prevented from using any perfume or incense for one whole year.

In some religions, remarriage is not permitted for a widow. Even if the husband dies immediately after her marriage, she has to remain a widow all her life, bearing the taunts of her in-laws. In the first place, she is held responsible for the death of her husband. It is believed that she has brought an ill-omen, as a result of which her husband died.

Islam did away with all those worthless customs and set a waiting period of four months and ten days. The purpose of the waiting period is to determine whether the woman is pregnant and to avoid hurting the feelings of the family of the deceased husband by leaving his home immediately after his death. Once the waiting period is over, no one from either her family or that of her husband, has the right to dictate to her what to do with her life. She is totally free to decide for herself within the established traditions and teachings of Islam. She is free to wear all the adornments permitted to Muslim women, to receive marriage proposals, and to give consent to marrying anyone she chooses. She has only Allah to please and fear.

Allah's Messenger ﷺ greatly sympathized with the plight of widows. He encouraged Muslims to help them in every possible way. He said, 'The person who strives hard to help widows and the poor is like a *mujaahid* in the cause of Allah.' He promised great reward for him and even compared him with the person who offers voluntary prayers all night and one who observes voluntary fasts all day.

The Ways of Helping Widows and Poor

The best charitable work is to bring relief to a widow in need and the poor. The first duty is the material one. The second duty is to render personal help to satisfy their needs. One should attend to their needs even without waiting to be asked and make effort to give them relief from every kind of discomfort and inconvenience. The Prophet ﷺ once said, 'Whoever relieves a believer's distress of the distressful aspects of this world, Allah will rescue him from a difficulty of the difficulties of the Day of Judgment.' (Reported by Muslim)

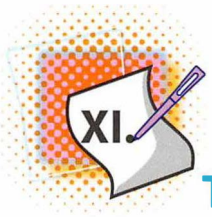
Who are Considered Poor? Definition of the Poor

According to Muslim scholars, the poor include the following:

- A person who has no property or income at all.
- A person whose wealth and income only partially satisfy their essential needs.
- A person whose wealth and income satisfy more than half of their essential needs but still fall short of fulfilment of these needs.

Review

- What was the plight of widows before Islam?
- Draw a distinction between how some non-Muslim widows are treated and the way Muslim widows are treated in Islam.
- Who are considered poor according to Islam?



The Virtue of Treating Orphans Kindly

عَنْ سَهْلِ بْنِ سَعْدٍ السَّاعِدِي (رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ) أَنَّ رَسُولَ اللهِ (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) قَالَ: "أَنَا وكَافِلُ اليَتِيمِ فِي الجَنَّةِ كَهَاتَيْنِ، وأَشَارَ بِأُصْبُعَيْهِ، يَعْنِي السَّبَّابَةَ والْوُسْطَى. (رَوَاهُ الْبُخَارِي)

Sahl ibn Sa'd as-Saa'idee ﷺ narrated that Allah's Messenger ﷺ said, 'The person who looks after an orphan and provides for him and I will be in Paradise like this,' and he put his index and middle fingers together.' (Reported by al-Bukhaaree)

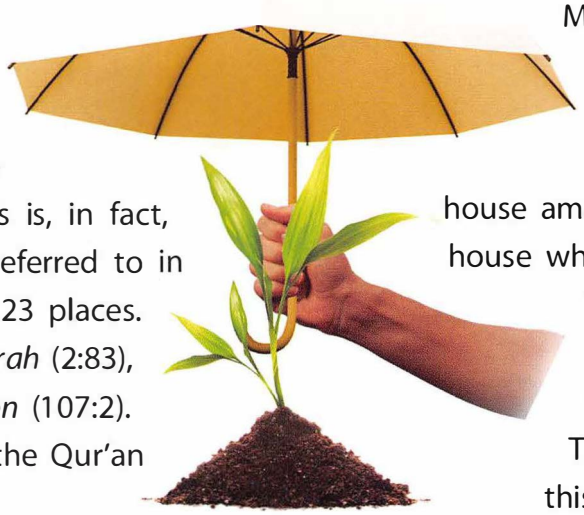
The Glorious Qur'an is emphatic in its demand for the fair treatment of orphans. This is, in fact, one of its recurrent themes, referred to in numerous places, precisely in 23 places. It first occurs in *Soorat al-Baqarah* (2:83), and finally in *Soorat al-Maa'oon* (107:2). Indeed, in one of the verses, the Qur'an warns:

'Indeed, those who consume the wealth of the orphan unjustly are only consuming fire into their bellies; for they shall roast in a flaming fire in Hell.' (4:10)

This verse made some of the Prophet's Companions who were taking care of orphans anxious about the consequences of some unintentional miscalculation or casual mishandling on their part, and asked the Prophet ﷺ about it. Thus another Qur'anic verse reads:

'They ask you about the orphans. Say: The best thing is their welfare, but if you mix their property with yours, then they are to be treated as your brothers in faith. And Allah knows the one who makes mischief from the one who means well.' (*Soorat al-Baqarah*, 2:220)

Elsewhere, the Qur'an addresses the Prophet ﷺ in these words: 'As for the orphan, do not oppress him.' (*Soorat ad-Duhaa*, 93:9) In another place, the Qur'an makes the treatment of orphans a testing ground for the truthfulness of a believer's faith: 'Have you seen the one who belies the Day of Judgment? This, then, is the same one who repels the orphan'. (*Soorat al-Maa'oon*, 107: 1-2)



Allah's Messenger ﷺ is reported as having said, 'Among the Muslims, the best house is the house where an orphan is being well-treated. The worst house among the Muslims is the house where an orphan is being ill-treated. The guardian of the orphan and I will be like this in Paradise. The Prophet ﷺ indicated this by showing his two fingers [the index and the middle finger].' (al-Bukhaaree, *al-Adab al-Mufrad*, *hadeeth* no. 137)

These teachings of the Prophet ﷺ changed the very nature of the Arabs. The same Arabs who were hard-hearted towards helpless orphans became tender hearted. The houses of several of his Companions turned into orphanages. The behaviour of 'Abdullaah ibn 'Umar ﷺ was such that he would never eat food without sharing it with an orphan.

Review

- Who, according to Islam, is considered an orphan?
- With a few quotes from the Qur'an and *ḥadeeth*, show the importance of treating orphans with great care.
- Is a person who is looking after an orphan allowed to use the orphan's wealth? Explain.



The Ease of Islam

عَنْ أَبِي بُرْدَةَ (رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُ) قَالَ : "بَعَثَ رَسُولُ اللهِ (صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) أَبَا مُوسَى وَمُعَاذ بْن جَبَلٍ إِلَى الْيَمَنِ، قَالَ: وَبَعَثَ كُلَّ وَاحِدٍ مِنْهُمَا عَلَى مِخْلاَفٍ، قَالَ: وَالْيَمَنُ مِخْلاَفَانِ، ثُمَّ قَالَ: (يَسِّرَا وَلاَ تُعَسِّرَا، وَبَشِّرَا وَلاَ تُنَفِّرَا). فَانْطَلَقَ كُلُّ وَاحِدٍ مِنْهُمَا إِلَى عَمَلِهِ." (رَوَاهُ الْبُخَارِي)

Abu Burdah ﷺ narrated that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ sent Abu Moosaa and Mu'aadh ibn Jabal to Yemen. He sent each of them to administer a province as Yemen consisted of two provinces. The Prophet said to them, 'Make things easy for the people and do not make things difficult for them; be kind and lenient with the people, and do not be hard on them, and give the people good news but do not repulse them.' So each of them went to carry out his job. (Reported by al-Bukhaaree)

Abu Moosaa al-Ash'aree ﷺ

His full name was 'Abdullaah ibn Qays Abu Moosaa al-Ash'aree. He hailed from Yemen and embraced Islam in Makkah at an early period of the Islamic mission. He then migrated to Ethiopia and later joined the Prophet ﷺ again at the time of the Campaign of Khaybar in 7 AH. 'Umar ibn al-Khattaab ﷺ appointed him governor of Basra, Iraq, in 20 AH. Abu Moosaa ﷺ remained in the office until the beginning of 'Uthmaan ibn 'Affaan's reign. Subsequently, he was transferred to Kufah, where he remained until 'Uthmaan's martyrdom. He had the most beautiful voice among the Prophet's companions. Three hundred and thirty five *aḥaadeeth* have been narrated on his authority. He died in Kufah in 44 AH.

Mu'aadh ibn Jabal ﷺ

His full name was Mu'aadh ibn Jabal al-Khazrajee al-Anṣaaree. He was one of the seventy delegates from Yathrib (the pre-Islamic name of Madeenah) to the Prophet ﷺ at al-'Aqabah. He took part in all the battles the Prophet ﷺ had fought. He was later appointed by him as administrator and judge of Yemen. The Prophet ﷺ often praised his deep understanding of Islam, and is reported to have said, 'The most learned from among my community as regards the lawful (*ḥalaal*) and the unlawful (*ḥaraam*) is Mu'aadh ibn Jabal.'

When the Prophet ﷺ died, he returned from Yemen to Madeenah. 'Umar ﷺ ibn al-Khattaab ﷺ appointed him governor of Syria. He died in 18 AH.

Enjoining Right and Forbidding Wrong

This *hadeeth* shows that ease and simplicity of Islam are among its prominent features that set it apart from all other religions. Ease is part of Islam's objectives and goals. Allah says, 'He has not placed on you any hardship in religion.' (*Soorat al-Hajj*, 22:78) He also says, 'Allah intends for you ease, and does not intend for you hardship.' (*Soorat al-Baqarah*, 2:185) The Prophet ﷺ also said, 'Certainly this religion is easy. No one overburdens himself in the religion except that it overcomes him [and he will not be able to continue it for long].' (Reported by al-Bukhaaree)

Once a man who had drunk alcohol was brought to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, and he said, 'Beat him.' Some of the Prophet's companions beat him with their hands, some with their shoes, and some with [a folded] piece of cloth. When he left, someone said to him, 'May Allah disgrace you.' The Prophet ﷺ said, 'Do not say that. Do not help Satan overcome him [by uttering such words].' (Reported by al-Bukhaaree)

A Bedouin once stood in the mosque and urinated. The people around were about to pounce upon him, but the Messenger of Allah ﷺ told them, 'Leave him and pour a vessel full of water over his urine. You have been sent to be easy on people and not to be hard on them.' (Reported by al-Bukhaaree)

These *ahaadeeth* are but practical pictures which demonstrate the manner of the Prophet ﷺ in dealing with people and their offences. Allah's Messenger ﷺ is reported as having said, 'Allah did not send me as someone causing hardship, or one who seeks out their mistakes and wrongs, but He has sent me as a teacher and one who brings ease.' (Reported by al-Bukhaaree)

Taking the simplest way was a principle in the life of the Prophet ﷺ. Whenever he had a choice between two matters, he would always choose the easier one as long as it did not involve any sin. He once said, 'Indeed, Allah is Kind and Gentle and loves gentleness. He gives for being gentle what he does not give for being harsh.' (Reported by Muslim)

'Make things easy for the people and do not make things difficult for them.' This is the teaching of Islam. It is, however, important to remember that this facility and flexibility should be in harmony with the demands of the Islamic Law (*Shareeʿah*) and justice. Allah makes Islam compatible with human nature. Matters in harmony with human nature are easy for people to accept. It is part of human nature to avoid difficulties and hardships. Therefore, one should make things easy for people. One should give good news and not incite hatred.

Review

- Who had the most beautiful voice among the Prophet's companions? Write a short biography of his life.
- The Prophet ﷺ is reported to have said, 'The most learned from among my community as regards the lawful (*halaal*) and the unlawful (*haraam*) is Muʿaadh ibn Jabal.' Write a short biography of Muʿaadh's life.
- Why do you think the Prophet ﷺ allowed the people to beat the drunken man but stopped them from saying 'May Allah disgrace you'?
- Why are Muslims encouraged by Allah to always choose the easier of two ways? What are the conditions when making that choice?



Remaining Associated to the Qur'an and Refreshing One's Knowledge of it

عَنْ ابْنِ عُمَرَ (رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمَا) أَنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) قَالَ: "إِنَّمَا مَثَلُ صَاحِبِ الْقُرْآنِ كَمَثَلِ صَاحِبِ الْإِبِلِ الْمُعَقَّلَةِ إِنْ عَاهَدَ عَلَيْهَا أَمْسَكَهَا وَإِنْ أَطْلَقَهَا ذَهَبَتْ." (رَوَاهُ الْبُخَارِي)

'Abdullaah ibn 'Umar ﷺ narrated that Allah's messenger ﷺ said, "The example of the person who knows the Qur'an by heart is like the owner of tied camels. If he keeps them tied, he will control them, but if he releases them, they will run away." (Reported by al-Bukhaaree)

The phrase *saahib al-Qur'an*, which occurs in this *hadeeth*, may mean a person who has committed the Qur'an to memory, or one who has developed a kind of proficiency in it by continually reciting it. It is clear that when the camel is constantly watched and is kept tied, it remains under control, otherwise it runs away. Similarly, if a person recites the Qur'an again and again and is vigilant enough as not to let it slip from his memory, it becomes a source of spiritual benefit to him. But when a person becomes indifferent to it, it slips out of his mind very quickly. The Prophet ﷺ once said, 'Keep refreshing your knowledge of the Qur'an, for it is more inclined to escape from the hearts of men than camels from their ropes.' (Reported by Muslim, *hadeeth* no. 1841)

Thus, if the 'Companion of the Qur'an' persists in reciting it by night and day, they will definitely remember it; but if they do not do that, they will forget it. This brings us to the most important questions: How often to read the Qur'an and how much of it to read?

There can be no fixed answer. It will vary from one individual to another and from one situation to another. The guiding principle must be what Allah Most High says, 'Read so much as may be easy for you.' (*Soorat al-Muzzammil*, 73:20) In other words: 'Read whatever you can with ease.'

The Practice of the Prophet's Companions and those who Followed them

The practice of the Prophet's Companions and those who followed them varied considerably. Some used to finish the whole Qur'an in two months, some in ten days, some in one week, some even in one day. One should, however, bear in mind the following *hadeeth*, as the governing principle in this respect:

'The person who reads the Qur'an in less than three days will not be able to understand it.' (Reported by Abu Daawood and at-Tirmidhee; classified as '*hasan*' by al-Albaanee)

This *hadeeth*, however, does not state that the person who reads the Qur'an in less than three days is doing something forbidden. It merely states that they will not be able to understand it. The safest way is to follow what the Prophet ﷺ said in this respect.

Once, when ʿAbdullaah ibn ʿUmar ﷺ – upon being asked by the Prophet ﷺ to read the Qur'an in one month – insisted on doing so in less time, the Prophet ﷺ told him, 'Read it in seven days and do not increase on this.' (Al-Bukhaaree)

It is instructive to realize that the Qur'an is divided into seven groups (*hizb*; plural: *ahzaab*) and thirty parts (*juz'*; plural: *ajzaa'*). This should give us some indication of what is considered desirable.

In his brilliantly written book *Way to the Qur'an*, Khurram Murad writes,

'In this respect an-Nawawee's advice is very sensible. One who can discover deeper meanings by contemplation should read less; similarly one who has to devote time in pursuits like education, affairs of government or important tasks entrusted by Islam may read less.'

Khurram Murad continues,

'The quantity of reading will very much depend on the purpose of reading. If you want to just spend time with the Qur'an, or get a quick overview you may read faster and, therefore, more. If you want to ponder and reflect, you may read much slower and, therefore, less. Under our present circumstances, I think, most of us should aim to finish a general reading of the whole Qur'an at least once every eight months. This, should not take more than 5-15 minutes every day, depending on whether you understand the meaning directly or through a translation. But, at least on a few occasions in your lifetime, you should also attempt to finish one reading in seven days or, in one month, especially in the month of *Ramadaan*. Some time should also be devoted to reading slowly, with pondering and reflection.' (*Way to the Qur'an*, pp. 60-1)

Review

- In what way is the camel's behaviour similar to human memory when it comes to the Qur'an?
- What is the advice regarding how much time should we take to finish reading the Qur'an?



Mercy and Generosity in Buying and Selling

عَنْ جَابِرِ بْنِ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ (رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمَا) أَنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) قَالَ: "رَحِمَ اللَّهُ رَجُلًا سَمْحًا إِذَا بَاعَ وَإِذَا اشْتَرَى وَإِذَا اقْتَضَى." (رَوَاهُ الْبُخَارِي)

Jaabir ibn ʿAbdullaah ﷺ narrated that Allah's Messenger ﷺ said, 'May Allah have mercy on the man who is generous when he buys and when he sells and when he demands his due.' (Reported by al-Al-Bukhaaree)

The Glorious Qur'an lays stress on honesty and straight dealing in the very earliest revelations:

'Woe to those who give short measure, who demand of other people full measures for themselves, but give less than they should when it is they who weigh or measures for others.' (*Soorat al-Mutaffifeen*, 83:1-3)

These verses do not, of course, refer only to commercial dealings. They touch upon every aspect of social relations: political and moral. Commerce (the activities and procedures involved in buying and selling) has always had a significant place in the minds of Muslims. Commerce means the attempt to make a profit. One buys goods at a low price, and then sells them at a higher price. The accrued amount is called profit. The truth about commerce can be described in two words: buy cheap and sell dear.

Trade is a superior way of earning one's livelihood. Islam looks with favour upon commercial activity, but condemns fraudulent practices. It is the characteristic of Islam that business is not separate from the rest of life. Islam places certain rules and regulations upon a Muslim trader and certain trades. Islam is a religion which regulates life in all its spheres. It is not to be regarded, like the modern man's religion, as a personal, private affair, which has nothing to do with his economic and political life. Islam censures economic exploitation as strongly as social excesses and individual dishonesty.

In fact, absolute honesty in business and commerce is an Islamic concept. It is not shared by any other religion. In Islam, it is people who regulate and dominate business, not business that dominates them. In business, as well as in all other matters, it is not people who ultimately order events, but Allah. Allah's will is everywhere. Nothing is too trivial for His attention.

Islam provides general rules for conducting business affairs. A casual look at *Kitaab al-Buyoo'* (the book pertaining to buying and selling) in the Six Sound Books of *hadeeth* collection will be enough to prove this.

The *hadeeth* under study provides ethical guidelines for regulating business and economic life. Good business is a result of goodwill. It cannot arise from fraud, force or taking advantage of someone's desperate conditions. One of the major factors that imbalances personality, society and nature is man's greed, which schemes and tricks to derive more than a just share, more than what is due.

Islam is most forceful in its condemnation of commercial dishonesty. It denounces, in the strongest possible terms, all sorts of deceitful dealings and illegal profits. It prohibits all transactions that are not based on justice

and fair-play. Admonishing a dishonest dealer once, the Prophet ﷺ said, 'Whoever deceives us is not one of us.' (Muslim) He wanted that both the buyer and the seller should be truly sympathetic and considerate towards each other. He strongly disapproved all transactions which involve any kind of injustice or hardship to the buyer or the seller. One should not take undue advantage of the simplicity or ignorance of the other. The seller should not think that he has unrestricted liberty to extract as much as possible from the buyer. He has to be just. He has to be generous and honest and take his own due and give the buyer what is his! All transactions: buying, selling and demanding dues should be based on the fundamental principle of mutual cooperation for the cause of goodness or piety.

One day the Prophet ﷺ was going to the mosque to offer the prayer when he saw people buying and selling. He called to the merchants and traders, so that they looked up. The Prophet ﷺ told them, 'Traders will be resurrected on the Day of Judgment as sinners except those who are honest and righteous. (Reported by at-Tirmidhee; *hadeeth* no. 1210) Allah's Messenger ﷺ is reported as having said, 'Weigh and give a little more.' (Reported by Abu Daawood; *hadeeth* no. 3336) Abu Daawood also reports Jaabir ibn ʿAbdullaah ﷺ as having said, 'The Prophet ﷺ owed me something and he paid me back and gave me something extra.' (*Hadeeth* no. 3347)

The Qur'an recounts the story of Prophet Shuʿayb ﷺ who admonished his people thus: 'Give full measure and be not one of those who measure short. Weigh with true balance and do not deprive people of their due. Do not go about causing mischief.' (*Soorat ash-Shuʿaraa'*, 26: 182)



The Islamic system of commerce and finance is the answer to the present-day global financial crisis and the Wall Street games. This is because Islam insists that transactions are linked to the real world economy, rather than being paper pushed around.

Furthermore, when people are unable to pay, the Islamic system encourages the rich financial institutions to give them time to reorganize their finances, rather than kicking them out onto the street. Islam, of course, encourages a freely flowing economy, but it also looks to it that the money is not siphoned off into hidden financial stockpiles, seen at its ugliest in the form of a Swiss bank account.

Review

- Islam regulates people's economic affairs too. What are the general Islamic rules that a tradesman must keep in mind when buying and selling?
- Why did the Prophet ﷺ say: 'Traders will be resurrected on the Day of Judgment as sinners...'?
- How does Islam advise us to treat people in debt? What in turn is the debtor advised to do when repaying his debt?



A Muslim Is Required to Be Merciful to All People

عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ (رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ) أَنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ) قَالَ: "مَنْ لاَ يَرْحَمُ لاَ يُرْحَمُ." (رَوَاهُ الْبُخَارِي)

Abu Hurayrah ﷺ narrated that Allah's Messenger ﷺ said, 'Allah is not merciful to him who is not merciful to people.' (Reported by al-Bukhaaree and Muslim)

Thus a Muslim is required to be merciful to all men, whether they are Muslims or non-Muslims. The Merciful One shows mercy to those who are themselves merciful to others. So show mercy to whatever is on earth, then He who is in heaven will show mercy to you.

All human beings come from Adam. The Prophet ﷺ has made no distinction between Muslims and non-Muslims in matters of human and moral obligations; relating to matters of life, honour, property, and human rights.

The Verb *Rahima* Used in This *Hadeeth*

The verb *rahima* is derived from the root *r – h - m*, meaning 'to show mercy, to have mercy on someone, to forgive, to spare, to rescue'. Of this root, 11 forms occur 342 times in the Qur'an. Mercy is one of the basic ethical qualities of human beings. Therefore, mercy holds a special importance in the ethical teachings of Islam.

Mercy may be explained with reference to tender feelings and emotions. As a result, one displays the utmost love, warmth and affection and kindness towards one's Muslim brothers and sisters. One cannot even think of hurting others. It was one of the outstanding qualities of the Prophet's conduct, the Qur'an clearly states. Faith prompts love for fellow beings. A true Muslim is, therefore, kind-hearted. The person who does not show mercy to fellow beings is a wretched person who is denied divine mercy. Those who are merciful are shown mercy by Allah, the Most Merciful. You should be merciful towards those on earth so that Allah may be merciful to you.

It is related that a woman went to ʿAa'ishah ﷺ, and ʿAa'ishah gave her three dates. The woman gave one to each of her children and kept one for herself. When the two children had eaten their dates, they began glancing at their mother. The mother took the date, divided it and gave each child a portion. When the Prophet ﷺ returned home,



ʿAa'ishah told him what had happened and he said, 'Why should this surprise you? Allah showed mercy towards her for the mercy she showed towards her children.' (Reported by al-Bukhaaree in *al-Adab al-Mufrad*) The Prophet ﷺ also said, 'He is not of us who does not show mercy to our little ones and respect to our elders.' *(Reported by al-Bukhaaree)*

Once Allah's Messenger ﷺ kissed his grandson al-Ḥasan ibn ʿAli ﷺ while al-Aqraʿ ibn Ḥaabis at-Tameemee ﷺ was sitting with him. Al-Aqraʿ ibn Ḥaabis exclaimed, 'I have ten children but I have never kissed one of them.' The Prophet ﷺ looked at him and said, 'Those who show no mercy will be shown no mercy.' (*al-Adab al-Mufrad*)

Thus, a Muslim embodies love and affection. One who neither loves nor is loved does not have any goodness. A true Muslim displays affection for his fellow beings and tries his best to please others and avoid any discomfort for them, hence meeting all the conditions of his close relationship. The teaching of mercy is not limited to mankind only, but it extends to animals as well. remember that if you are dealing with a Muslim, you are dealing with a brother in faith; if you are dealing with a non-Muslim, you are dealing with a brother in humanity.

Review

- What does the verb *raḥima* mean?
- The above *ḥadeeth* shows the importance of being merciful to people. Elaborate on it, mentioning non-Muslims, children, elders and animals.

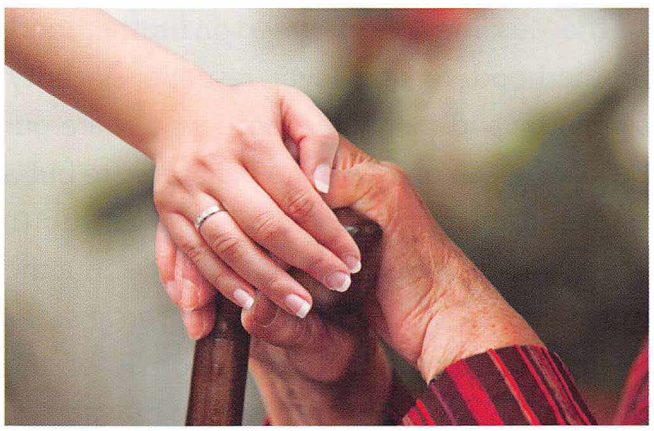


Mutual Mercy, Compassion and Support of Relatives

عَنِ النُّعْمَانِ بْنِ بَشِيرٍ (رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ) قَالَ: قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ)، "اَلْمُسْلِمُونَ كَرَجُلٍ وَاحِدٍ. إِنِ اشْتَكَى عَيْنُهُ، اشْتَكَى كُلُّهُ. وَإِنِ اشْتَكَى رَأْسُهُ، اشْتَكَى كُلُّهُ». (رَوَاهُ مُسْلِم)

An-Nuʿmaan ibn Basheer ﷺ narrated that Allah's Messenger ﷺ said, 'The Muslims are like one man: if his eye suffers, his whole body suffers; and if his head suffers, his whole body suffers.' (Reported by Muslim; *ḥadeeth* no. 6589)

This *ḥadeeth* indicates the significance and importance of the social aspects of mutual help and cooperation among Muslims. Mutual cooperation in all phases of life is a fundamental requirement of Islam. The Prophet ﷺ said, 'The believers are to one another like [parts of] a building: each part strengthening the others.' (Reported by Muslim)



In reality, Islam demands a society that provides not only for the spiritual needs of its members, but also for their bodily needs. Allah's Messenger ﷺ said, 'The likeness of the believers

in their mutual love, mercy and compassion, is that of the body; when one part of it is in pain, the rest of the body joins it in restlessness and fever.' (Reported by Muslim; *hadeeth* no. 6568)

He also said, 'You will see the believers in their having mercy for each other and in their love for each other, and in their kindness towards each other, like the body; when one member of it ails, the entire body suffers, one part calling out the other with sleeplessness and fever.' (Reported by al-Bukhaaree)



The Muslim society is based on brotherhood. Brotherhood means love, respect, sincerity, sympathy and mercy for those who share our belief. The Qur'an says: 'The believers are but a single brotherhood.' (*Soorat al-Hujuraat*, 49:10) The main objective of faith is to bring about the moral and social change on a universal scale. Therefore, everyone's contribution is of the utmost importance in achieving this ideal.

A devout Muslim acts sincerely towards fellow Muslims. He defers his own needs in order to help others. Thus a Muslim owes many obligations to fellow Muslims, such as help in solving their financial problems, resolving their worries and meeting their needs. One is, of course, not legally bound to do so. However, one may do so by way of doing good to fellow Muslims. It is not possible to enact any legislation on such an issue. It is rather the obligation of a Muslim to feed, clothe or fulfil the needs of a fellow Muslim by way of offering him/her financial help or emotional support. If one refuses to do so in spite of one's ability, Allah will take one to account and ask one about His bounties He has bestowed on one, which would have been sufficient to meet the needs of fellow Muslims.

The Prophet ﷺ said that Allah, the Exalted and Glorious, will say to such persons on the Day of Judgment, 'I fell ill but you did not visit Me... I asked you to give Me food, but you did not feed Me... I asked you for a drink, but you did not give Me any.' (Excerpts from a long *hadeeth qudsee* reported by Muslim on the authority of Abu Hurayrah ﷺ)

One will have no answer to these questions. For meeting the needs of a Muslim for Allah's sake is a good deed whose reward cannot be imagined. Hence, one should help and support a fellow Muslim in need, in whatever way one can. This entitles one to Allah's help and support, as evidenced by the *hadeeth* in which the Prophet ﷺ said, 'Whoever relieves a believer's distress of the distressful aspects of this world, Allah will rescue him from a difficulty of the difficulties of the hereafter. Whoever alleviates the situation of one in dire straits who cannot repay his debt, Allah will alleviate his lot in both this world and in the hereafter. Whoever conceals the fault of a Muslim, Allah will conceal his faults in this life and in the hereafter. Allah helps the servant as long as the servant helps his brother.'

(Excerpts from a long *hadeeth* reported by Muslim)

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ also said, 'A Muslim is a brother of a Muslim; he neither oppresses him nor does he fail him; he neither lies to him nor does he hold him in contempt. Piety is right here – and he pointed to his breast three times. It is evil enough for a man to hold his Muslim brother in contempt. The whole of a Muslim for another Muslim is inviolable: his blood, his property and his honour.' (Reported by Muslim)

The best type of behaviour for a Muslim is to learn and to pass on what he has learnt, to do full justice to people under his control and to strive in Allah's way.

Thus a Muslim should do as much good as they can. They should visit their sick neighbours, attend their funerals and smile and show a cheerful face. Every good act should arise from good intentions and be done deliberately. Intention (*niyyah*) is very significant in Islam. One should not do good to show off or to gain praise.

Review

- What are the obligations of the members of this Muslim *Ummah* towards one another?
- Why does Almighty Allah compare the entire Muslims to one single body?



Hayaa' Generates Goodness

عَنْ عِمْرَانَ بْنِ حُصَيْنٍ (رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ) قَالَ: قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ): "اَلْحَيَاءُ لاَ يَأْتِي إِلاَّ بِخَيْرٍ." (رَوَاهُ الْبُخَارِي)

'Imraan ibn Husayn ﷺ narrated that Allah's Messenger ﷺ said, '*Hayaa'* (Shame or modesty) produces nothing but good.' (Recorded by al-Bukhaaree)

The importance of this *hadeeth* lies in the fact that it points to one of the traits of *hayaa'* – shame, modesty, shyness or bashfulness.

The Word *Hayaa'*

According to E. W. Lane, the Arabic word *hayaa'* means shame, a sense of shame; shyness; bashfulness; or modesty: a shrinking of the soul from foul conduct through fear of blame.' (*Arabic-English Lexicon*, Vol. 1, p. 681; 2003 edition)

Modesty is Purity's Protection

Shame or modesty is one of the most important factors that keep a person away from committing a shameful or sinful act. If a person has no feeling of shame, there is nothing to stop them from doing anything. They would do almost anything,

because they have nothing 'within' them that would tell them that such-and-such is not proper behaviour, and that they should be ashamed to act in such a manner. Thus, shame produces nothing but good.

It is often said that the person who has no shame is like a dead person in this life. They have no modesty or shame. Their heart is, therefore, dead. If they possess shame, their heart will be sound and healthy. The more modest a person is, the healthier their heart is! It is in fact the feeling of shame that prevents a person from performing evil deeds. Shame is thus a very powerful preventing force in the face of temptation. A person's sense of shame bothers them even if nobody saw the shameful act they have committed. Their heart becomes uneasy and they become perturbed. Thus, shame generates nothing but good.

Shame is an attribute that sets apart people from animals. Animals do not feel any shame for their actions. The Prophet ﷺ once said, '*Hayaa'* is from faith, and faith is in Paradise. Obscenity (shamelessness) is from rudeness, and rudeness is in the Fire.' (at-Tirmidhee; *hadeeth* no. 2009; graded as '*hasan*') Allah's Messenger ﷺ said, 'If you feel no shame, then do as you wish.' (Reported by al- Bukhaaree)

He also said, 'There is never any obscenity or indecency in a thing but it mars it, and there is never any modesty, but it beautifies it.' (Ibn Maajah; Hadith 4185; graded *saheeh*) For a further discussion on this subject, you may refer to lesson 3 in Islamic Studies Grade Nine.

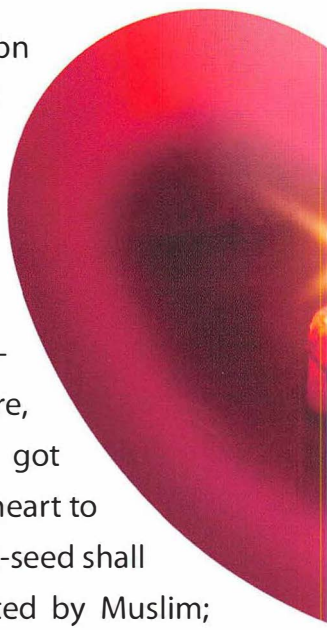
Review

- What does the Arabic word *hayaa'* mean? What relation does *hayaa'* have with good actions?



The Result of Faith and the Prohibition of Pride

عَن عَبْد الله بْنِ مَسْعُودٍ (رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ) قَالَ: قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ): "لاَ يَدْخُلُ النَّارَ أَحَدٌ فِي قَلْبِهِ مِثْقَالُ حَبَّةِ خَرْدَلٍ مِنْ إِيمَانٍ. وَلاَ يَدْخُلُ الْجَنَّةَ أَحَدٌ فِي قَلْبِهِ مِثْقَالُ حَبَّةِ خَرْدَلٍ مِنْ كِبْرِيَاءٍ». (رَوَاهُ مُسْلِم)



'Abdullaah ibn Mas'ood ﷺ narrated that Allah's Messenger ﷺ said, 'No one who has got faith (*eemaan*) in his heart to the weight of a mustard-seed shall enter the Fire, and no one who has got pride (*kibriyyaa'*) in his heart to the weight of a mustard-seed shall enter Paradise.' (Reported by Muslim; *hadeeth* no. 266)

What is *Eemaan*?

Eemaan means faith or belief, and the person with *eemaan* is called *mu'min* (feminine form: *mu'minah*), a believer. The Arabic word *eemaan* signifies security. A person who comes to believe becomes

secure against falsehood and misguidance in this world and against punishment in the next, as is indicated in the first part of the *hadeeth* mentioned above. The word *eemaan* is used for faith or belief, as *eemaan* gives an individual peace of mind. It also creates a harmonious relationship between a human being and the rest of the universe. The word *eemaan* is used 45 times in the Qur'an, and its related terms are used 858 times.

The Articles of *Eemaan*

When Angel Jibreel ﷺ asked Allah's Messenger ﷺ, 'What is *eemaan* (faith)?' He replied, 'It is to believe in Allah, His Angels, His Books, His Messengers, the Last Day, and to believe in the Divine Decree (*al-qadar*), the good of it and the bad of it.' (Muslim)

The *shahaadah*: 'I bear witness that there is no god except Allah and I also bear witness that Muhammad is His servant and Messenger' is the concise form in which the complete creed of Islamic faith is expressed in the Qur'an.

The articles of faith are summed up in essentially the three fundamental beliefs of (1) *tawheed*, (2) *risaalah* and (3) *aakhirah* – that is, (1) belief in the Oneness of Allah, (2) the message with which Almighty Allah sent Muhammad ﷺ to all mankind, and (3) the Hereafter. The entire edifice of Islam rests on these fundamental beliefs.

The Parts of *Eemaan*

Allah's Messenger ﷺ said, '*Eemaan* has more than seventy parts, the highest is the testimony that there is no god except Allah, and the lowest is removing a harmful object from the road.' (Reported by al-Bukhaaree) There are other *ahaadeeth*, such as 'Modesty is part of faith.' (Reported by at-Tirmidhee)

These *ahaadeeth* show that *eemaan* embraces the totality of a believer's life. Of course, certain parts of *eemaan* – like pronouncing the *shahaadah*, offering the obligatory prayers, paying *zakaat*, fasting in the month of *Ramadaan* and performing *hajj* – are more essential, and neglecting them would lead to the loss of *eemaan*. Others like removing a harmful object from a path are marginal and their omission will not impair *eemaan*. There are other aspects of varying degrees of importance between these two. *Eemaan* in the sense of 'to become a believer' sets apart a Muslim from non-Muslims. This *hadeeth* gives good news to the believers, 'No one who has got faith (*eemaan*) in his heart to the weight of a mustard-seed shall enter the Fire.'

For a detailed discussion concerning '*eemaan*', see *Islamic Studies: Grade Eight*.

Forbiddance of Pride (*Kibr*)

The word *kibr* (or *kibriyyaa'*) signifies pride or conceit. The second part of the *hadeeth* under discussion says, 'No one who has got pride (*kibriyyaa'*) in his heart to the weight of a mustard-seed shall enter Paradise.'

Pride is the offspring of self-conceit, and it is the very negation of faith. Pride and faith thus cannot go together. *Eemaan* inculcates in people the spirit of humility and submission to the truth. Pride is the expression of vanity. It is one of the greatest obstacles in the path of truth. Self-conceited people accept nothing which does not satisfy their vanity. Therefore, they cannot be true believers. They are worshippers their own selves. Vain and self-conceited people consider themselves to be superior beings marked-off from the rest of mankind.

The Prophet ﷺ once said, '*Kibr* (pride) is to refuse and reject the truth [because of self-esteem] and to look down on people.' (Reported by Muslim)

In reality, one of the first sins ever committed, the act of disobedience by Satan himself, was built upon the disease of conceit or pride (*kibr*). The evil of *kibr* can be so great that it can be the main reason for a person refusing to accept Islam and submit himself to Allah.

Review

- What is *eemaan*?
- What are the articles of *eemaan*? How can we sum them up in three basic beliefs?
- What is *kibr*?
- Muslims are proud of their religion. Some people like to wear good clothes, for example. Is this type of pride *haraam*? What kind of pride has Allah warned us against in the above *hadeeth*?



The Life of the World

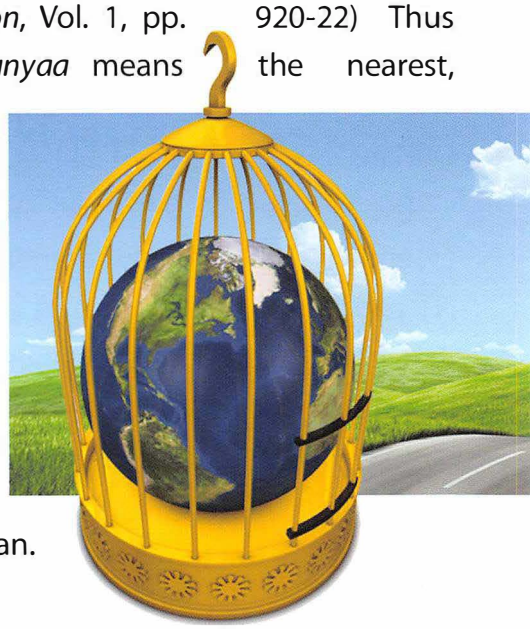
عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ (رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ) قَالَ: قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ): "الدُّنْيَا سِجْنُ الْمُؤْمِنِ وَجَنَّةُ الْكَافِرِ." (رَوَاهُ مُسْلِم)

Abu Hurayrah ﷺ narrated that Allah's Messenger ﷺ said, 'The world is a prison for the believer but a paradise for the disbeliever.' (Reported by Muslim)

In this *hadeeth*, Allah's Messenger ﷺ describes how the believer and the disbeliever feel about this world. Let us first examine the life of the world (*dunyaa*).

The Word *Dunyaa*

The Arabic word *dunyaa* is derived from the root *d – n - y*, which means 'to be near; to come close; to bring close this life as opposed to the next; to behave contemptibly.' (Lane, *Arabic-English Lexicon*, Vol. 1, pp. 920-22) Thus the term *dunyaa* means the nearest, lowest in value, the life of this world as opposed to the next life. The word *dunyaa* occurs 115 times in the Glorious Qur'an.



Dunyaa is so called because it is the nearest life that comes before the life to come (*aakhirah*). It is also considered to be base and low in comparison to the hereafter.

Characteristics of *Dunyaa*

As compared to the afterlife (*aakhirah*), this worldly life (*dunyaa*) is more immediate and visible, while the afterlife (*aakhirah*) is distant and hidden.

Dunyaa is a Transitory Life

The Qur'an often emphasizes that this world is short-lived and perishable as compared to the afterlife, which is to remain forever (*Soorat al-Aʿlaa*, 87:16-17) People are by nature impatient (*Soorat al-Anbiyyaa'*, 21:37); they love haste and things that are achievable hastily. For this reason they pin their hopes and efforts on transitory things. They negate things of lasting value, which come slowly but surely. They, however, can only be seen in the afterlife. The life of the world is called *daar al-imtiḥaan* (place of test), where people's faith is tested. Almighty Allah has endowed them with free will so that they can choose whatever way of life they desire: either the path of Almighty Allah, which leads to Paradise, or the path of satan, which will certainly lead to Hellfire. It is true that they enjoy this free will, but they will be held accountable for their choices in the hereafter, when all mankind will stand before Allah for judgment. Foolish people waste their life and do not think of the hereafter, which is the real life; smart people, however, devote themselves in this life to the worship of Allah and work really hard in order to reap a reward from Allah in the hereafter. For them, this life is just like a 'farmland' for the after life.



The Nature of this Worldly Life as Described in the Qur'an

'The life of this world is but amusement and diversion and adornment and boasting to one another and competition in increase of wealth and children.' (*Soorat al-Ḥadeed*, 57:20)

'The worldly life is not but amusement and diversion, but the home of the hereafter is best for those who fear Allah.' (*Soorat al-Anʿaam*, 6:32)

'The example of the life of this world is like rain, which We send down from the sky, and the vegetation of the earth mingles with it, then it becomes dry remnants scattered by the wind.' (*Soorat al-Kahf*, 18:45-46)

The Nature of this Worldly Life as Described in *Ḥadeeth*

Allah's Messenger ﷺ said, 'By Allah, [the bounties and length of] this world with respect to the hereafter are but as if one were to put his finger into the ocean and see with what it comes out (compared to what it leaves into the ocean). (Reported by Muslim)

He also said, 'If the worldly life were worth a mosquito's wing in the Sight of Allah, He would

not give a disbeliever even as much as a drink of water from it.' (Reported by at-Tirmidhee who graded it as 'sound')

Surely, the believers suffer considerably in this world. They find themselves exposed to sudden desires, which they must resist. They encounter violent wishes. They find themselves torn apart between permitted things which they strive after and forbidden things of which they are fearful. They have needs but they give priority to acts of obedience over their needs when they conflict with them. For this reason, They fast out of submission to the command of Allah and pay no attention whatsoever to their feelings of hunger and thirst. Likewise, they pay the purifying dues (*zakaat*) to purify their wealth and please Almighty Allah in spite of their love for wealth. This is because their love for Allah is much greater.

Thus this world is a prison for the believers. They only move towards desire within the limits imposed on them by faith. They do not covet any luxury without being in check by awareness of Allah and the desire to please Him. They know that when their time comes they will find more with their Lord in the hereafter than they could ever have imagined. As for the disbelievers, they are not restrained by obedience to Allah, nor does any divine command curb them. They are totally free from any restrictions in this world. They do not believe in life after death.

On the other hand, the believers know that human existence is a journey and this worldly life (*dunyaa*) is nothing but a very short stage on a much greater journey. It is a place of transition in which the traveller stops to take shade and to rest for a while during the day.

It is significant to realize that Islam does not prohibit efforts to provide for livelihood in this world. Instead, it guides us to the proper balance between this life and the hereafter. We, therefore, do not make the goods of this world our utmost goal. In other words, our utmost goal always remains the pleasure of Allah and the hereafter. This is not so with the non-believers who always complain. Their complaint is that they never have enough. They want more and more wealth and comforts and desire even greater luxury. Those who have a house seek a palace, and those who own cars envy those who have better cars. But true believers do not put their aspirations and their hearts into this world. They do not borrow money to buy luxuries. They save first and buy later. This world is not their real home. If the believers lose anything in this world, it will not have a great effect on their hearts and emotions. They are not like the disbelievers who in reality and practice, having nothing to live for but this life. If they face some difficulty in this life, they are sometimes even willing to kill themselves due to their depression and lack of having anything else to look forward to.

It is a well-known fact that during the latter half of the year 2008, many Americans and others throughout the world committed suicide in the face of the global financial crisis (far greater than the famous stock market crash of 1929) – as their whole world, everything and all they had lived for – came crumbling down around them.

Once *Imaam* ash-Shaafi'ee (150-204 AH/767 -819 CE) was sitting in a shade, immaculately dressed in clean clothes. A Jew passed by him. The Jew was struggling behind his donkey, loaded with oil. His clothes were dirty, and his manner was distasteful. The Jew paused and

asked ash-Shaafi'ee, 'How is it that people say the *dunyaa* is a prison for the believer and a paradise for the disbeliever?' indicating the blessings that surrounded ash-Shaafi'ee and the striving and the toil in which he found himself. It was as if he wanted to suggest that those words were simply not true and that if they were at all true then ease and comfort should be for the Jew and toil and struggle ought to be the fate of ash-Shaafi'ee, who could expect his blessings in the afterlife. Ash-Shaafi'ee replied, 'Yes, it is true that the worldly life is a prison for the believer and a paradise for the disbeliever. It is certain that the blessings I enjoy now, in fact, represent a prison in relation to what awaits me in the next world. And if you knew what torments await you then, you would realize that this worldly life you now enjoy is, in fact, a paradise for you compared to that.' Thus the *dunyaa* is the prison of the believer.

Review

- What does the word *dunyaa* mean?
- Write a note on the nature of this life. Give a reference from the Qur'an and *ḥadeeth*.
- Why does a true believer feel like he is in prison in this world, and how is the worldly life considered to be the unbeliever's paradise?



The Necessity of Sincerity in Performing Deeds

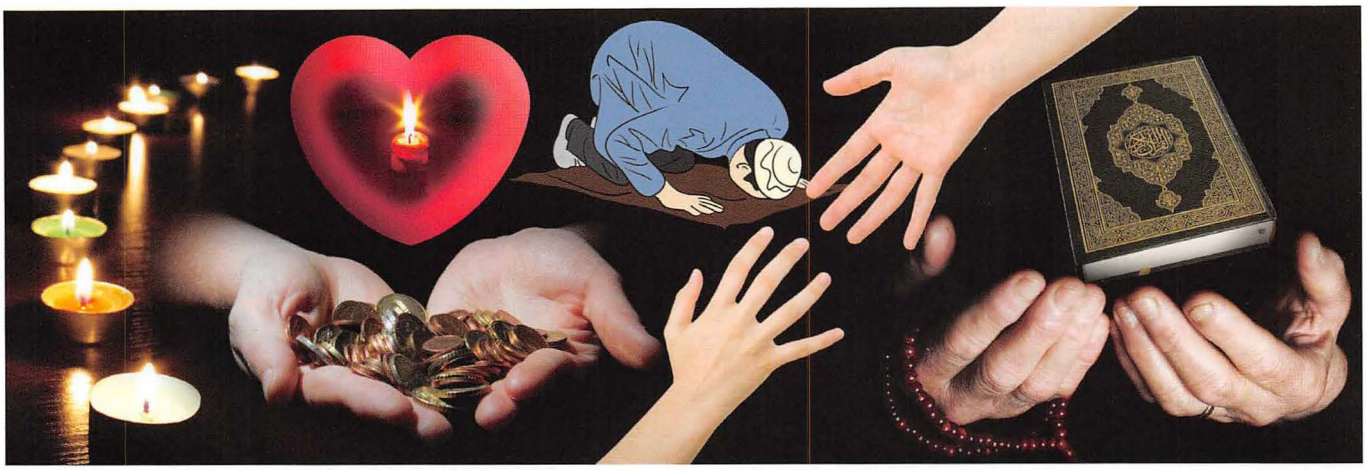
عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ (رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ) قَالَ: قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ (صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ): « إِنَّ اللهَ لاَ يَنْظُرُ إِلى صُوَرِكُمْ وَأَمْوَالِكُمْ ، وَلَكِنْ يَنْظُرُ إِلى قُلُوبِكُمْ وَأَعْمَالِكُمْ. " (رَوَاهُ مُسْلِم)

Abu Hurayrah ﷺ narrated that Allah's Messenger ﷺ said, 'Indeed, Allah does not look at your appearances and wealth, but He looks at your hearts and your actions.' (Reported by Muslim)

This *ḥadeeth* expresses one of the fundamental ethical principles of Islam. The Arabic word *ṣuwar* (singular: *ṣoorah*) used in this *ḥadeeth* signifies shape, form and image. The Qur'an says, 'In whatever form He wills, He composes you.' (*Soorat al-Infiṭaar*, 82:8)

Allah does not look at our shapes or outward appearances. He does not look at our riches. He looks at our hearts and actions. Actions are of value through the intention behind them. One's rightness of intention makes one's action right.

Thus intention (*niyyah*) is required before the performance of various acts of worship: ablution, *ghusl* (ritual bath), prayers, fasting, *zakaat*, pilgrimage, sacrifice, charity, and so forth. Moreover, the intention must immediately precede the act. Its place is the heart. A person should be well acquainted with the act they want to perform. The act must be performed for the sake of Allah, to earn His good pleasure. In this sense, the intention is of great importance. At the very beginning of



his famous *Saheeh*, *Imaam* al-Bukhaaree has prefaced his vast collection of authentic Prophetic traditions (*ahaadeeth*) with the saying of Allah's Messenger ﷺ, 'Indeed, actions derive their value from the intentions and every person is credited with what they have actually intended.' This *hadeeth* is recorded in practically all major works of *hadeeth*. The value of an act of worship, rather all actions, even if performed in complete accord with the rules of the Islamic Law, depends upon the intention of the performer. A good intention is taken into account by Allah, even if not carried out. It heightens the value of the deed. On the other hand, refraining from an evil intention is reckoned as a good deed (Al-Bukhaaree) Allah says, 'Neither their flesh reaches Allah nor their blood; it is your piety that reaches Him.' (*Soorat al-Hajj*, 22:37)

In pre-Islamic times, the Arabs used to offer the flesh of the animals they had sacrificed at the altars of idols. In like manner, they brought the flesh of animals so sacrificed to the Ka'bah, smearing the walls of the Ka'bah with their blood. Exposing the underlying folly of this practice, the Qur'an points out that what reaches Allah is not the blood or the flesh of the sacrificial animals, but rather piety or righteousness. If a person sacrifices an animal out of genuine feelings of thankfulness to Allah and does so with purity of intention and for the sake of Allah alone, then the purity of their spirit and intention is bound to reach Allah. Devoid of the purity of intention, however, the mere offerings of flesh and blood are meaningless.

The same point is made in the *hadeeth* under discussion. Indeed, Allah does not look at forms and shapes. It is the intention behind any action that gives it its worth.

The meaning of sincere devotion (*ikhlaas*) is that the servant of the Lord devotes their religion sincerely to Allah, that they put it into practice for the sake of Allah, that they attribute no partner to Him in his religion, and that they do not seek to impress anyone with their religious practice.

It is instructive to remember that we have full control over one's intention. However, we must make it clear that the intention is not to be confused with wishing. Wishing to do something is not synonymous with the intention of doing it. Intention is a conscious step. It reflects one's resolve: the intention or resolve to seek Allah's Pleasure.

Review

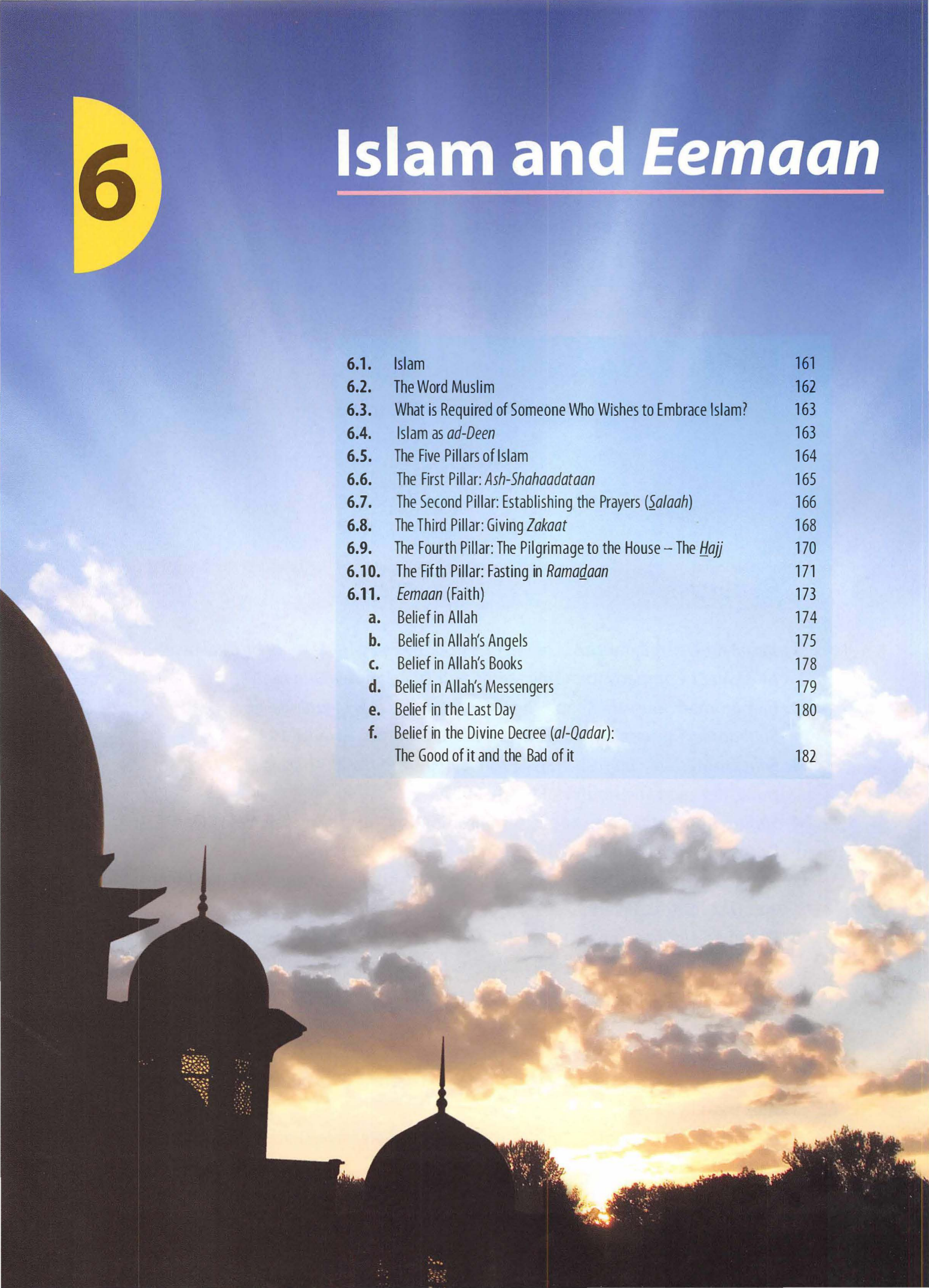
- Why does Allah base His judgement on the intentions of people and not on their outward condition?
- What does this tell us when we are judging others or forming opinions about others?
- What does sincere devotion (*ikhlaas*) mean?

For Further Reading and Research

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6 Islam and *Eemaan*

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Islam and *Eemaan* 6

6.1. Islam



The word Islam is derived from the Arabic root *s – l - m*, which means 'safety, calm, being safe, and sound, or to remain unharmed, being free from obstacles, to hand over, to submit to, surrender to'. The word *salaam*, which comes from the same root, means 'peace'. Thus, Islam means total willing submission. (*Soorat Aal-ʿImraan*, 3:19) Hence, Islam is an act of total willing surrender to Allah's will and following His commands. The term Islam occurs eight times in the Qur'an.

The religion sent down by Allah and brought into the world by His prophets has been called Islam for the simple reason that, in it, the servant surrenders completely to the power and control of the Lord and obeys Him whole-heartedly. The Qur'an speaks of Aadam ﷺ as the first man and the first prophet. Prophethood began with Aadam ﷺ and came to a close with Prophet Muhammad ﷺ. Prophet Aadam ﷺ was the first Muslim. The religion of all the prophets and messengers was Islam. This is the vital point which should be kept in mind in trying to understand Islam.

6.2. The Word Muslim

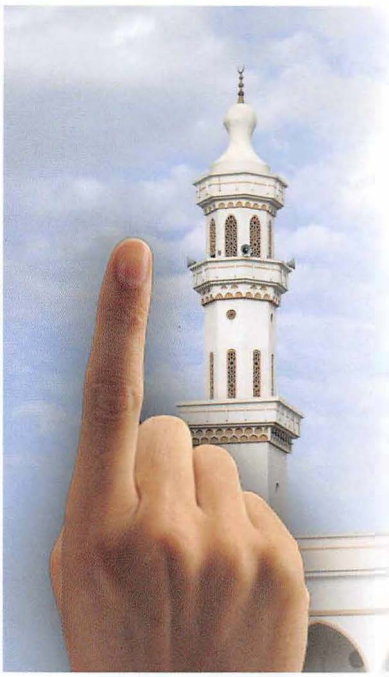


Muslim means one who submits to Allah; (2:131) one who professes the faith of Islam, (*Soorat al-Hajj*, 22:78) hence, a 'submitter'. The term in its singular form occurs twice in the Qur'an (*Soorat Aal-'Imraan*, 3:67 and *Soorat Yoosuf*, 12:101). Discussing the term Muslim, Hasan Gai Eaton states,

'The term 'Muslim' (with a capital letter) is properly applied only to those who follow the Message of the Qur'an, but when it takes the lower case, it has a far more universal meaning. In the first place, everyone and everything is *muslim*, in the sense that all, knowingly or unknowingly, are subject to the Divine Will and cannot escape from it. The rock that falls by the force of gravity is *muslim*, so are the birds and beasts of the field, so too is the humankind as a whole. All submit to the will of their Creator.' (*Remembering God*, p. 5)

Since everything in this universe behaves in accordance with its ingrained laws, they automatically obey the command of Allah. The whole universe is, therefore, *muslim*, surrendering to the Will of Allah. Man is the only exception in this universal law. This is because he is endowed with the free choice of obeying or disobeying the commands of Allah.

6.3. What is Required of Someone who Wishes to Embrace Islam?



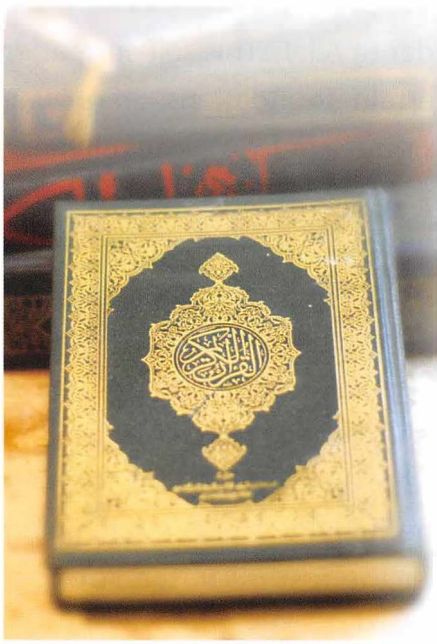
First of all, they must pronounce the two declarations of faith (*ash-Shahaadataan*):

لا اله الا الله محمد رسول الله

There is no god but Allah *Laa ilaaha illallaah*
Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah *Muhammad-ur-Rasoolullaah.*

They must firmly and sincerely believe in the Oneness of Allah. they must be detached from every other religion, since religion in the sight of Allah is Islam (*Soorat Aal-ʿImraan*, 2:19). Thus, by simply sincerely reciting *ash-shahaadataan* a non-Muslim enters the fold of Islam and joins the community of Muslims.

6.4. Islam as *ad-Deen*



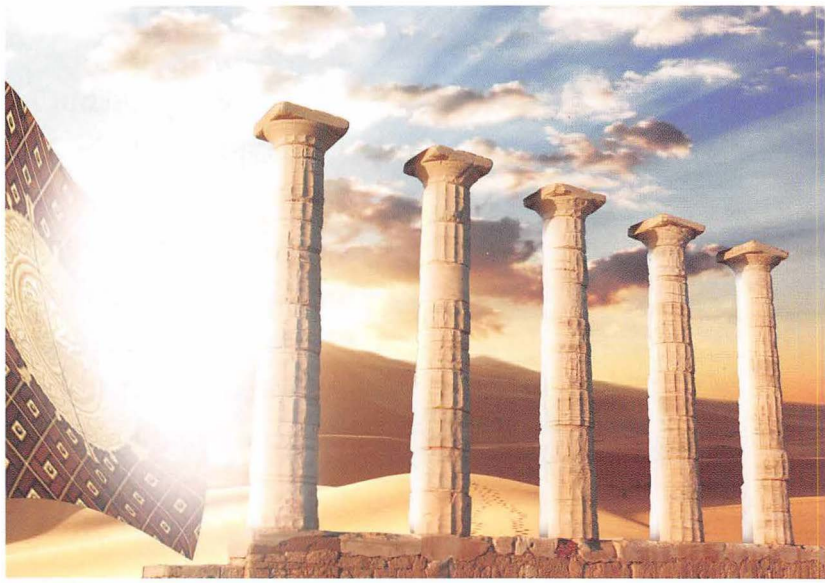
The Arabic word *deen* is usually translated as religion. But this does not provide its true meaning. *Deen*, in fact, denotes a system of beliefs, a code of life. It does not merely signify the spiritual fulfilment of the individual. It means all matters pertaining to a way of life, for it encompasses religion, law, trade, commerce, morality, politics, justice, foods and drinks, clothing: in fact, all aspects of life relating to people's thoughts or actions. This is the most fundamental point that should be grasped in trying to understand Islam, because, in this comprehensive sense, religion is a Muslim's life. All prophets and messengers brought the same *deen*. Any other *deen* besides Islam is unacceptable to Allah (*Soorat Aal-ʿImraan*, 3:85). Thus, it would appear that it is not possible to translate the term in a single word in any other language.

Review

- What does Islam mean? How many times is this word repeated in the Qur'an?
- Explain the word Muslim.
- What is *ash-Shahaadataan*? When does one become a Muslim?
- What is the proper meaning of the word *deen*?

6.5.

The Five Pillars of Islam



The basic obligatory duties of a Muslim towards Allah are known as the Five Pillars of Islam. The Prophet ﷺ said,

'Islam is built upon five pillars[1]: Testifying that there is no god but Allah and that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah, establishing the [obligatory] prayers, giving the *zakaat*, making the pilgrimage to the [Sacred] House, and fasting in Ramadaan.' (Reported by al-Bukhaaree and Muslim)

Importance of this *Hadeeth*

This *hadeeth* is of great significance. It lays down the fundamental aspects of one's outward surrender to Allah. This self-surrender is based on certain foundations, in a way similar to a building. If a person carries all these aspects, he lays down a solid foundation for his religion as a whole. If a person lacks in any of these pillars, then the entire building will be exposed to danger. If any of the pillars is missing, the house will stand but it will have a deficiency. It is important to realize that the main pillar is the testimony of faith. The first pillar leads to the fulfilment of the remaining pillars. The firmer the first pillar, the stronger the remaining pillars!

1- The word pillar does not appear in the Arabic text, but it has been supplied for clarity of meaning: *An-Nawawee's Forty Hadeeth.* Tr. Ezzeddin Ibrahim-Denys Johnson Davies, p. 34. The testimony of faith is: 'I bear witness that there is no god but Allah and that Muhammad is His servant and Messenger'. By reciting this two-fold testimony of faith, one comes into the fold of Islam. Although this is a verbal affirmation, it requires conviction in one's heart and then its manifestation by actions.

6.6. The First Pillar: The Two Statements of Faith (*ash-Shahaadataan*)



The Arabic word *shahida* means 'to witness, to experience personally, to be present'. From this root *shahaadah* means testimony, evidence or witness.

Being a Muslim is outwardly established by one's saying the two statements of faith. One's submission is perfected through performing other obligatory duties, mentioned in the *hadeeth* above. Neglecting them suggests that one has dissolved or weakened the terms of one's obedience. The testimony of faith is a statement or *kalimah*. The Qur'an calls it *Kalimatan-tayyibatan* – a good word (*Soorat Ibraaheem*, 14:24), which is like a good tree firmly rooted, its branches reaching out towards the sky. This testimony is so important and significant that Allah Himself, His angels and those endowed with knowledge bear witness to it and make this declaration. (*Soorat Aal-'Imraan*, 3:18)

a. There Is No god but Allah: The Qur'anic Conception of the Oneness of Allah – The *Tawheed*

The word Allah is used with the highest frequency in the Qur'an. It is the personal name of the Creator of the universe. The word Allah is unique. It cannot be translated into any other language. Allah is the personal name of the Ultimate Reality in this universe. Thus, there cannot be any plural of this word in the way 'God' becomes 'gods', nor has it a feminine form as 'goddess or goddesses'.

The Oneness of Allah (*tawheed*) is the central theme of the Qur'an. The name Allah is used exclusively for the One who created the heavens and the earth and everything in the universe. According to a *hadeeth* of the Prophet ﷺ, there are ninety-nine names of Allah. These names are collectively known as *al-Asmaa' al-Husnaa* (the most beautiful names), and many of them are mentioned in the Qur'an. However, the most repeated names of Allah are *ar-Raheem* and *ar-Rahmaan*, which express the immensity of Divine Mercy for everything that is in the universe. They lead us to the proper understanding of our relationship with our Creator. (Abdur Rashid Siddiqui, *Qur'anic Keywords*)

b. *Muhammad-ur-Rasool-ullaah*: Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah

This is the second part of the *Shahaadah* or the testimony of faith. Muhammad ﷺ is the Messenger of Allah. This means he was chosen by Allah to be His Messenger in order to convey His message. He is the final prophet sent by

Allah. He has been sent to all mankind until the Day of Judgment. The Qur'an says, 'He is Allah's Messenger and the Seal of the Prophets.' (*Soorat al-Aḥzaab*, 33:40)

Allah's Messenger ﷺ is described as the Seal of the Prophets – *Khaatam an-Nabiyyeen* – in this verse. he was the last in the line of prophets and messengers, and there will be no other prophet after him.

Review

- What are the Pillars of Islam? Name them.
- What is *ash-shahadataan*? Is the verbal affirmation of the *shahaadah* enough for someone to be considered a true Muslim?
- Explain *Laa ilaaha ill-Allaah, Muḥammad-ur-Rasoolullaah.*

6.7. The Second Pillar: Establishing the Prayers (*Ṣalaah*)

Ṣalaah is an Arabic word which means 'to turn towards something or to pay attention to pray, to praise and to pay respect'. It is a Qur'anic keyword. Establishing the prayers means the prescribed Islamic prayers: the five daily prayers. (*Soorat al-Baqarah*, 2:238) The structure and timings of *ṣalaah* as well as its contents are all very well explained in both the Qur'an and the *Sunnah*. It is not only for this nation (*Ummah*) that *ṣalaah* was made obligatory. The Qur'an declares that Allah enjoined the performance of *ṣalaah* to the communities of all the earlier prophets. However the form of *ṣalaah* prescribed was different from the one prescribed for this community. But *qiyyaam*, *rukooʿ* and *sujood* were always parts of *ṣalaah*. The word *ṣalaah* occurs 78 times in the Qur'an.

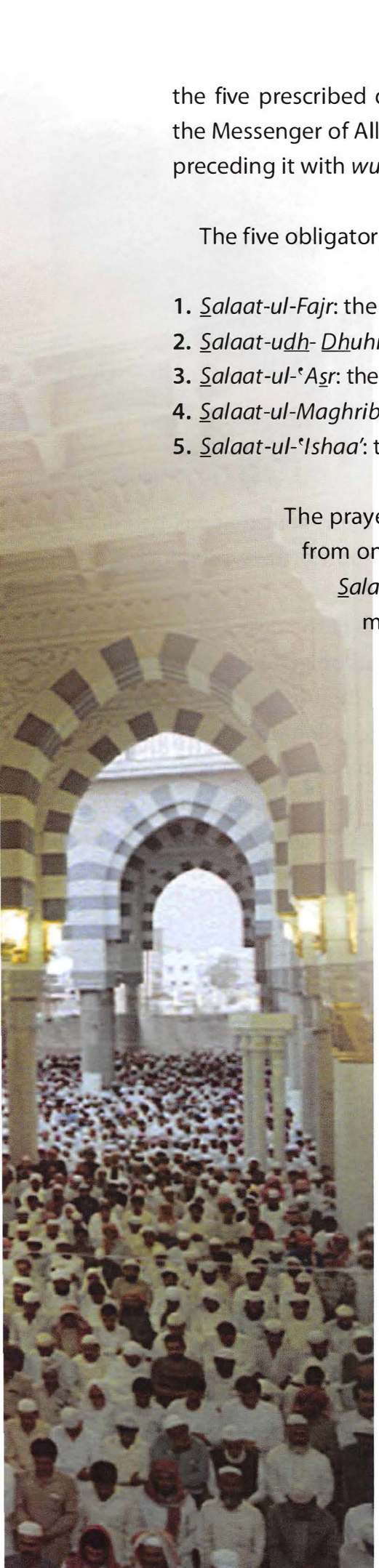
Allah's Messenger ﷺ said, 'Pray in the manner that you have seen me praying.' (Reported by al-Bukhaaree) The objective of *ṣalaah* is to establish an intimate relationship between the servant and his Creator. This is renewed five times a day. It continues throughout one's life until death. *Ṣalaah* is the most important obligation for a Muslim. After pronouncing the *shahaadah* by which one enters the fold of Islam, the very first obligation testing one's sincerity of faith is *ṣalaah*.

It is important to realize that the believers are commanded to establish the five daily prayers. This means that these prayers must be performed at their proper timings in congregation and in a mosque according to its rules and regulations taught by the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. The structure and timing of each of

the five prescribed daily prayers is recorded and fully explained in the traditions of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. It is important to note that *ṣalaah* will not be valid without preceding it with *wuḍoo'* (ritual ablution).

The five obligatory daily prayers are:

1. *Ṣalaat-ul-Fajr*: the dawn prayer
2. *Ṣalaat-uḍh- Ḍhuhr*: the noon prayer
3. *Ṣalaat-ul-'Aṣr*: the mid-afternoon prayer
4. *Ṣalaat-ul-Maghrib*: the sunset prayer
5. *Ṣalaat-ul-'Ishaa'*: the nightfall prayer



The prayer times vary a little each day with the season and the year, and from one town to another through the effects of latitude and longitude. *Ṣalaah* can be performed individually or in congregation, but men must perform it in a mosque in the congregation. Allah's Messenger ﷺ said, 'The merit of the congregational prayer (*ṣalaat-ul-jamaa'ah*) surpasses that of the individual prayer by twenty-seven degrees.' (Reported by al-Bukhaaree and Muslim)

The Prophet ﷺ also said, 'To perform the late evening prayer ('*Ishaa*') in congregation is equivalent to spending half the night in prayer, while to perform the dawn prayer (*Fajr*) in congregation is like praying the whole night.' (Reported by Muslim)

The Friday prayer, which is performed at *Ḍhuhr* time, has special significance as it is preceded by a sermon (*khuṭbah*) delivered by the *imaam*. It has to be performed in congregation and is obligatory on all adult men.

Review

- What does *ṣalaah* mean?
- How must we offer the *ṣalaah*? What is its objective?
- How many times must we offer *ṣalaah*? Name them.
- What are the merits of *ṣalaah*?

6.8. The Third Pillar: Giving *Zakaat*



The Arabic word *zakaat* is derived from the root *z – k – y*, which means 'to grow, to flourish, to reach, to purify, and to be purified'. *Zakaat* is meant to purify a person's capital and income from the taint of selfishness, hence the name *zakaat* – the purifying dues. The term *zakaat* occurs 32 times in the Qur'an.[2]

Zakaat is the third pillar of Islam. It ranks very close to *ṣalaah*, and they are both often mentioned together in the Qur'an – in eighty-two places to be precise. See, for instance, 73:20, 33:33 and 2:43.

The payment of *zakaat* purifies a believer and their wealth. It purifies their soul by cleansing it of the disease of tightfistedness and miserliness. In *Shareeʿah*, *zakaat*'s technical meaning is in reference to a specific portion of one's different type of wealth that one must give every year to a specific group of recipients mentioned in the Qur'an. See (*Soorat at-Tawbah*, 9:60)

Zakaat is not a favour to be given to the poor by the rich. Rather, it is the right of the poor on the wealth of the rich. (*Soorat al-Maʿaarij*, 70: 24-25) To withhold *zakaat* is to deprive the poor of their rightful share. Thus, one who gives *zakaat* actually purifies one's wealth by separating from it the portion that belongs to the poor. One who incurs *zakaat* and does not give it will have severe punishment in the hereafter. Traditions of the Prophet ﷺ describe in detail the punishment that will be inflicted on those who do not give proper *zakaat* on their wealth.

Zakaat is one of the pillars of Islam, and if a Muslim denies its obligation or says that it is not a part of Islam, then such a person becomes a disbeliever, according to the agreement of scholars. *Zakaat* is not imposed unless the zakaatable wealth reaches a minimum level. This level is called the *niṣaab*[3] or scale. Different types of properties have different *niṣaabs*.

Zakaat Year

Passage of one lunar year (according to the hegira (*hijrah*) calendar) is required before *zakaat* can be imposed on wealth. Assets that remain with their owners for one full year are zakaatable. Rich Muslims, therefore, must establish their *zakaat* year. Many Muslims calculate *zakaat* during *Ramaḍaan* for the added reward of worshipping during the blessed month. So, an example of *zakaat* year

2- For more details, see Kassis's *A Concordance of the Qur'an*, pp. 1325-26.

3- *Niṣaab* on money is 85 grams of gold and so on. *Niṣaab* must be in excess of the basic needs of the owner. Things used for satisfying basic needs are not considered *zakaatable*. Basic necessities are food, shelter, clothes, household goods, utensils, furniture, money to pay back debts and books of knowledge, among other things.

may be from 15th *Ramaḍaan* 1430 AH to the 14th *Ramaḍaan* 1431 AH (one full *hijrah*/ lunar calendar year). Once the *zakaat* year is set, the same date range should be used for future years.

The wealth or property subject to *zakaat* should be of a growing type. It should have the capability for growth and development. *Zakaat* is obligatory on wealth regardless of whether the owner is an adult or a minor. It is due on wealth owned by the insane as well. Legal guardians should pay *zakaat* on behalf of minors and the insane.

Zakaat is compulsory on merchandise or trading goods. If a lunar year passes and the merchandise or trading goods reach *niṣaab*, which is the value of 85 grams of gold, *zakaat* becomes due. *Zakaat* on them is 2.5 % if their value reaches the *niṣaab*. *Zakaat* on livestock and their *niṣaab* is different. Agricultural produce, such as grains, is zakaatable. According to some scholars, however, *zakaat* need not be given on jewels, pearls, diamonds, and precious stones which are used for wearing. *Niṣaab* on jewellery is 85 grams of gold or 595 grams of silver and the *zakaat* rate is 2.5 %.

Who are entitled to receive *zakaat*?

The Qur'an states that there are eight categories of people who are entitled to receive *zakaat* (*Soorat at-Tawbah*, 9:60). They are: 'the poor; the destitute and the needy; workers in *zakaat* administration; those whose hearts need to be reconciled; freeing from bondage; those in debts; for the cause of Allah and the travellers.'

Review

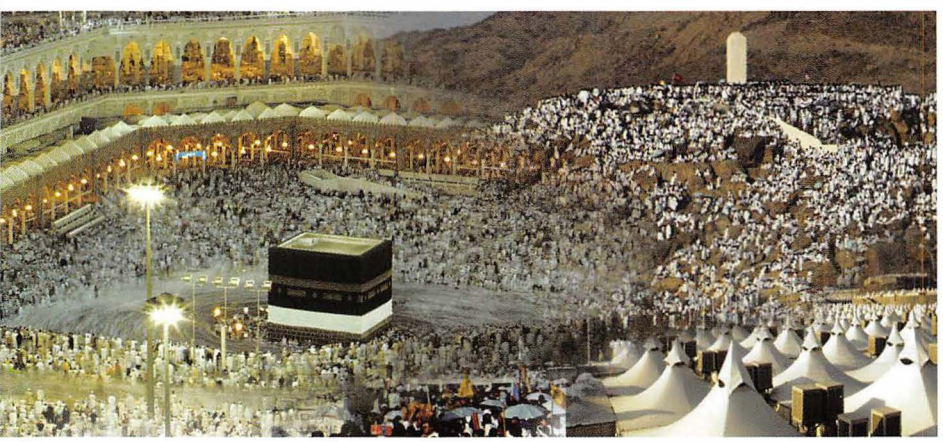
- What does the word *zakaat* mean?
- What is the importance of *zakaat*? What are its merits?
- On whom is *zakaat* compulsory?
- On what kind of wealth is *zakaat* compulsory, and how much is to be paid?
- Who are entitled to receive *zakaat*?

6.9.

The Fourth Pillar: The Pilgrimage to the House – The *Hajj*

The next pillar mentioned in the *hadeeth* above is the pilgrimage to the House – the *hajj*. *Hajj* is an Arabic term whose primary meaning is 'to intend to visit someone or somewhere that is the object of reverence, respect, veneration or honour'. In the terminology of the Islamic Law (*Shareeʿah*), it is the pilgrimage to the Kaʿbah in Makkah during the prescribed period: during certain specific days in the month of *Dhul-Hijjah*.

The *hajj* is an obligation upon every adult Muslim who is financially well off and physically fit to undertake the journey, once in a lifetime. It is, however, much more than an obligation. It is a pillar of Islam itself.



The Institution of *Hajj* and its Rites

In accordance with the command of Allah, the call for *hajj* was first given by Prophet Ibraaheem ﷺ. Since then it has been carried on for the last four thousand years. Muslims from all over the world, using different means of transport, come to Makkah to perform the *hajj*.

There are various rites connected with the *hajj*, including wearing a special garment to enter the state of *ihraam* (sacred purity) and circling the Kaʿbah seven times (*tawaaf*). The climax of the *hajj* is the standing on ʿArafah, a plain and hill to the east of Makkah. The time for this is from midday to sunset on the ninth of the month of *Dhul-Hijjah*.

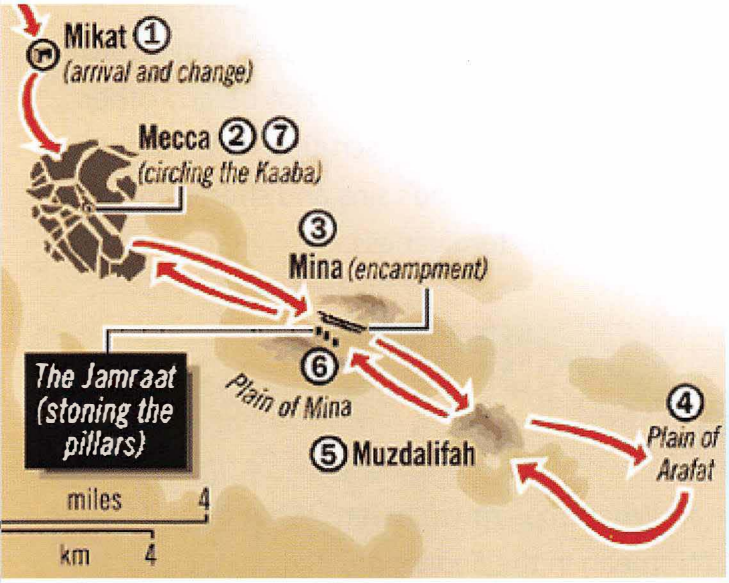
The rites of *hajj* symbolically re-enact many of the events in the lives of Prophet Ibraaheem, his wife Haajar and their son Ismaaʿeel. The *hajj* ceremonies start on the 8th of *Dhul-Hijjah* with pilgrims doing the *tawaaf* (circling the Kaʿbah in an anti-clockwise fashion) seven times. This is followed by performing *saʿee* (a swift walk) between the hillocks of Safaa and Marwah, which are now included in the Masjid al-Haraam. Pilgrims then proceed to Minaa, which is about 5 miles from Makkah. After an overnight stay there, they move to ʿArafah on the 9th of *Dhul-Hijjah* and spend the whole day in prayers and supplications. They leave the Plain of ʿArafah after the sunset for a stop-over at Muzdalifah for the night and finally they return to Minaa to perform the rest of the rites, including the sacrifice of an animal (depending on the type of *hajj* one intends to perform), the shaving or clipping of

the hair, the stoning at the three pillars and the performance of another *ṭawaaf* of the Ka'bah. The *ḥajj* rites finish by the 12th or 13th of *Dhul-Ḥijjah*.

The rituals performed during the *ḥajj* create bonds of brotherhood among Muslims. In fact, *ḥajj* manifests the unity of the Muslim Community as one family. It also removes all differences of race, colour, language, nationality and social position.

Review

- What does the term *ḥajj* mean?
- What does it mean in the *Sharee'ah*?
- On whom is the *ḥajj* compulsory?
- Give an account of the rites of *ḥajj*.



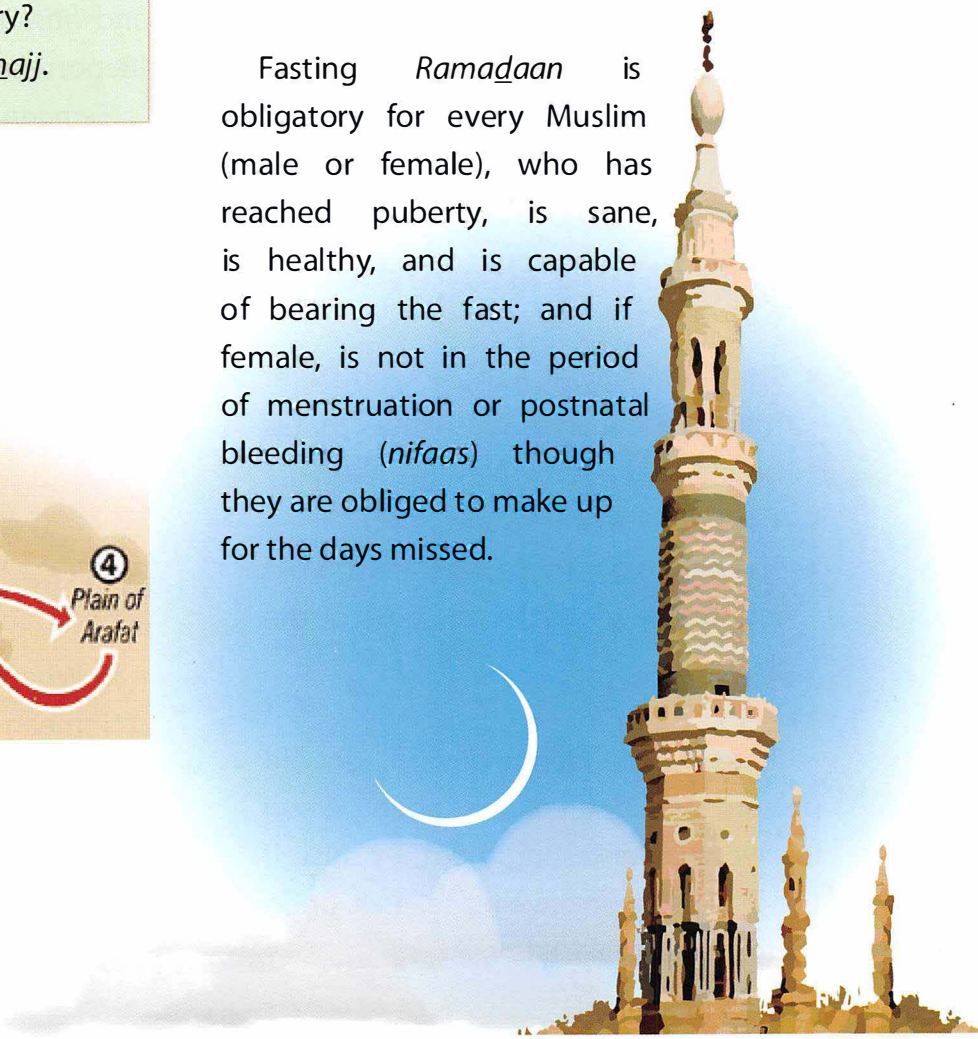
6.10.

The Fifth Pillar: Fasting in *Ramaḍaan*

Ṣawm or *ṣiyaam* literally means 'to refrain from something or to leave something'. In the *Sharee'ah*, it denotes refraining from food, drink and sexual intercourse during the days of the month of *Ramaḍaan*. Fasting in the month of *Ramaḍaan* is a pillar of Islam.

Who Must Fast *Ramaḍaan*?

Fasting *Ramaḍaan* is obligatory for every Muslim (male or female), who has reached puberty, is sane, is healthy, and is capable of bearing the fast; and if female, is not in the period of menstruation or postnatal bleeding (*nifaas*) though they are obliged to make up for the days missed.



Those who Have a Valid Reason to Postpone Fasting

The following are permitted, if they find it necessary, to suspend fasting. However, they must fast an equal number of days after the end of *Ramaḍaan*, but not on *'Eed* days.

- The ill if the fasting is likely to increase the illness,
- The traveller,
- A pregnant woman – if fasting is likely to harm the health of the mother or the unborn baby, and/or prevent her from having enough milk for her baby.

Those who Are Excused from Fasting altogether

- The terminally ill – those who suffer from a terminal, serious illness that is bound to worsen if they fast,
- The permanently insane,
- The very old – those who are too old and feeble to fast at any time of the year.

Instead, the terminally ill or old person should feed one poor person for everyday of fasting that they miss. If the ill person or traveller takes it upon themselves to fast, it is valid.

The Pillars of Fasting

- The *niyyah* (the intention)
- *Imsaak*: abstaining from eating, drinking and sexual intercourse during the daylight hours of fasting – from the coming of dawn, until the setting of the sun.

Fasting Shows One's Sincerity to Allah

Fasting is an act of worship that shows one's sincerity to one's Lord. Only Allah is aware whether a person has truly fasted or not. No one can know if they secretly break their fast. Therefore, Allah has a special reward for those who fast. Allah's Messenger ﷺ said, 'Whoever fasts the month of *Ramaḍaan* with *eemaan* and *iḥtisaab*, all their previous sins are forgiven.' (Reported by al-Bukhaaree and Muslim)

Eemaan and *iḥtisaab* are technical terms. They mean that all good deeds are done for the sake of Allah with the hope of receiving reward from Him. Thus, there should not be any other motive. *Iḥtisaab* means scrutiny. One should take account of all one's sins and shortcomings and seek Allah's forgiveness.

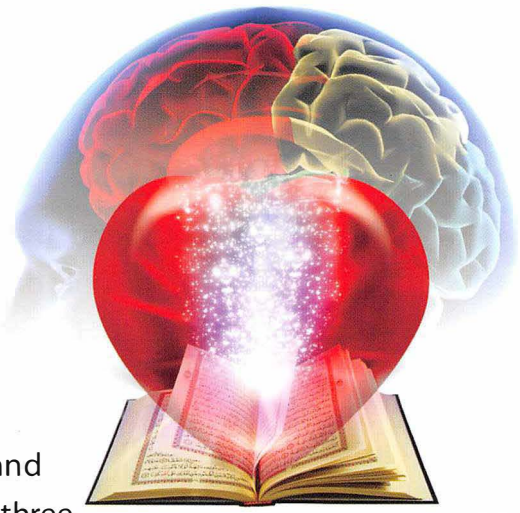
Review

- What does *ṣawm* mean? What does it mean in the *Sharee'ah*?
- Upon whom is fasting during *Ramaḍaan* compulsory?
- Who are excused from fasting? Who may give it up altogether?
- What are the merits of fasting?

6.11. *Eemaan* (Faith)

Eemaan is an Arabic word which means faith. Hence, *mu'min* (feminine form: *mu'minah*) means one who believes; an adherent to the true faith. The term *eemaan* occurs 45 times in the Qur'an.

The word *eemaan* is used for faith or belief as it gives an individual peace of mind and also creates a harmonious relationship between a human being and the rest of the universe.



Eemaan is a Statement and Action

Eemaan is a statement and action. In other words, it has three essential elements: sincere belief in the heart, profession by the tongue and performance of the deeds by the physical parts of the body.

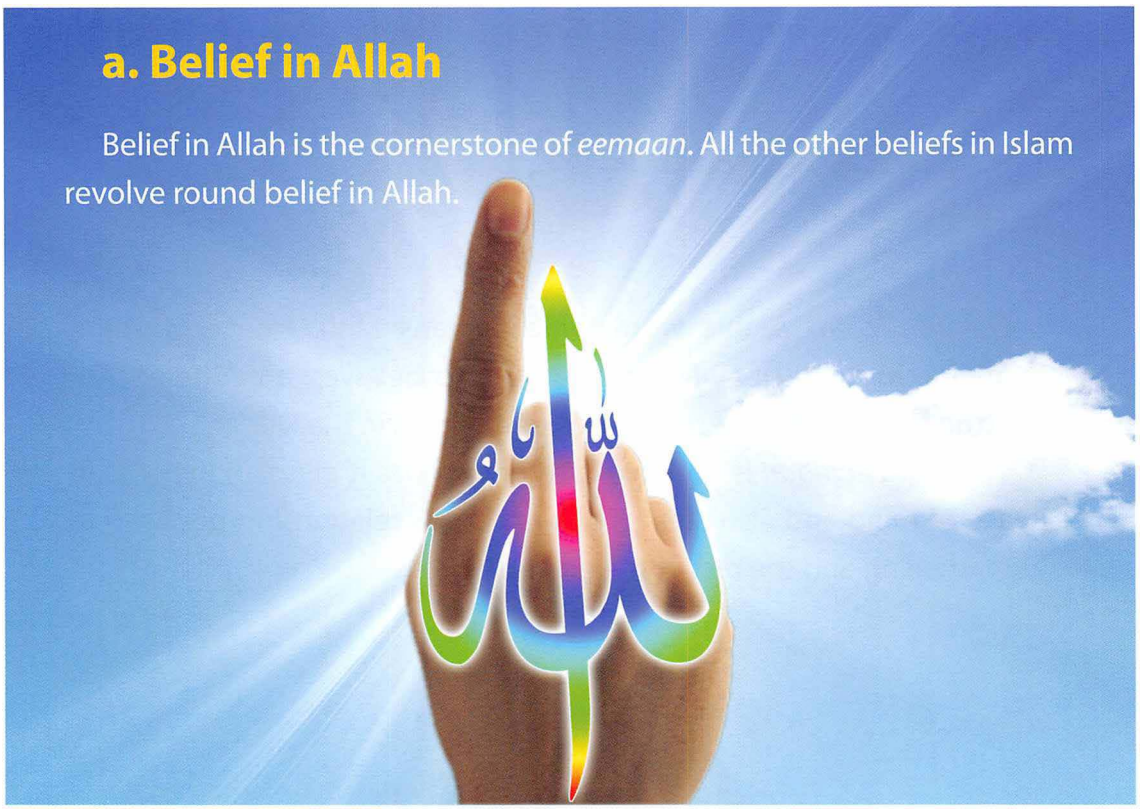
Eemaan resides in the heart. The heart is its locus, its foundation. *Eemaan* increases by acts of obedience to Allah and decreases by acts of disobedience. If the heart is filled with *eemaan* – with love of Allah and His Messenger ﷺ, hope in Allah's mercy and fearing His punishment, it will certainly drive one to perform acts of obedience to Allah.

The Articles of Faith

When Allah's Messenger ﷺ was asked by Angel Jibreel ﷺ, 'What is *eemaan* (faith)? He replied, 'It is to believe in Allah, His Angels, His Books, His Messengers, the Last Day, and to believe in the Divine Decree (*al-qadar*), both the good of it and the bad of it.' (Reported by Muslim)

Thus, the essential elements of *eemaan*, according to the *hadeeth*, are as follows:

To believe in Allah,
His Angels,
His Books,
His Messengers,
The Last Day, and
To believe in divine destiny: the good of it and the bad of it.



Oneness of Allah (*Tawheed*): the Importance of Correct Belief in Allah

Tawheed is an Arabic word which means 'making something one' or 'asserting oneself'. Most of the Qur'an, rather almost all of it, refers to *tawheed*. In fact, the entire Qur'an is the exposition of the Names and Attributes of Allah.

The Oneness of Allah: His Attributes

Faith in the Oneness of Allah means to believe that Allah is the sole Creator and the Lord of everything that exists in this universe. Allah as one's Lord and Master requires voluntary submission to His Commands.

Allah Alone is the Sustainer – the Lord (*ar-Rabb*). He is the One without any partners whatsoever in His Kingdom. He is the Only Creator and the true Owner of the creation. He is the only one who nourishes, sustains and maintains His creation. Everything that happens in this creation happens by His permission and will. Sustenance and provisions are from Allah. Life and death are in the Hands of Allah. All bounties come from Him alone.

Allah commands and forbids. He elevates and abases. He changes day into night. He alternates the days of people and nations, replacing one with another. Things occur according to His will. Whatever He wills comes into being in the time and manner He wills it. His orders and decrees are fulfilled in the heavens, in the farthest reaches of the earth, and beneath it, in the seas, the skie, and every other part of the universe. He encompasses all things. With His knowledge, He keeps count of every single thing.

His hearing encompasses all voices, yet they do not blend into each other. Rather, He hears

the clamour of all the various tongues, in all countless languages, distinct in their countless supplications. His Sight envelopes all things. He sees the smallest black ant upon a piece of coal in a moonless dark night. The hidden for Him is visible and the secret is public.

In His Hand is all good and to Him return all affairs. His power encompasses all things. All depend upon Him for their safety and sustenance. He forgives sins, relieves cares and removes woes. He makes the broken whole, enriches the poor, feeds the hungry, clothes the naked and heals the sick. To Him do the deeds of the night ascend before those of the day, and the deeds of the day before those of the night. There is no one to withhold what He gives and no one to give what He withholds. He is the Supreme Lord without any partners whatsoever. He is unique without equal. He has no sons or daughters. He is the one without comparison or kind. There is nothing similar to Him. He is the All-Hearing, the All-Seeing.

Hence, every act of worship, be it prayer, fasting, pilgrimage, sacrificing animals, and so forth, must be done for the sake of Allah only. All supplications and prayers must be directed to Him alone. If someone does any of these acts for someone other than Allah, he is negating his *tawḥeed*. These include putting one's trust in Allah, having fear and devotion only for His sake, and so on. Submission to Him alone encompasses worshipping Him alone and obeying Him alo.



b. Belief in Allah's Angels

One of the unseen worlds of which Islam tells us is the world of angels. The angels are described in the Qur'an and *ḥadeeth* in great detail. Belief in the angels is another essential belief that forms the cornerstone of *eemaan* (faith). When Allah's Messenger ﷺ was asked by Angel Jibreel عليه السلام, 'What is faith?' he replied, 'It is to believe in Allah, His Angels, His Books, His Messengers, the Last Day, and to believe in the Divine Decree (*al-qadar*), both the good of it and the bad of it.' (Reported by Muslim) Thus, belief in the angels is the second article of faith.

The Arabic word for angel is *malak*, of which the plural form is *malaa'ikah*. The angels belong to the unseen world (*'aalam al-ghayb*). They are created from light and are invisible to human beings. Yet, they do not have forms and bodies. The Glorious Qur'an speaks of their having a set of wings. (*Soorat Faaṭir*, 35:1)

From the moment an individual is conceived in his mother's womb, until his death and beyond, angels play a very significant role in human life. Allah's Messenger

ﷺ said, 'When forty nights have passed for the sperm drop (the *nuṯfah*), Allah sends an angel to it, and it gives it its shape and creates its hearing, sight, skin, flesh and bones. Then he says, "O Lord, male or female?" Your Lord decrees whatever He wills, and the angel writes it down. Then he says, "O Lord, his lifespan?" Your Lord says whatever He wills, and the angel writes it down. Then he says, "O Lord, his provision?" Your Lord decrees whatever He wills, and the angel writes it down. Then the angel departs with the scroll in his hand, and he adds nothing to the decree, nor does he subtract anything from it.' (Reported by Muslim, *ḥadeeth* no. 6726)

Another *ḥadeeth*, narrated by both al-Bukhaaree and Muslim, states that an angel follows the sperm drop (*nuṯfah*: sexual fluid: gamete is the precise word for it) from the time it enters the womb until it is completed or aborted (Quoted by Dr. Moḥammed Ali Albar in his work entitled *Human Development*, p. 74).

Angels accompany human beings. They protect them by Allah's leave and record all their deeds. They extract the soul of the person when the moment of their death arrives. The common phrase 'an untimely death' seems close to blasphemy (rude or disrespectful thing for Allah): every death is right on time. Moreover, to ask 'why' when someone dies young is absurd. Our strictly limited minds cannot grasp the total scheme of things willed by Allah.

The angels form a world entirely different from the world of mankind. It is a noble world, completely pure. They are in total submission to Allah. They are incapable of committing any sin and are constantly engaged in Allah's praise. Each one of them is assigned a specific task in the governance of the universe. The number of angels is known only to Allah. Angels are made of light, and Allah has not given our eyes the ability to see them.

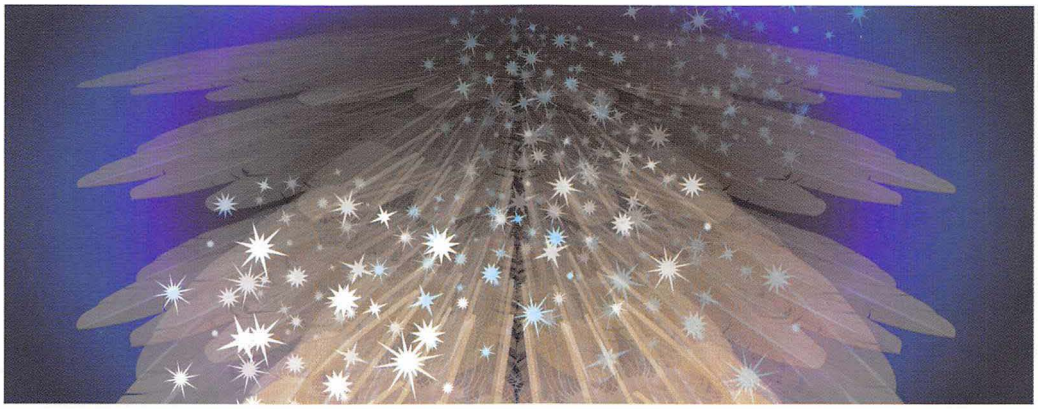
The angels have wings: two, three, or four. Angel Jibreel ﷺ has six hundred wings. (al-Bukhaaree) Allah has created the angels in noble and beautiful forms. They are not all the same in their physical shape and status. They vary in their status before their Lord. They are neither male nor female. They do not eat or drink or get married like humans do. They have names, but the Qur'an and the *ḥadeeth* mention only a few of them. They are as follows:

First and foremost is Angel Jibreel ﷺ (also called *ar-Rooḥ al-Ameen*). He performed the most important task of bringing the message of Allah to His prophets. He no longer performs this duty as the institution of Prophethood came to an end with Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ. The second angel is Israafeel, who, by Allah's command, will blow the Trumpet on the Day of Resurrection and bring the present system and order of the world to an end. The third angel is Mikaa'eel, whose duty is to arrange for rainfall and supply of provisions to the creation of Allah by His command. Finally, there is the angel of death who has been appointed to take people's souls. It is worth mentioning here, however, that his name is not mentioned in the Qur'an or in any sound *ḥadeeth*. Therefore, the name *'Azraa'eel* (or *'Izraa'eel*) must not be attributed to him, as some people mistakenly do, as there is no evidence whatsoever to this effect.

Other angels mentioned in the Qur'an are *Kiraaman Kaatibeen* – two honourable and kind scribes, and Ḥaaroot and Maaroot. The former are attached to every human being, and as their names suggest, they record good and bad deeds. The latter were sent to the people of Babylon as a test. Among the angels is Maalik, the keeper of Hell (*Soorat az-Zukhruf*, 43:77).

Among the angels are Munkar and Nakeer, mentioned in the *hadeeth*. These two angels question the dead in their graves and put them through an examination on the subject of their religious beliefs.

Allah has given the angels the ability to take up forms different from their own. The speed of angels is far greater than that of light and cannot be measured by human standards. But they are the servants of Allah and they do not have any aspect of divinity in them, whatsoever. They submit to Allah's commands completely and never stray away from obeying His orders.



The Great Size of One of the Angels of Allah

Jaabir ibn ʿAbdullaah ﷺ narrated that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, 'I have been given permission to speak of one of the angels of Allah, one of the bearers of the Throne. The distance between his earlobe and his shoulder is like the distance of seven hundred years' travel.' (Reported by Abu Daawood, *hadeeth* no. 4727, and graded *saheeh* 'authentic')

Belief in Allah's angels is one of the essential articles of faith. For a detailed and interesting discussion concerning the angels, see Umar S. al-Ashqar's book entitled *The World of the Noble Angels*.

Review

- What does the term *eemaan* mean?
- What are the six articles of *eemaan*?
- What does *tawheed* mean? Why is belief in Allah the first article of faith? Give a few important attributes of Allah.
- What does the term *malak* mean, and what is its plural form?
- What are the angels made of? How many wings do they have?
- Name a few angels and mention their duties.



c. Belief in Allah's Books

Belief in Allah's Books is the third article of *eemaan*. This refers to the revelations Allah sent down to His messengers. These revelations were a mercy and guidance from Allah. Allah sent down many scriptures for guiding and instructing human beings as to how to lead their life in the right way.

The Scriptures Mentioned in the Qur'an

- The *Tawraah* revealed to the Prophet Moosaa ﷺ.
- The *Zaboor* revealed to the Prophet Daawood ﷺ.
- The *Injeel* revealed to the Prophet Isa ﷺ.
- There is also reference in the Qur'an to the *Suhuf*, scrolls, or leaves, revealed to Ibraaheem and Moosaa.
- The Glorious Qur'an, the final Book given to Prophet Muhammad ﷺ.

All of the previous revelations have been cancelled and abolished by the final revelation – the Glorious Qur'an. The Qur'an is the 'ruler' over all the previous revelations. It is the determinant factor in judging what is genuine and what is false in the earlier scriptures.

Allah sent specific and different revelations according to the needs and conditions of different people over time. This mercy of Allah in the form of revelations continued until the Qur'an was revealed. The Qur'an contains all the guidance that people need until the Last Day. The Qur'an is meant to be guidance for all times until the Day of Resurrection. This is the reason why Allah has protected the Qur'an from any tampering, errors or distortions.

The Qur'an is the uncreated word of Allah. It is the final message to mankind. It is exactly the same in its present form as it was at the time of the Prophet ﷺ. The Qur'an has come down to us complete. No additions have ever been made to it. No part, not even a tiny syllable of it, is forgotten or has gone unrecorded. The Qur'an is protected by Allah Himself from all corruptions and distortions. The previous revelations or the Revealed Books that were sent down before Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, such as the Torah and the Gospel, are not the same as what people today possess.

Belief in Allah's Books requires that one must believe that these books were revealed from Allah ﷻ. However, one must act in accordance with the teachings of the Qur'an – which is the final revelation.



d. Belief in Allah's Messengers

Belief in prophets and messengers is an essential doctrine in Islam. Prophethood is a favour and bounty from Allah. The terms prophets and messengers are commonly used interchangeably. However, there is a slight difference between a prophet (*nabiyy*) and a messenger (*rasool*). A messenger is a prophet who was given divine guidance in the form of scriptures, while a prophet came in the periods between messengers and followed the divine scripture, or Book, of the preceding messenger. Thus, a messenger is a *rasool* and *nabiyy*, but a prophet is not a *rasool* (messenger). The term *nabiyy* literally means 'a giver of news: the one who gives news from Allah'.

All messengers and prophets have preached essentially the same message that there is One God, Allah, to whom worship and service are due. All others are His creation. This is the Qur'anic *tawheed* – the Oneness of Allah. Islam is unthinkable without *tawheed*. All messengers and prophets brought the same *deen* (religion, way of life) for mankind. Their fundamental teachings were the same. They called upon their people, saying, 'I am a messenger worthy of all trust. So be conscious of Allah and obey me.' (*Soorat ash-Shu'araa'*, 26: 161-3) Of course the *Sharee'ah* (Islamic Law) differed from one messenger to the next due to change in conditions. As prophets and messengers were models for humanity, they were all human beings. They did not have any divine status. Their loftiest attribute was that of being servants of Allah. Such is Allah's description of them in the Qur'an.

It is worth mentioning here, however, that each prophet or messenger was sent to his own people, but Prophet Muhammad ﷺ was sent to all mankind. Islam is, therefore, a universal religion, unlike the previous ones which were rather 'local'.

Aadam عليه السلام was the first prophet. After Aadam a succession of messengers and prophets came to renew the guidance of Allah, which was either lost or had become polluted or mixed up with human interference. The last messenger was Muhammad ﷺ, who completed the chain of prophets and sealed the succession. Thus, the golden chain of prophets, which began with Aadam عليه السلام, ended with Prophet Muhammad ﷺ. The Holy Qur'an and the Prophet's teachings are preserved for humanity till the end of time.

The stories of the prophets form a significant portion of the Qur'an. The Qur'an, however, tells the stories of some of the prophets and messengers but does not tell the stories of a large number of them. Among those mentioned

in the Qur'an are: Aadam; Idrees, Nooh, Hood, Saalih, Ibraaheem, Ismaa'eel, Ishaaq, Ya'qoob, Loot, Yoosuf, Shu'ayb, Ayyoob, Dhul-Kifl, Moosaa, Haaroon, al-Yasa', Ilyaas, Daawood, Sulaymaan, 'Uzayr, Zakariyyaa, Yahya, 'Eesaa and Muhammad – Peace be upon them all. It is important to realize that all over the world, Allah's prophets and messengers were sent, whether named or not in the Qur'an.

A Muslim, therefore, is required to believe in all the messengers and prophets mentioned in the Qur'an and the *Sunnah*. As for those not mentioned in the Qur'an, one must believe in them in general. One must believe that there is not a single community among whom a warner has not come.

If a person denies any single prophet or messenger confirmed in the Qur'an and *Sunnah*, then they are in fact denying all of them. Denial of one amounts to denying all of them.

Review

- Why did Allah send down books to mankind?
- Name some books and to whom they were sent down?
- Why did Allah not protect the previous revelations? Why is Allah protecting the Qur'an?
- What is the difference between a prophet and a messenger?
- What is the difference between the Messenger of Allah ﷺ and the previous Prophets?
- Can you supply the equivalent Biblical names of prophets mentioned above?



e. Belief in the Last Day

Belief in the Last Day is one of the essential articles of faith. It is called the Last Day because no new day will come after that day. The word generally used in the Qur'an to indicate life after death is *al-aakhirah*. The Last Day is also called the Day of Resurrection, the Day of Rising, the Day of Judgment, the other life (as opposed to the near one *ad-dunyaa*), the Last Abode, the Hereafter, and so on. The word *al-aakhirah* occurs 115 times in the Glorious Qur'an, not counting the other words of its root.

Belief in the Last Day consists of belief in everything that the Glorious Qur'an or the Messenger of Allah ﷺ has stated about the events of that day and the events that will take place thereafter. There are many aspects of this day, like Resurrection, Judgment, Reward, Paradise, and Hell, among other things, that every Muslim is required to believe in with certainty. The Qur'an and the Prophet ﷺ have furnished graphic details of this overwhelming day.

Proof of the Hereafter

The Qur'an often uses the comparison of the rain to explain how it is possible to resurrect

the dead. Just as after a shower of rain, dead earth becomes covered with greenery, so can Allah resurrect the dead. See, for instance, *Soorat Qaaf*, 50:11; *Soorat al-ʿAnkaboot*, 29:20; and *Soorat al-Ḥajj*, 22:5-6)



The Qur'an also argues that if Allah is able to create not only human beings but the whole universe in the first place why should it be hard for Him to recreate them. See. For instance, *Soorat Yaaseen*, 36:79 and *Soorat al-Aḥqaaf*, 46:33).

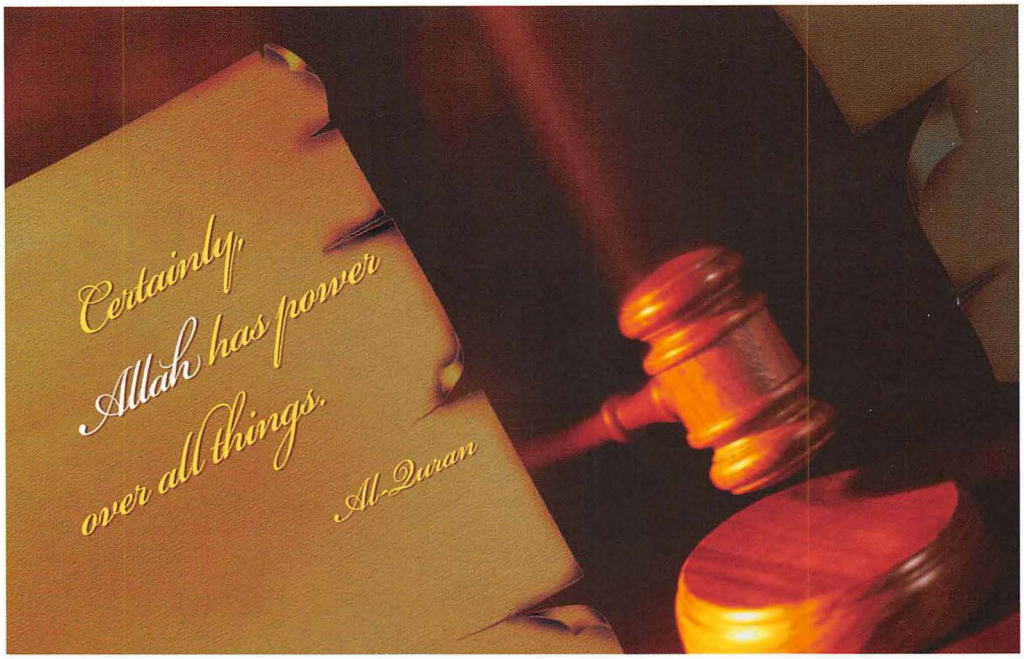
Some of the prophets, including Prophet Ibraaheem ﷺ, were shown how Allah brought the dead to life (*Soorat al-Baqarah*, 2: 259-260). Likewise, the story of the Companions of the Cave (*Aṣ-ḥaab al-Kahf*) related in *Soorat al-Kahf* (*soorah* no. 18 of the Qur'an) is presented as historical proof to prove that people can be raised again after sleeping for about three hundred years.

The Necessity of Judgment

We see countless injustices and wrongs being done all around us. Perpetrators of such crimes are not always caught nor are they sufficiently punished in proportion to the crime they have committed. Then consider those pious believers who selflessly devote their whole lives to doing good deeds. They are not always rewarded for their good actions. This is not fair at all. Therefore, if there is no life after death, where people will be punished and rewarded, all other beliefs become meaningless. Without this belief, life on this earth makes no sense at all. Likewise, if a person does not believe in the Day of Rising and does not consider that they are accountable for their actions, then they can pursue a life of pleasure and wickedness.

There will be no motivation or lure for those to follow the code of life provided by Allah and His Messenger ﷺ. Why should they go through tests and tribulations and suffer hardships? On the other hand, those who believe in the Day of Judgment will be the ones who are conscious in this life. They will act according to the dictates of the Islamic Law (*Sharee'ah*) and lead a life of piety and righteousness. Thus, this belief has a sweeping effect on people's lives. The only thing which can prevent the wicked from pursuing the life of wickedness and evil is the belief in the Last Day.

If a person were to ponder over how they themselves were created, they would see that life started as a tiny drop of semen that grew in the womb. The One who gave life first can give life again. It is not difficult to understand. Belief in the Last Day consists of belief in the Resurrection, belief in the reckoning of the deeds and belief in Paradise and Hell. Belief in the Last Day also includes belief in everything that happens to a person after death and before the Day of Rising. This consists of the trials in the grave and the joy or punishment in the grave. The grave is the first of the phases of *al-aakhirah*. The *aakhirah* with *tawheed* (Oneness of Allah) and belief in Allah's messengers and prophets are the three main elements of faith (*eemaan*).



f. Belief in the Divine Decree (*al-Qadar*): The Good of it and the Bad of it

It is an essential part of *eemaan* to believe in *al-qadar*.

The Term *al-Qadar*

Al-qadar is an Arabic word whose linguistic meaning is 'a specified measure or amount whether of quantities or qualities'. It also means, among other things, 'to measure, to decide, to estimate the quality, quantity, or position, etc. of something before one actually makes it'. *Al-qadar* also means 'decree, fate or destiny'.

Al-eemaan bil-qadar denotes belief in the divine decree. This means that whatever happens comes from Allah. This belief makes one dependent on Allah's will. Allah Alone controls all affairs, and nothing happens in this universe that is not in His prior knowledge and will. (*Soorat al-An'aam*, 6:59)

There are, in fact, four aspects of belief in *al-qadar*. The first of these is to believe that Allah has knowledge of everything that exists in the universe, as we have pointed out above. He has knowledge of everything, big and small, before it comes into existence.

The second aspect of belief in *al-qadar* is that Allah not only knew and knows what will happen but also has recorded this knowledge or information in minute details in the Preserved Tablet (*al-Lawh al-Mahfoodh*). All this is easy for Allah, and it is a mistake to judge Allah's knowledge by our rather limited knowledge.

The third aspect of belief in *al-qadar* is to believe in Allah's decreeing everything that exists; if He does not will something, it can never come into existence. In other words, this means that a person may intend or try, for instance, to shoot someone to death, but such a thing can only happen if Allah decrees it. The shooter may take all the necessary precautions, but if Allah does not will it to occur, it will not occur!

The fourth aspect of belief in *al-qadar* is to believe in Allah's ability to create everything and bring everything into existence. He has created everything and measured it exactly according to its due measurement.

Thus, to qualify as a believer, a person must believe in both the good side of destiny (*al-qadar*) and its bad side, in both the sweetness of fate and its bitterness. They must believe that everything that has ever happened in former eras and ages and whatever will happen in the future, until the Day of Resurrection, is

in accordance with the decree of Allah and His foreordained destiny.

This is not difficult to understand. If one ponderlrs over one's life, looks deeply into onself or into the functioning of one's body, one will soon discover that there are several things beyond one's freedom to choose. The reality is that most of one's life is not subject to one's own choice.

Think about the first moments when one arrives, in the form of a baby, in this world, when the first breath enters into one's lungs at the moment of one's birth. Does one choose the place of one's birth? Does one choose the hour, the day of one's birth? None of us chooses the moment of their arrival into this world. In other words, we all come into this life by the will of Allah. *Imaam* Ahmad was once asked about *al-qadar*, and he said, '*Al-qadar* is the power of Allah.'

A person who believes in *al-qadar* affirms that this universe and everything in it was created by Allah. When a person believes that everything that happens is decreed, and that provisions and one's lifespan are in the hands of Allah, then they can face difficulties and trials with a strong heart with their head held high. This belief is one of the greatest resources of strength for the righteous in confronting evildoers and tyrants.

Review

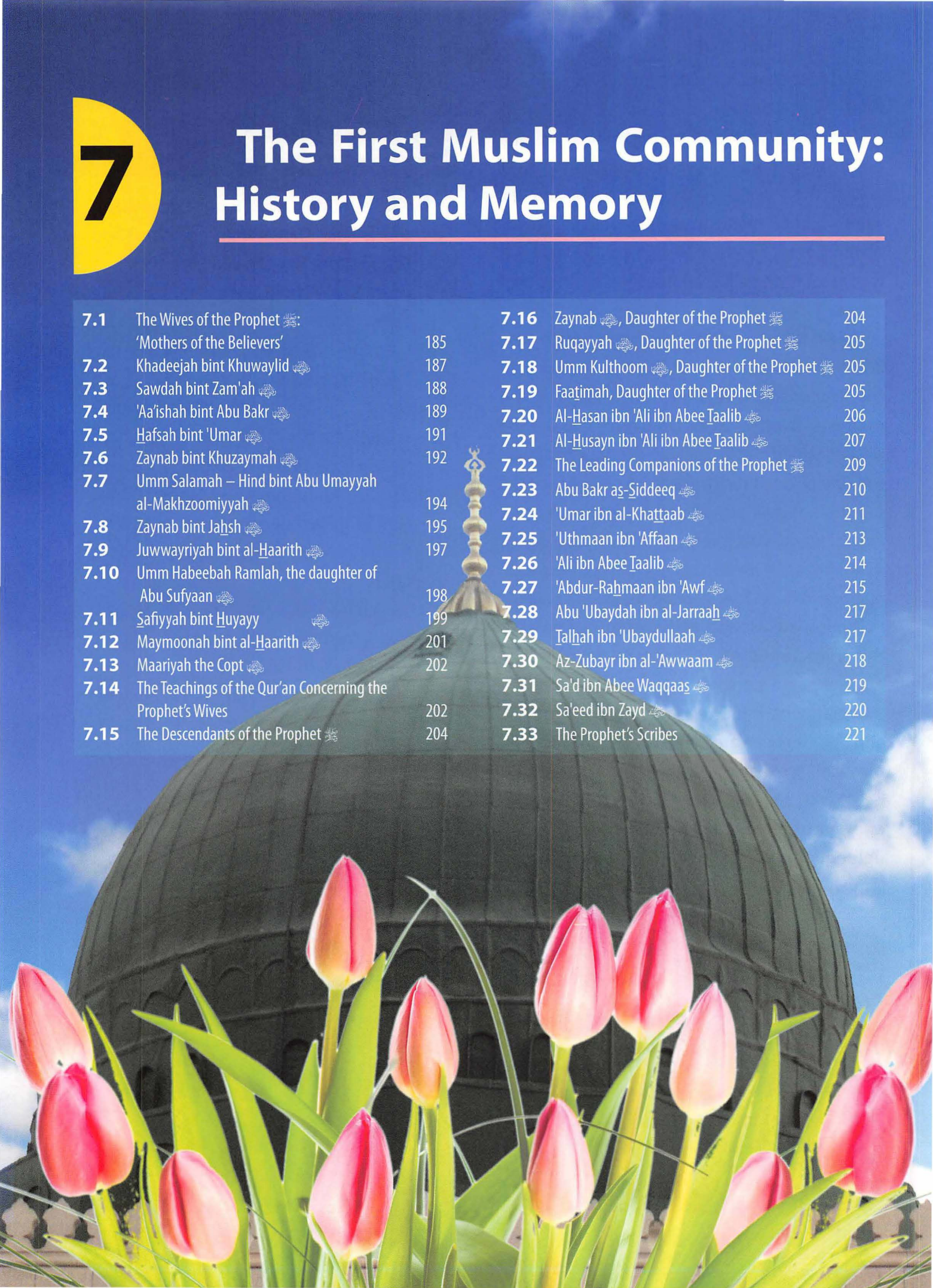
- What is the Last Day?
- Give a few proofs of the coming of the Last Day.
- Why is the Last Day so important?
- What does the word *al-qadar* mean?
- Describe the four aspects of belief in *al-qadar*.

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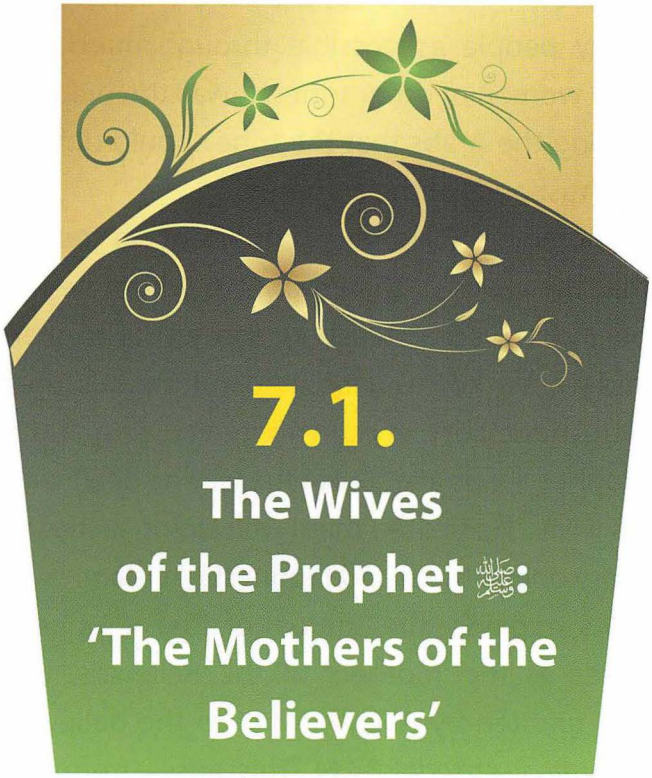
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The First Muslim Community: History and Memory

7



7.1. The Wives of the Prophet ﷺ: 'The Mothers of the Believers'

Perhaps the aspect of Islam in respect of women which is the most prominent in the western mind is that of polygyny. The term polygamy is often used to refer to the practice of Muslims having more than one wife. While the word polygamy can be used to describe this practice, it is instructive to note that polygamy also includes the action of women taking more than one husband. Therefore, the proper word to use is polygyny, which means the practice of taking more than one wife.

As to the several marriages of the Prophet ﷺ, it is important to realize that polygyny was customary among the Arab and the Semitic peoples in general in those times. Semitic means the people who speak the Semitic languages, especially Arabic and Hebrew. Among many prophets and messengers of ancient communities, polygynous marriages were widespread. Thus, the prophets who came before Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, for instance, Ibraaheem, Ya'qoob, Daawood and Sulaymaan, practised polygyny.

However, an examination of the circumstances and manner in which the Prophet ﷺ practised polygyny will show that these marriages were for honourable reasons. They were for the advancement and promotion of Islam.

Allah's Messenger ﷺ had nine wives that outlived him. He actually had a total of thirteen, two of which he did not consummate marriage with, and two of which died prior to his own death. These two were of course the famous Khadeejah bint Khuwaylid رضي الله عنها and Zaynab bint Khuzaymah رضي الله عنها. Zaynab bint Khuzaymah رضي الله عنها was twice married and was divorced before the Prophet ﷺ married her.

The other nine began with Sawdah bint Zam'ah رضي الله عنها. She was the first woman the Prophet ﷺ married after the death of Khadeejah رضي الله عنها. They married a few days after Khadeejah's death in the tenth year of Prophethood. Sawdah had been previously married to as-Sakraan ibn 'Amr with whom she emigrated to Ethiopia and on their way back he died. Marrying her was a way of honouring her sacrifice and consoling her.

'Aa'ishah رضي الله عنها and Hafsah رضي الله عنها were the daughters of his close companions. As far as Juwwayriyah bint al-Haarith رضي الله عنها is concerned,

the Prophet ﷺ married her to strengthen relations with her tribe. Juwwayriyah was the daughter of the chief of Banu al-Mustaliq, of Khuzaa'ah tribe. Having inflicted a crushing defeat upon them, the Prophet ﷺ quickly moved to lighten some of their acute sense of disgrace. Juwwayriyah ؓ fell captive after the defeat of her people. She came to the Prophet ﷺ seeking his help in restoring her freedom. He was moved by her plight and saw a possibility to reconcile a sub-clan of a noble Arabian tribe, Khuzaa'ah, which was, in the main, a faithful ally of the Muslims. As soon as news of the Prophet's ﷺ marriage to her became known, more than a hundred families of Banu al-Mustaliq were freed from captivity in one day. The 'in-laws of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ', the Muslims decided, could not be kept in captivity. Thus, Juwwayriyah was a great blessing to her people. The Banu al-Mustaliq were living within easy reach of Madeenah, and their friendship was of vital military significance.

The Prophet ﷺ married Safiyyah bint Huyayy ؓ out of sympathy for her plight, her Jewish father having been killed in the battle of Khaybar. She had no one to take care of her. She accepted Islam. It is important to note that when the Prophet ﷺ emigrated to Madeenah, enmity towards him had not remained limited to the Quraysh. Rather, it spread to tribes around Madeenah. It was necessary that the Prophet ﷺ should neutralize the enmity of as many people as possible through marriages with women of other tribes. It was the practice among the Arabs that the tribe should defend the husbands of their women.

Moreover, it is very important to realize that the wives of the Prophet ﷺ whom he left behind served as teachers and jurists to men and women of this nation. Apart from this, they were models of piety and righteous living, as the Prophet ﷺ was a model in the way he dealt with his wives. He treated them well, doing justice to every one of them and taught them Islam.

As regards the status of the Prophet's wives as the 'Mothers of the Believers', this was granted by Allah himself to the believers (*Soorat al-Ahzaab*, 33:6). This arises from the fact of their having shared the Prophet's life in its most intimate aspect. Consequently, they could not marry after his death, since all the believers were, spiritually, their 'children'.

Review

How many wives did the Prophet ﷺ have in all? Name them and give the circumstances in which he married them.

7.2. Khadeejah bint Khuwaylid ﵂



Khadeejah ﵂ was the daughter of Khuwaylid ibn ʿAbd al-ʿUzzaa. The Prophet's marriage to Khadeejah ﵂ took place about fifteen years before the beginning of the revelation, when he was twenty-five and she was forty years old. She was a rich widow and ran a large trade of her own. It was she who offered herself in marriage to the Prophet ﷺ, who was associated with her in her trading ventures. She soon understood the extraordinary qualities with which he was endowed and remained deeply devoted to him and morally supported him throughout her life. Khadeejah ﵂, (also called Khadeejah al-Kubraa, or the Grand Khadeejah) was the first wife of the Prophet ﷺ.

Khadeejah ﵂ belonged to the Quraysh tribe, and the lineage of the Prophet ﷺ meets with hers in the famous Qusayy, the great founder of Makkah and famous chief of the Quraysh.

The marriage proved to be one of love and happiness. Despite Khadeejah's comparatively advanced age, it was the most fruitful the Prophet ﷺ ever had. Indeed, all his children, with the exception of Ibraaheem who died as a little boy, were the fruit of this marriage. Khadeejah ﵂ bore the Prophet ﷺ two sons, al-Qaasim and ʿAbdullaah (also called *at-Taahir*) who died at a very early age. Khadeejah ﵂ proved to be a devoted soulmate who provided comfort and helpful counsel throughout their twenty-five year, monogamous marriage. The Prophet ﷺ never married another woman as long as Khadeejah ﵂ was alive. Although Allah's Messenger ﷺ would go to marry other women after her death, he never forgot her and did not cease to speak affectionately about her. The first to accept Islam, as is universally acknowledged, was Khadeejah ﵂. The beautiful story of the Prophet's first encounter with the Angel of Revelation (Jibreel ﵇) reminds us of Khadeejah ﵂. Allah's Messenger ﷺ told her what had happened to him and said to her, 'Really, I fear for my life.' Al-Bukhaaree records, 'Then Khadeejah ﵂ said, 'No, by Allah, never will Allah humiliate you! Look, you fulfil the duties of kinship, support the weak, bring gain to the destitute, are bounteous towards guests and help those in genuine distress.'

Allah's Messenger ﷺ once said about her, 'The best of the women of her time was Maryam, and the best of the women of her time was Khadeejah.' (Reported by al-Bukhaaree) The Prophet's love for Khadeejah remained undiminished even after her death. In fact, her death, which took place about three years before the *Hijrah*, so deeply affected the Prophet ﷺ that his companions always referred to that year as 'the year of grief'. She was indeed a worthy mate of the Last Prophet ﷺ who, although fifteen years younger, never thought of marrying another woman as long as she was alive.

7.3. Sawdah bint Zam'ah ﵂



Sawdah bint Zam'ah ﵂, the Prophet's ﷺ second wife, was one of the first women who accepted Islam. She accompanied her first husband as-Sakraan ibn 'Amr to Ethiopia (Abyssinia). The couple returned to Makkah before the *Hijrah*, and as-Sakraan died there.

Sawdah's marriage to the Prophet ﷺ was arranged by Khawlah bint Hakeem ﵂, who wished to console him for the loss of Khadeejah ﵂. The marriage took place a few days after the latter's death, in 10 AH, before the Prophet's journey to at-Taa'if. In the first year of the *Hijrah*, Sawdah ﵂, together with Allah's Messenger's daughters, joined him in Madeenah. Her dwelling and 'Aai'shah's were the first built close to the Mosque. Sawdah ﵂ was no longer young at the time of her second marriage.

As she grew older, she became overweight. Allah's Messenger ﷺ, during a pilgrimage, allowed her the privilege of reaching Minaa for the *Fajr* prayer before the crowd's arrival to avoid being inconvenienced. As she grew older, she yielded her day to 'Aai'shah ﵂. 'Aai'shah ﵂ narrated, 'Never did I find any woman more loving to me than Sawdah bint Zam'ah. I wished I could be exactly like her. She was so passionate." (Reported by Muslim)

Sawadah ﵂ agreed to give up her right of having the Prophet spend every alternate night with her in favour of the Prophet's other wife 'Aa'ishah ﵂. The reason Sawdah ﵂ gave up this right was her age. She was old and, recognizing the Prophet's fondness for 'Aa'ishah ﵂, gave up her nights to 'Aa'ishah willingly. The Prophet ﷺ still maintained and took care of Sawdah ﵂ in every other way in his home.

Sawdah was charitable and good-natured. Once she received a gift of money from 'Umar ibn al-Khattaab ﵁, which she gave away in charity. She died in Madeenah, in 23 AH/ 644 CE towards the end of 'Umar's rule.

7.4. ʿAa'ishah bint Abu Bakr ﵄



The Prophet ﷺ married ʿAa'ishah ﵂ shortly after Khadeejah's death, about two and a half years before the *Hijrah*, a year after his marriage to Sawdah ﵂. She was at that time between six and seven years old.

On that occasion only the wedding ceremony was performed. The marriage was consummated in Madeenah, about three years later. ʿAa'ishah ﵂ was at that time between nine and ten years old. The marriage was consummated in the month of *Shawwaal*, 1 AH. The Prophet ﷺ died in *Rabeeʿ al-Awwal*, 11 AH. Thus, ʿAa'ishah lived with him in reality for nine years and five months.

After the actual marriage ceremony, some three years later, when they were all established in Madeenah, Abu Bakr ﵁, her father, had to remind the Prophet ﷺ that he take his bride home, for till then ʿAa'ishah ﵂ had remained in her father's house. Incidentally, this reminder would suggest that by then ʿAa'ishah had reached puberty, and Abu Bakr ﵁ had become aware of it.

Modern Muslims influenced by Western conceptions of marriage and sex relations in general are sometimes disturbed by the thought that the Messenger ﷺ of Allah took for his wife a girl of about nine or ten years. For anyone, however, who knows something about the rapid physical development of Arabian women there is hardly anything astonishing in such marriages. In fact, ʿAa'ishah's mental precocity (advanced or mature mental abilities for one's age) is quite obvious from many traditions. It is very probable that her physical development went hand in hand with the mental development. In any case, during the years of her married life, she not only gave happiness to her husband, but also herself found, besides the honour of being allied to the Prophet ﷺ, all the happiness and satisfaction which a woman could expect from a marriage.

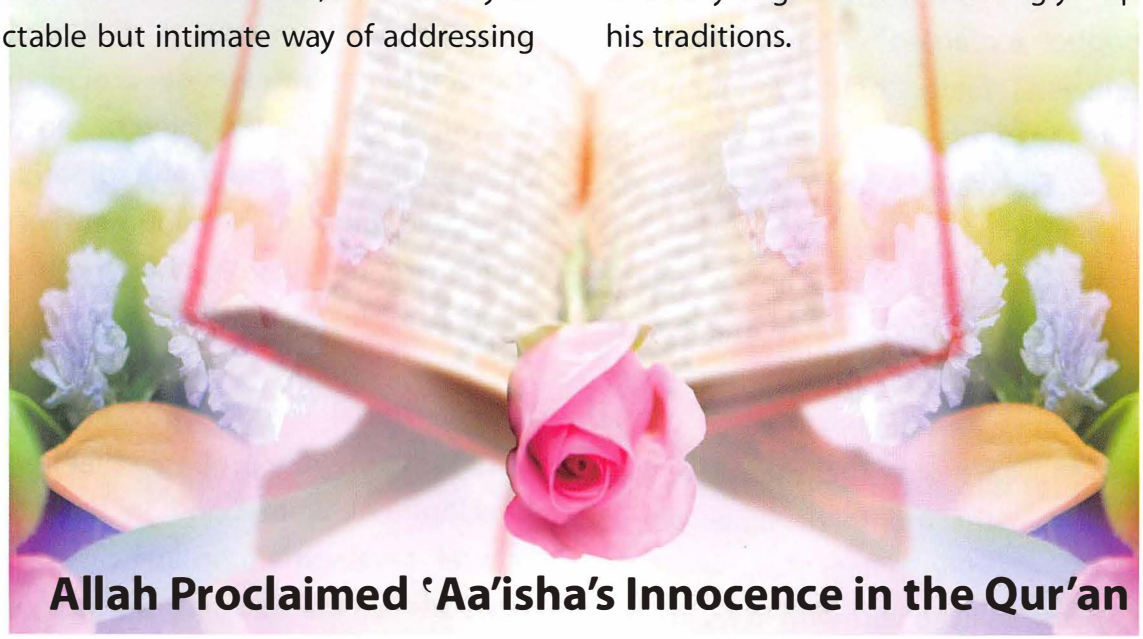
In fact, the initiative in the matter of his marriage with ʿAa'ishah did not proceed from the Prophet ﷺ himself. After Khadeejah's death, he was so sad and dispirited that his companions were worried about him. Then, a Muslim woman, Khawlah bint Hakeem ﵂, requested him to remarry and suggested two women – the middle-aged Sawdah bint Zamaʿah, widow of a companion, and the

young daughter of Abu Bakr as-Siddeeq, 'Aa'ishah. The Prophet ﷺ allowed Khawlah to arrange matters on his behalf.

Moreover, his marriage to ʿAa'ishah was motivated by dreams which were shown to the Prophet ﷺ twice. In those dreams, he saw her picture wrapped in a piece of silk. Someone said, 'This is your wife.' Then the Prophet ﷺ uncovered the piece of cloth and saw her face. The Prophet ﷺ said to himself, 'If those dreams were from Allah, this marriage would take place.' (Reported by al-Bukhaaree)

ʿAa'ishah's mother was called Umm Roomaan bint ʿUmar ibn ʿAamir, and her *kunyah* (a respectable but intimate way of addressing people as the father of so-and-so, or the mother of so-and-so) was Umm ʿAbdullaah, after the name of her nephew ʿAbdullaah ibn az-Zubayr. ʿAa'ishah رضي الله عنها is arguably the most prominent woman of early Islam. She is considered to have been the nineteenth person to accept Islam.

She was clearly the Prophet's soulmate in many ways, and although by no means the only wife in his life, she was the best loved and cherished in his household after his first wife Khadeejah's death. Nicknamed al-Humayraa' (Red-faced or Little Ruddy One) by the Prophet ﷺ, his deep and abiding love for his youngest and only virgin wife is touchingly displayed in his traditions.



Allah Proclaimed ʿAa'isha's Innocence in the Qur'an

The incident occurred when the Prophet ﷺ was returning from the campaign against the Banu al-Mustaliq in 628 CE. During one of the halts not very far from Madeenah, ʿAa'ishah رضي الله عنها wandered off by herself to search for a missing necklace, leaving the curtains of her camel litter shut. In the meantime, Allah's Messenger ﷺ gave the command for departure and the litter-bearers moved on without perceiving her absence due to her light weight. When ʿAa'ishah رضي الله عنها came back to the stop and discovered what had happened, she waited there for somebody to escort her back.

A young man by the name of Safwaan ibn al-Muʿattal, happened to arrive at the spot and brought her back to Madeenah, mounted on his camel, which he held by the rein. The sight of ʿAa'ishah arriving alone in the company of a young man, made the tongue of the hypocrites wag with slander. The principal accuser

was ʿAbdullaah ibn Ubayy, who was one of the notorious hypocrites in Madeenah: the name given to lukewarm or nominal Muslims at best. Shortly thereafter, her name was cleared through verses revealed to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ (*Soorat an-Noor*, 24:11-17), which condemned those who had spread the unfounded accusations against her. These verses became the basis for legal rulings on establishing evidence of illicit sexual conduct.

The Glorious Qur'an (*Soorat an-Noor*, 24:13) specifically enjoins that four eye-witnesses who have witnessed the actual act of illicit sex be produced before a charge of adultery can be established. Apart from this, the Qur'an (24:4) threatens with whipping eighty lashes those who slander (*qadf*) chaste women without producing such witnesses.

ʿAa'ishah ﵂ used to take pride in the fact that she had been a cause of revelation and that Allah ﷻ Himself had declared her innocence in these verses of the Qur'an. This critical incident in the life of the young ʿAa'ishah, is known as *Haadithat al-Ifk*, or the Incident of the Slander. The accusation was very hard on ʿAa'ishah ﵂. She kept herself confined to herself, weeping out the day and spending the night in sleepless anxiety and depression. Yet her hope in the mercy and justice of Allah never faded. It was this hope in Allah and this trust in Him that sustained her.

Her major contribution was in the areas of religion and knowledge. The years she spent in the house of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ were just sufficient for her to master the sciences and disciplines, which she did. She is reported to have narrated more than two thousand and three hundred of the Prophet's sayings (*ahaadeeth*). She is, therefore, the most widely quoted person on the traditions of the Prophet ﷺ. Many prominent and learned companions of the Prophet ﷺ sought knowledge from her. She had an excellent grasp of the Qur'an and its meanings.

She witnessed and participated in a number of military campaigns, alongside the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. Prominent among them were the Battle of Uhud and that of Banu al-Mustaliq. Her steadfastness, endurance and courage during the Incident of the Slander are inspiring examples for all time.

ʿAa'ishah's love of charity is a source of inspiration and pride to Muslim women of all generations. She was dignified and benevolent. She shunned pomp and the show of this world and led a simple life. Her greatest endowments were her quick wits and phenomenal memory. She possessed extraordinary intellectual abilities and had a good knowledge of the history, language, poetry and the ancestry of Arabia. Perhaps no other young girl of the Quraysh was more qualified than her to occupy the role of the wife and companion of the Prophet ﷺ.

ʿAa'ishah ﵂ played a leading role in many of the activities in the Prophet's household, during his lifetime and particularly in the period after his death. Allah's Messenger ﷺ breathed his last in her arms, when she was only eighteen years old.

During the caliphates of Abu Bakr and ʿUmar, ʿAa'ishah ﵂ lived quietly. It was after the murder of ʿUthmaan ﵁, the third caliph, in 656 CE, when she assumed a public political role. ʿAa'ishah ﵂ openly demanded that ʿAli, who had succeeded the slain caliph, find and bring the killers to justice, which he was reluctant to do for several reasons. But ʿAa'ishah, along with her two allies, Talhah ibn ʿUbaydullaah ﵁ and az-Zubayr ibn al-ʿAwwaam ﵁, launched the

Battle of the Camel against ʿAli, in which her side lost. It is so called because of the camel she rode in this battle. ʿAa'ishah ﵂ was respectfully escorted back to Madeenah by ʿAli.

ʿAa'ishah ﵂ took pride in claiming at least ten honours that were her own.

(1) she was the only virgin wife of the Prophet ﷺ
(2) Both her parents migrated to Madeenah;
(3) Allah ﷻ declared her innocence in the Qur'an;
(4) Jibreel ﵇ revealed her image to the Prophet ﷺ and guided him to marry her;
(5) she had washed in the same vessel with the Messenger of Allah ﷺ;
(6) she was the only wife in whose presence he received revelations;
(7) she was the daughter of his best friend and successor
(8) the Prophet ﷺ died in her arms
(9) he passed away on the night allotted to her; and
(10) he was buried in her apartment.

ʿAa'ishah ﵂ died in 58 AH (678 CE), when she was about 67 years of age during the reign of Muʿaawiyah ﵁, the first Umayyad Caliph. Her funeral was attended by a large crowd of people who were among the most prominent Muslims of the time. Abu Hurayrah ﵁, the governor of Madeenah at the time, led her funeral prayer. Her body was laid to rest in the famous al-Baqeeʿ graveyard in Madeenah.

7.5. Hafsah bint ʿUmar ﵄



Hafsah ﵂ was the daughter of ʿUmar ibn al-Khattaab ﵁. She was born in Makkah. She was first married to Khunays ibn Hudhaafah as-Sahmee ﵁, who had emigrated in the way of Allah twice: once to Ethiopia and another time to Madeenah. He died in Madeenah soon after the Battle of Badr. He had participated in the Battle of Badr and had been wounded. Hafsah ﵂ was then about twenty years of age.

Allah's Messenger ﷺ married her out of regard for her father, who was very close to the Prophet ﷺ and enjoyed his love and appreciation for services rendered to the cause of Islam.

Hafsah, the Mother of the Believers, was deeply religious, steadfast in prayer and always observed voluntary fasts. When her first husband died, her father, ʿUmar ibn al-Khattaab ﵁, tried unsuccessfully to persuade some of his close friends and brothers in Islam to marry her. The noble-hearted Messenger of Allah ﷺ was moved by the pain of his close aide and companion ʿUmar and offered to marry her after the Battle of Uhud. She was once divorced on account of her proneness to jealousy. But Angel Jibreel ﵇ came with a divine command ordering the Prophet ﷺ to take her back on account of her piety and devotion to Allah.

Qays ibn Zayd ﵁ narrated that Allah's Messenger ﷺ said, 'Jibreel told me, "Take her back because she fasts and prays a great deal and she will be your

wife in Paradise,'" (*Saheeh al-Jaami'*, *hadeeth* no. 4351) Her marriage to the Prophet ﷺ was a childless one. Hafsah lived to play a vital role in the history of Islam. When the compilation of the Qur'an was completed during the reign of Abu Bakr, the manuscript was presented to him, and it remained with him until his death. It then went to his successor 'Umar, and after his martyrdom, it passed into the custody of his daughter Hafsah, the widow of the Prophet ﷺ. It was 'Umar, after all, who had entrusted the Qur'an manuscript in his possession, which formed the basis for the final form of the Qur'anic text, to the safekeeping of his daughter Hafsah, rather than to that one of his sons. She kept the manuscript and painstakingly looked after it. She had memorized the entire Qur'an.

During the time of 'Uthmaan ﷺ, differences in reading the Qur'an became obvious and after consultation with the Prophet's companions, 'Uthmaan ﷺ had a standard copy prepared from the manuscript of Abu Bakr that was kept with Hafsah at that time. So 'Uthmaan ﷺ sent a message to Hafsah saying, 'Send us the manuscript of the Qur'an so that we may compile the Qur'anic material in perfect copies and return the manuscript to you.' Hafsah, therefore, sent it to 'Uthmaan ﷺ. Later 'Uthmaan ﷺ did return the original manuscript to Hafsah. Thus Hafsah played a very important part in the collection of the Qur'an.

Hafsah ﷺ died in the year 41 AH at the age of about 59. She was fasting at the time of her death. The funeral prayer was led by the governor of Madeenah, Marwaan ibn al-Hakam. Her body was laid to rest in al-Baqee' graveyard in Madeenah.

7.6. Zaynab bint Khuzaymah ﷺ



The Prophet's next wife was Zaynab the daughter of Khuzaymah of the Bedouin tribe of 'Aamir. Her first husband at-Tufayl ibn al-Haarith had divorced her, the second, 'Ubaydah ibn al-Haarith, was martyred at the Battle of Badr. She was very generous by nature, and was known before the advent of Islam as *Umm-ul-Masaakeen* (the Mother of the Poor). A year after being widowed, she was still unmarried, and the Prophet ﷺ asked her to marry him. She gladly accepted. The marriage took place in *Shawwaal* in 4 AH. A fourth apartment was made for her in his house adjoining the Mosque. She was twice married and was widowed before the Prophet ﷺ married her. She was known for her piety and charity.

However, Zaynab did not live long after her marriage with the Prophet ﷺ. She fell ill and died, less than eight months after he had married her. He led her funeral prayer and buried her in al-Baqee' graveyard, not far from the grave of his daughter Ruqayyah. She was the first of the Mothers of the Believers to be buried in al-Baqee' graveyard.

7.7. Umm Salamah – Hind bint Abu Umayyah al-Makhzumiyyah ﵂



The name Umm Salamah literally means mother of Salamah. It is common among Arabs to take a *kunyah*, a name which one is ascribed to a son or daughter – usually, to the eldest son. In the same manner, Umm Salamah's husband became known as Abu Salamah, which literally means, father of Salamah. Umm Salamah's actual name was Hind bint Abu Umayyah al-Makhzumiyyah. Her husband was her cousin, and his actual name was ʿAbdullaah ibn ʿAbdul-Asad. They were the earliest emigrants to Ethiopia and later migrated to Madeenah. Abu Salamah ﵁ died in 4 AH from wounds received in the Battle of Uhud. The wounds had, in fact, closed too soon but broke out afresh. The Prophet ﷺ was with him and prayed for him as he was breathing his last, and it was the Prophet ﷺ who closed his eyes when he was dead.

Umm Salamah ﵂ and Abu Salamah ﵁ had both been through a lot of hardships that only made their love for each other stronger. They had been a most devoted couple, and she had wanted him to make a pact with her that if one of them died the other would not marry again; but he told her that if he died first she should marry again, and he prayed, May 'Allah grant Umm Salamah after me a man who is better than me, one who will cause her no sadness and no hurt.' 'And who is better than Abu Salamah?' she thought. Four months after his death, after the end of her waiting period, Allah's Messenger ﷺ approached her and asked for her hand in marriage. She replied that she feared that she was not a suitable match for him. 'I am the mother of orphans. Apart from this, I have a nature of exceeding jealousy, and you, Messenger of Allah ﷺ, have more than one wife.' He said, 'As to your jealousy, I will pray to Allah to take it from you; as to your orphan children, Allah and His Messenger will care for them.' And so they were married, and he lodged her in the house which had belonged to Zaynab. She said after the marriage, 'Surely. Allah gave me through the Prophet ﷺ someone better than Abu Salamah.'

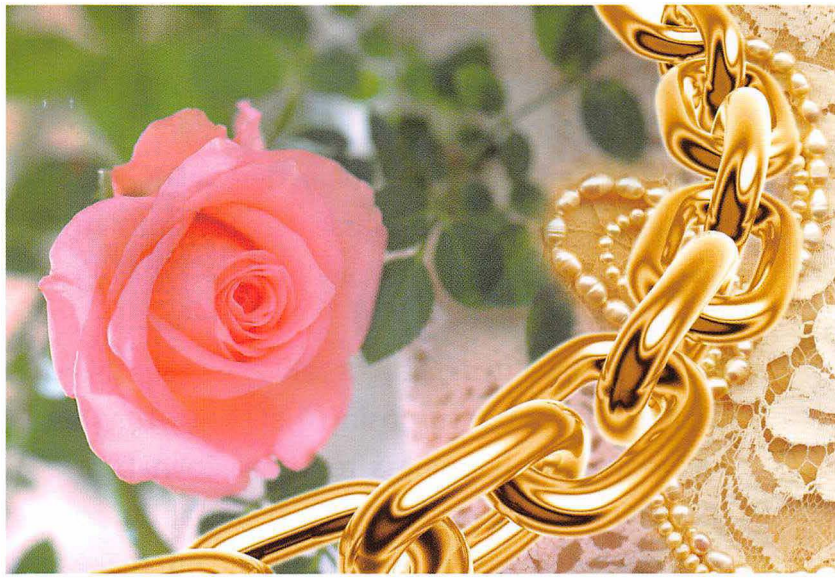
There are several good reasons why the Prophet ﷺ married Umm Salamah. Firstly, she was a woman of superior character and intelligence. Secondly, by marrying her, Allah's Messenger ﷺ, in his fatherly compassion wanted, as well as to honour her, to provide for her and her children and to give consolation for the loss of her husband. Thirdly, Umm Salamah ﵂ was from the Banu Makhzoom clan, a respected clan of

the Quraysh and, more importantly, the one that carried the banner of war against the Prophet ﷺ. It was hoped that the Prophet's marriage to Umm Salamah would be seen as a token of goodwill – a reason among other reasons, for the people of Banu Makhzoom to enter the fold of Islam, now that they had become 'in-laws' of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. Fourthly, by marrying Umm Salamah, whose husband had died a martyr, the Prophet ﷺ taught an important lesson to the Muslims of his generation and to the Muslims of the succeeding generations: When men sacrifice their lives and are martyred, the men left behind should honour them by doing their utmost to take care of their bereaved dependants.

The Prophet's marriage to Umm Salamah proved a successful and affectionate one. Umm Salamah رضي الله عنها had many of the qualities of Khadeejah رضي الله عنها. Like her, she came from a noble Quraysh family, being of Banu Makhzoom and, like her, she was beautiful and radiant despite her somewhat advanced age. Like her, she had an engaging and affectionate character and was a superb and pleasant companion and partner. Allah's Messenger ﷺ liked staying longer in her apartment.

Umm Salamah رضي الله عنها played a significant role in supporting Allah's Messenger ﷺ and comforting him on the day of the Peace Treaty of al-Hudaybiyyah (*Sulh al-Hudaybiyyah*). Like 'Aa'ishah and Hafsah, Umm Salamah had also become a *haafidhah* – memorizer of the Qur'an. Umm Salamah رضي الله عنها held an eminent position due to her beauty, knowledge and wisdom. Umm Salamah was very learned in religious matters. She lived a long life. She died in the year 61 AH and was the last of the Prophet's wives to die. She was 84 years old.

7.8. Zaynab bint Jahsh رضي الله عنها



Her full name was Zaynab bint Jahsh ibn Ri'aab al-Asadiyyah. Her mother was Umayyah the daughter of 'Abdul-Muttalib, the paternal aunt of the Prophet ﷺ. Zaynab رضي الله عنها, therefore, was the first cousin of the Prophet ﷺ. She was one of the first emigrants to Madeenah, and she was a very pious woman.

Several years before the Prophet's mission, his wife Khadeejah رضي الله عنها had made him a present of a young slave, Zayd ibn Haarithah who had been taken captive as a child in the course of one of the many tribal wars and then sold into slavery at Makkah. As soon as he became the boy's owner, Allah's Messenger ﷺ freed him, and shortly afterwards adopted him as his son. Later, Zayd was among the first to embrace Islam.

Years later, impelled by the desire to break down the ancient Arabian prejudice against a slave or even a freeman marrying a freeborn woman, Allah's Messenger ﷺ persuaded Zayd to marry his (the Prophet's) own cousin. Zaynab was closely known to the Prophet ﷺ. She consented to the proposal with great reluctance, and only out of respect to the authority of the Prophet ﷺ.

The Prophet ﷺ wanted to destroy the class system along with other customs and beliefs of the days of the pre-Islamic ignorance (*jaahiliyyah*). With the advent of Islam, all people were equal 'like the teeth of a comb'. Only piety, and no other factor, raised some people above others. Zaynab ﵂ obeyed the Prophet's command and married Zayd. Thus the Prophet ﷺ succeeded in destroying the barriers between the classes in the Muslim society according to the Law of Allah, starting with his own house.

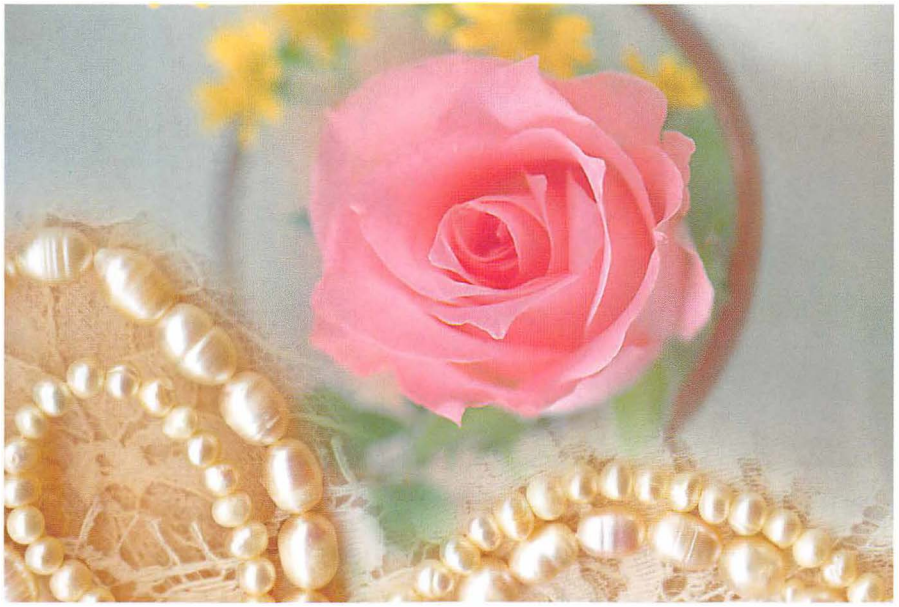
Since Zayd was not at all keen on this alliance, it was not surprising that the marriage did not bring happiness to either Zaynab or Zayd. On several occasions Zayd was about to divorce his wife, who, on her part, did not make any secret of her dislike for Zayd; and each time they were persuaded by the Prophet ﷺ to persevere in patience and not to separate. In the end, however, the marriage proved untenable, obviously on account of Zaynab's feeling of superiority over Zayd, a former slave, and so Zayd divorced Zaynab in the year 5 AH. (See *Soorat al-Aḥzaab*, 33:37)

Formerly Zayd used to be called Zayd ibn Muḥammad, but the Qur'an outlawed this practice, commanding the believers to call their adopted sons by the name of their natural fathers. (*Soorat al-Aḥzaab*, 33:5) Allah's Messenger ﷺ was then commanded by the Qur'an to marry her so as to abrogate the custom that fathers of adopted sons may not marry the divorcees of their adopted sons. This is because Zayd ﵁ was not really the Prophet's son, which made Zaynab ﵂ lawful for the Prophet ﷺ once Zayd divorced her. Therefore, their marriage made it known to people that one does not become a man's father through adoption; instead, his true father was and always will remain his father, to whom he must ascribe himself. The marriage was ordered by Allah to abrogate an old custom (*Soorat al-Aḥzaab*, 33:37).

Apart from this, Allah's Messenger ﷺ married her in order to redeem what he considered to be his moral responsibility for her past unhappiness. The Prophet ﷺ married her in *Dhul-Qa'dah*, 5 AH. She was then 35 years of age. In fact, it was Almighty Allah ﷻ who had given her to the Prophet ﷺ in marriage.

Zaynab was a woman of great piety. She fasted much, offered voluntary night prayer a great deal and gave generously to the poor. There could be no question in her case of any formal wedding, for the marriage was announced in the revealed verses as a bond already contracted. Moreover, it is significant to note that the permission which Allah had given to the Prophet ﷺ to have more than four wives was for him alone, and not for the rest of the community. Moreover, his wives were given the title of the Mothers of the Believers. Their status was such that having been married to the Prophet ﷺ, their marriage to another man was forbidden. Zaynab bint Jaḥsh died in the year 20 AH at the age of 53.

7.9. Juwwayriyah bint al-Haarith ﵂



Juwwayriyah was the daughter of al-Haarith ibn Abu Diraar. Her name was Barrah, but the Prophet ﷺ changed it to Juwwayriyah. Barrah means someone pious, and so it is a name that amounts to a degree of self-praise. She was from the tribe of Banu al-Mustaliq and was taken as a war-captive during the Battle of al-Muraysi' in 5 AH. She had been married to Musaafi' ibn Safwaan who was killed in this battle.

When Allah's Messenger ﷺ married her, she was twenty years old. She was a very beautiful woman, as is attested to by her co-wife, 'Aa'ishah ﵂. When Juwwayriyah came to the Prophet's door seeking his help in restoring her freedom, she was met by 'Aa'ishah. Seeing her attractive looks, 'Aa'ishah tried her best to send her away without meeting the Prophet ﷺ. But as the two women stood at the door, Allah's Messenger ﷺ chanced to look out of the house and saw the ardent and eager Juwwayriyah refusing to be sent away. 'Aa'ishah later said that she tried to send her away lest the Messenger of Allah ﷺ should see her and desire to marry her. This indicates that she was an extremely beautiful woman. Allah's Messenger ﷺ married her and she became a mother to all the believers. She became very knowledgeable and an ardent worshipper. Juwwayriyah ﵂ died in the year 50 AH at the age of 65. She was buried in the famous al-Baqee' graveyard in Madeenah.

7.10. Umm Habeebah Ramlah, the Daughter of Abu Sufyaan ﵂



Her full name was Ramlah bint Abu Sufyaan. In fact, her father, Abu Sufyaan ibn Harb, was the one time arch-enemy and leader of the Quraysh opposition. Ramlah embraced Islam despite the attitude of her father and her family and suffered a great deal of hardships as a result of that. She was first married to ʿUbaydullaah ibn Jahsh and emigrated with him to Ethiopia. There ʿUbaydullaah abandoned Islam and embraced Christianity. This had greatly distressed Umm Habeebah, but she refused to follow suit and remained faithful to Islam. Subsequently ʿUbaydullaah died.

When news of the death of ʿUbaydullaah came from Ethiopia, the Prophet ﷺ sent a letter to the Negus, asking her in marriage, if she were willing. The Prophet ﷺ did not send the message directly to her, but she had a dream in which someone came to her and addressed her as 'Mother of the Believers', and she interpreted this as meaning that she would become the wife of the Prophet ﷺ. The next day she received the message from the Negus, which confirmed her dream. The ceremony was performed by the Negus himself in the presence of Khaalid ibn Saʿeed, one of her relatives. Jaʿfar ibn Abee Taalib and other companions of the Prophet ﷺ were also present.

It is clear that the Prophet ﷺ wished thus to distinguish and reward the faithful woman who, in spite of her husband's apostasy, had remained true to her religion. Later Umm Habeebah came to Madeenah together with other companions who had migrated to Ethiopia. This took place in the year 7 AH. She was over thirty years of age at that time. She had earlier given birth to a daughter who was called Habeebah. While married to the Prophet ﷺ, she received moral support for her steadfastness in faith, her marriage helped decrease Banu Umayyah's hatred for Islam and its Prophet. This was one of the objectives of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. Umm Habeebah died in Madeenah in the year 44 AH.

There is also the famous incident when her father visited her when she was married to the Prophet ﷺ and she refused to allow him to sit on the Prophet's bed. Her understanding of Islam was remarkably deep. Umm Habeebah's father, Abu Sufyaan, embraced Islam when the Prophet ﷺ victoriously returned to Makkah.

7.11. Safiyyah bint Huyayy ﵂



She was Safiyyah bint Huyayy ibn Akhtab. She was born in Madeenah and belonged to the Jewish tribe of Banu an-Nadeer. Her father and her uncle Abu Yaasir were the Prophet's bitterest enemies. When their tribe was expelled from Madeenah in 4 AH, Huyayy ibn Akhtab was one of those who settled in Khaybar, together with Kinaanah ibn ar-Rabee' ibn Abul-Huqayq, to whom Safiyyah was married in 7 AH, a month or two before the Prophet ﷺ set out from Madeenah for the Khaybar expedition.

She had formerly been the wife of Sallaam ibn Mishkam, who had divorced her. She was seventeen years old at this time. When Khaybar fell in *Safar* 7 AH, Safiyyah was taken captive in a fortress, along with other women and children. Her husband was condemned to death by the Prophet ﷺ for having concealed the treasure of the Banu an-Nadeer. He was killed for treachery. Safiyyah was the daughter of that Huyayy who had persuaded the Banu Quraydhah to break their treaty with the Prophet ﷺ, and who had been put to death with them after the Battle of the Trench. Unlike her father and her uncle, Safiyyah was of a deeply pious nature. From her earliest years, she had heard her people talk of the Prophet ﷺ who was soon to come, and this had filled her imagination. Then they spoke of an Arab in Makkah, and then came the news that he had arrived at Qubaa'. That was seven years before, when she was a girl of ten.

Not long before the Prophet ﷺ arrived in front of Khaybar, she had a dream in which she saw a brilliant moon hanging in the sky, above the city of Madeenah. Then the moon began to move towards Khaybar, where it fell into her lap. When she woke up, she told Kinaanah about her dream, and he struck her a blow in the face and said, 'This can mean that you desire the King of Yathrib (Madeenah).' The mark of the blow was still visible when she was brought as a captive to the Prophet ﷺ. He asked her what had caused it, and she told him of her dream. Allah's Messenger ﷺ then told Safiyyah that he was prepared to set her free, and offered her the choice between staying a Jewess and going back to her people or embracing Islam and becoming his wife. She said, 'I choose Allah and His Messenger.' They were married at the first halt on the way back to Madeenah. The Prophet ﷺ married Safiyyah out of sympathy for her plight. She was the daughter of a leader and chieftain. Her husband was killed

and she had no one to care for her. Safiyyah's emancipation was her bridal gift (*mahr*).

Allah's Messenger ﷺ married her for the same reasons as he had married Juwwayriyah. Both her father and her husband had died fighting against Islam. It was necessary to treat her in an honourable manner because of her status among the Jews. The marriage clearly exposes the falsehood of the allegation of the Jews that the Prophet's quarrel with them was racial. Racism never crossed the Prophet's mind.

Allah's Messenger ﷺ held Safiyyah in high esteem, and he would show it in the way he treated her. For example, he would first kneel on the ground so that Safiyyah could place her foot on her knee and mount first. But she was so polite and respectful of the Prophet ﷺ that she refused to place her foot on his knee; instead, she would place her knee over his knee and, from that position, climb onto the riding camel.

Once Safiyyah heard Hafsah saying that she was after all the daughter of a Jew. When the Prophet ﷺ later found her crying as he went into her apartment, he asked her about the reason for crying and replied, 'Hafsah says I am the daughter of a Jew.' The Prophet ﷺ told her, 'You are the daughter of a prophet, the niece of a prophet and the wife of a prophet. How can they ever seek to air superiority over you?' Then he said, 'Fear Allah, Hafsah.' (Reported by at-Tirmidhee, *hadeeth* no. 3894)

It is said that the Prophet ﷺ abandoned Zaynab bint Jahsh for three months when she called Safiyyah a Jewess. When he finally returned to her, she gifted one of her slaves to the Prophet ﷺ in celebration of his forgiveness, and atonement for the slip. This was during the Farewell Pilgrimage, as can be understood from various reports in this connection. (Dr. Mahdi Rizqullah Ahmed, *Prophet of Islam*, Vol. 2, p. 879)

Safiyyah ﵂ was noble by birth as well by nature. She was pious, intelligent, beautiful, patient, tolerant and dignified. She devoted a lot of time to reciting the Qur'an, and its effect on her heart was so intense that tears would stream down her cheeks, and she would start sobbing.

Safiyyah ﵂ loved the Prophet ﷺ. Actually, she loved him more than she loved her father, her relatives and all mankind. She even loved him more than she loved herself. Without giving the matter a second thought, she would gladly sacrifice her life for him. When the Prophet ﷺ observed *i'tikaaf* in the mosque, Safiyyah would frequently visit him.

One Ramadaan night, the Prophet ﷺ was observing *i'tikaaf* (retreat or seclusion) when she visited him. He went out with her to see her off to her house, near the house of Usaamah ibn Zayd. Safiyyah's house was on the outskirts of Madeenah at that time. On the way, he met two of his companions who were from the *Ansaar*. When they saw the Prophet ﷺ, they hurried their pace and moved out of the way, feeling shy to embarrass him, because he was in the company of his wife. The Prophet ﷺ called out loudly to them, 'Why are you hurrying? This is Safiyyah bint Huyayy.' Both of them said, 'Glorified be Allah! Messenger of Allah ﷺ! We cannot conceive of anything doubtful even in the remotest corners of our minds.' The Prophet ﷺ then said, 'Satan circulates in the body of a person like the circulation of blood, and I was afraid lest it should instil any evil in your heart or anything.' (Reported by Muslim, *hadeeth* no. 5679) This shows that Safiyyah ﵂ often felt a longing to see and talk with the Prophet ﷺ, so she used to visit him, even during the night.

Safiyyah ﵂ died in the month of Ramadaan in the year 50 AH. She was laid to rest in al-Baqee' graveyard.

7.12. Maymoonah bint al-Haarith ﵂



12 Maymoonah bint al-Haarith ﵂

She was the daughter of al-Haarith and a sister-in-law of al-ʿAbbaas ibn ʿAbdul-Muttalib, the Prophet's uncle. She was twice-married before. Her first husband had divorced her. Her second husband, Abu Ruhm ibn ʿAbdul-ʿUzzaa, died. She, therefore, asked her sister Umm al-Fadl, the wife of al-ʿAbbaas, to find a suitable husband for her. Umm al-Fadl delegated the task of finding Maymoonah a husband to al-ʿAbbaas. Al-ʿAbbaas ﵁ could not find a better match for Maymoonah than his nephew, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. The matter was quickly decided upon and al-ʿAbbaas gave her four hundred *dirhams* (silver coins) as a bridal gift on behalf of the Prophet ﷺ. This took place at the time of the Prophet's compensatory *ʿumrah*, in the year 7 AH, in the month of *Dhul-Qaʿdah*, right after the Prophet ﷺ had completed his *ʿumrah*. The marriage was consummated at a place called Sarif, about 9 miles outside of Makkah. She was then 26 years old.

Indeed, Maymoonah ﵂ was of such good qualities that she deserved to be a member of the Prophet's family, in recognition of her virtues and in order to soften her family towards Islam. She was the last woman to marry the Prophet ﷺ and she was the last of his wives to die. She died in the year 61 AH at the age of 81. It is interesting to note that she died at Sarif and was buried there, the very place where, years before, her marriage was consummated.

7.13. Maariyah the Copt ﵂ and Rayhaanah



In addition, the Prophet ﷺ had at least two female slaves. The first one was Maariyah the Copt (an Egyptian Christian), a gift from al-Muqawqis, the Roman viceroy ruling the Copts in Egypt. She bore the Prophet ﷺ a son, who died before his second year, in *Shawwaal*, in the year 10 AH.

The second one was Rayhaanah, taken captive from the Banu Quraydhah, who was originally Jewish. There is a difference about her status, but it is generally held that she was a slave-girl and not a wife. As for Maariyah, it is reported that the Prophet ﷺ said when she gave birth to his child Ibraaheem, 'Her son has freed her.' (Dr. Rizqullah Ahmed, *Prophet of Islam*)

7.14. The Teachings of the Qur'an Concerning the Prophet's Wives



The Qur'an allots a distinctive status to the Prophet's wives. It outlines their special obligations and responsibilities.

The Qur'an states,

'O wives of the Prophet! You are not like any of the other women, provided that you remain conscious of Allah. Hence, be not soft in your speech [to men], lest any whose heart is diseased should be moved to desire, but speak in a kindly way. And abide quietly in your homes, and do not make a dazzling display of your beauty and adornment like that of the old days of pagan ignorance. And be constant in prayer and give the purifying dues. And obey Allah and His Messenger, for Allah only wants to remove from you, O members of the Prophet's family, the impurity [of sin] and to purify you with a thorough purification.' (*Soorat al-Ahzaab*, 33: 32-33)

The Glorious Qur'an also cautions them of severe punishment if they commit immoral conduct:

'O wives of the Prophet! Whoever of you commits manifest lewdness, the punishment for her will be doubled, and that is very easy for Allah. And whoever of you is obedient to Allah and His Messenger and does righteous good deeds, We will reward her twice, and We have prepared for her a noble provision [in the hereafter].' (*Soorat al-Ahzaab*, 33:30-31)

Review

- Write short notes on the following wives of the Prophet ﷺ. Mention a few things about each wife that sets her apart from the rest of them.

1. Khadeejah bint Khuwaylid ﵂
2. Sawdah bint Zam'ah ﵂
3. 'Aa'ishah bint Abu Bakr ﵂
4. Hafsah bint 'Umar ﵂
5. Zaynab bint Khuzaymah ﵂
6. Umm Salamah ﵂
7. Zaynab bint Jahsh ﵂
8. Juwwayriyah bint al-Haarith ﵂
9. Umm Habeebah ﵂
10. Safiyyah bint Huyayy ﵂
11. Maymoonah bint al-Haarith ﵂

- What are the teachings of Islam regarding the Prophet's wives?

7.15. The Descendants of the Prophet ﷺ

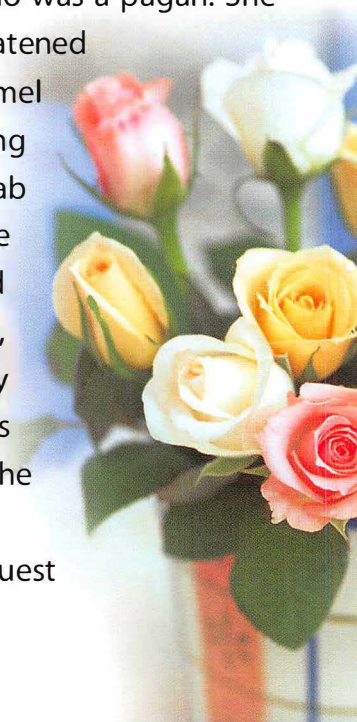


The Prophet's marriage with his first wife, Khadeejah ﵂, took place about fifteen years before the beginning of the revelation, when he was twenty-five and she was forty. He did not marry again as long as Khadeejah ﵂ lived. Khadeejah ﵂ bore him four daughters: Zaynab, Ruqayyah, Umm Kulthoom, and Faaṭimah and two sons who died in their infancy.

7.16. Zaynab ﵂, Daughter of the Prophet ﷺ

Zaynab ﵂ was the eldest of the Prophet's daughters. Her mother was Khadeejah ﵂ and her husband was ʿAli ibn Abee Ṭaalib ﵁. She was married to Abul-ʿAaṣ ibn ar-Rabeeʿ, a nephew of Khadeejah before the beginning of her father's Prophetic mission. His real name is uncertain, but it was most probably Laqeeṭ. At the beginning, he sided with the pagan Quraysh and took part with them in the Battle of Badr. Taken prisoner by the Muslims, he was ransomed by his wife, Zaynab, who, although a Muslim, had remained with him in Makkah. Zaynab ﵂ sent a necklace which had belonged to Khadeejah ﵂ to ransom him. The Prophet ﷺ allowed him to return on condition that he would send Zaynab to Madeenah, as she could not remain the wife of a non-Muslim.

According to Islam, a Muslim woman cannot be joined in marriage to a non-Muslim man. Abul-ʿAaṣ faithfully fulfilled his promise and sent Zaynab to Madeenah. The separation of Zaynab from her husband and her subsequent emigration to Madeenah is one of the most moving stories of the Muslim exodus. On her way to Madeenah, she was maltreated by al-Habbaar ibn al-Aswad, who was a pagan. She was pregnant, and he threatened her with his spear. The camel on which she was riding jerked violently and Zaynab fell so heavily to the ground that the fall caused her to miscarry. Ultimately, she safely made her way to Madeenah and was reunited with her father, the Prophet ﷺ.



Shortly before the Conquest

of Makkah, Abul-ʿAaṣ was again taken prisoner by the Muslims in one of the minor campaigns. In Madeenah, he took refuge in the house of Zaynab and subsequently embraced Islam. He was then reunited to Zaynab by a second marriage, after many years of separation and agony. This took place in 7 AH. She had two children, ʿAli and Umaamah. ʿAli died in infancy but Umaamah survived. Later, ʿAli ibn Abee Ṭaalib, the Commander of the Faithful, married her, after the death of his first wife Faaṭimah, daughter of the Prophet ﷺ.

7.17. Ruqayyah ﵂, Daughter of the Prophet ﷺ

Her mother was Khadeejah ﵂. Ruqayyah was born in Makkah and had been married to ʿUtbah ibn Abu Lahab ibn ʿAbdul-Muṭṭalib before the beginning of Prophethood. When the Prophet ﷺ was sent on his divine mission and Allah revealed the verse: 'Perish the hand of Abu Lahab' (*Soorat al-Masad*, 111:1), ʿUtbah's father asked him to divorce Ruqayyah. So ʿUtbah divorced her without having consummated the marriage. She embraced Islam when her mother Khadeejah did and swore allegiance to the Prophet ﷺ, together with the other women.

Then ʿUthmaan ibn ʿAffaan married her, and she migrated twice to Ethiopia with him. On the first emigration, she miscarried the child she had from ʿUthmaan, but she later bore him a son whom he named ʿAbdullaah. ʿAbdullaah lived to the age of two and then a cock pecked his face which became swollen and he soon died. When the Prophet ﷺ emigrated to Madeenah, she followed suit.

Ruqayyah ﵂ fell ill when the Prophet ﷺ was preparing to set out for the Battle of Badr. So he left ʿUthmaan behind to watch over her. She died in *Ramaḍaan*, seventeen months after the Prophet's, while the Prophet ﷺ was at Badr. When Zayd ibn Ḥaarithah arrived from Badr with the good news of the victory and entered Madeenah, the people were levelling the earth over her grave. She was laid to rest in al-Baqeeʿ graveyard in Madeenah.

7.18. Umm Kulthoom ﵂, Daughter of the Prophet ﷺ

Her mother was Khadeejah ﵂. She had been married to ʿUtaybah ibn Abu Lahab before the Prophet ﷺ was sent on his divine mission. He divorced her for the same reason that his brother ʿUtbah divorced her sister Ruqayyah, even before the consummation of their marriage.

Umm Kulthoom emigrated to Madeenah. Following the death of Ruqayyah ﵂, he gave Umm Kulthoom in marriage to ʿUthmaan ibn ʿAffaan, hence his title *Dhun-Noorayn* 'the one with the two lights'. She remained married to him until her death. She bore him no children. Umm Kulthoom ﵂ died in *Shaʿbaan* 9 AH.

7.19. Faaṭimah ﵂, Daughter of the Prophet ﷺ

Her mother was Khadeejah bint Khuwaylid ﵂. She was born in Makkah at the time when the Quraysh were rebuilding the Kaʿbah, five

years before the beginning of the Prophet's mission. The Prophet ﷺ was then thirty-five years old. She was the youngest of the Prophet's daughters.

ʿAli ibn Abee Taalib married Faatimah in *Rajab*, five months after the Prophet's arrival in Madeenah and consummated his marriage on his return from the Battle of Badr. She was then eighteen years old. The marriage produced the two famous grandsons al-Hasan and al-Husayn. A third son of ʿAli and Faatimah, Muhsin, died in infancy. They also had two daughters: Zaynab and Umm Kulthoom, the latter was born in the last year of Faatimah's life.

She is usually referred to as Faatimah *az-Zahraa'* (the Radiant). ʿAli was the Prophet's cousin, the son of Abu Taalib, the Prophet's kind uncle who protected him during the worst trials of his life. ʿAli's devotion to the Prophet ﷺ is best evidenced during the emigration to Madeenah, when he acted as the Prophet's decoy in Makkah, while the Prophet ﷺ quietly left his home under the cover of night.

Allah's Messenger ﷺ was very fond of Faatimah رضي الله عنها. She bore a striking resemblance to her father. She not only looked like him, but her way of speaking, sitting, standing and walking, were exactly like that of the Prophet ﷺ. Once Allah's Messenger ﷺ said, 'Faatimah is a part of me, and whoever offends her actually offends me.' (Reported by al-Bukhaaree)

During the illness preceding his death, the Prophet ﷺ called his daughter Faatimah رضي الله عنها and spoke to her in secret, and she wept. He addressed her again and spoke to her in secret, but this time she laughed. Faatimah رضي الله عنها later said, 'The Prophet ﷺ spoke to me in secret and informed me that he would die in the course of that illness, which did take him away, and so I wept. Thereafter, he spoke to me in secret and informed me that I would be the first of his family to follow him and I laughed.' (Reported by al-Bukhaaree)

Faatimah رضي الله عنها died six months after the Prophet ﷺ. She died on Monday the 3rd of *Ramadaan* in the year 11 AH. She was laid to rest in al-Baqeeʿ graveyard.

Faatimah رضي الله عنها was the last surviving child of the Prophet ﷺ. His other daughters, two of whom in succession married ʿUthmaan رضي الله عنه, died during the lifetime of the Prophet ﷺ. Khadeejah رضي الله عنها had also borne him two sons who both died in infancy in Makkah. A third son, by Maariyah the Copt, died when he was sixteen months old. There was thus no issue surviving in the male line. But two grandsons, al-Hasan and al-Husayn, were left by his daughter Faatimah رضي الله عنها. They were then six or seven years of age..



Al-Hasan ibn ʿAli ibn Abee Taalib رضي الله عنهما

Al-Hasan, the eldest grandson of the Prophet ﷺ was born in the middle of *Shaʿbaan* 3 AH/625 CE. He resembled the Prophet ﷺ who named him al-Hasan.

After the assassination of ʿAli رضي الله عنه, al-Hasan was proclaimed caliph. Al-Hasan succeeded his father ʿAli in the year 40 AH to become the fifth caliph. Muʿaawiyah, the Umayyad governor of Damascus, attacked al-Hasan, and before a definite battle could take place, al-Hasan himself gave up the caliphate in return for remuneration and pensions for himself and his brother al-Husayn. He handed over the caliphate to Muʿaawiyah in *Rabeeʿ al-Awwal*, 41 AH. Thus the caliphate of Muʿaawiyah ibn Abu Sufyaan became validly established from the moment al-Hasan ibn ʿAli renounced his

right to the caliphate and transferred it to Muʿaawiyah. This in reality represented the fulfilment of something that the Prophet ﷺ had foretold, for he once said about al-Ḥasan: 'This son of mine is a chieftain (*sayyid*) who will be used by Allah as an agent of reconciliation between two enormously powerful factions.'

Muʿaawiyah's leadership was thus made completely legitimate by al-Hasan's commitment to him. The year in which he succeeded to the caliphate was called the Year of the Reunion, because it marked the end of discord among all members of the Muslim community and the general agreement to follow the rule of Muʿaawiyah.

Al-Ḥasan was a particular favourite of his grandfather. He was very polite, generous and commanded high respect. He had a great dislike for disturbance and bloodshed. He performed *ḥajj* twenty-five times on foot although he had his camel with him. Al-Ḥasan's caliphate lasted six months in all. He died in Madeenah in the month of *Rabeeʿ al-Awwal*, 50 AH. It is generally held that he was poisoned to death, but when al-Ḥusayn, his brother, pressed him to tell the name of the person who poisoned him, he said, 'If the suspect has poisoned me, Allah will take revenge, otherwise why should one be unjustly put to death for me.' He left behind nine sons and six daughters.



Al-Ḥusayn ibn ʿAli ibn Abee Ṭaalib رضي الله عنه

Al-Ḥusayn, the second son of ʿAli and Faaṭimah, was born in Madeenah in the month of *Shaʿbaan* in the year 4 AH/626 CE.

Muʿaawiyah had become the sixth caliph and was the founder of the Umayyad dynasty, having forced al-Ḥasan, the son of ʿAli, to withdraw. Muʿaawiyah was the son of Abu Sufyaan, who had led the Makkan opposition against the Prophet ﷺ. Muʿaawiyah died in *Rajab*, in the year 60 AH/680 CE. When Muʿaawiyah died, his son Yazeed became caliph in Damascus without the usual election. He had a reputation as a pleasure-seeker. Al-Ḥusayn رضي الله عنه refused to accept Yazeed as a caliph and left Madeenah to take refuge in Makkah.

In Makkah, his supporters invited al-Ḥusayn to Koofah, Iraq, and assured him of support there against Yazeed. Al-Ḥusayn رضي الله عنه sent his cousin Muslim ibn ʿAqeel ahead to test how matters stood and to prepare the way. On his arrival thousands of people rushed to swear loyalty to al-Ḥusayn. Muslim wrote to al-Ḥusayn to persuade him to come to take charge of the movement.

In the meantime, ʿUbaydullaah, the governor of Iraq, captured Muslim ibn ʿAqeel and executed him. Leaving Makkah, where he had sought refuge after refusing to swear allegiance to Yazeed, al-Ḥusayn took the road to Koofah, according to Muslim's instructions. A few stages from Makkah, he learnt of the tragic end of his envoy. ʿUbaydullaah had set up outposts on all the roads leading from Arabia to Iraq and bands of cavalry were patrolling the roads. The escort of relatives and devoted followers attached to al-Ḥusayn came in contact with one of these detachments. On their refusal to halt, ʿUbaydullaah's troops accompanied them at a short distance. Ultimately, they reached Karbala, ten days later, which was destined to be the scene of al-Ḥusayn's martyrdom. The iron ring formed by the soldiers sent by ʿUbaydullaah closed in around him. The governor wished to persuade or force him to surrender. He cut off all pathways

to the Euphrates, hoping to reduce him by thirst. The majority of al-Ḥusayn's supporters were terrorized by the killing of Muslim.

The tenth of *Muḥarram* 61 AH/10 October 680 CE dawned. An army of four thousand led by ʿUmar ibn Saʿd, the son of the Companion Saʿd ibn Abee Waqqaas, surrounded him in Karbala near the Euphrates river. Cut off from water for several days, he negotiated with the Caliph's troops until at length the parties fought, at first in single combats, as was the custom of the Arabs. Finally, al-Ḥusayn mounted his horse and went into the battle, where, weakened by thirst, he was martyred. Only two of his children survived the massacre which followed. The martyrdom took place on the 10th *Muḥarram* in 61 AH/10 October 680 CE.

Muslims have held al-Ḥusayn in high esteem, particularly out of sympathy for the way in which he was killed. His decision to die for his principles rather than surrender is seen as a sacrifice in order to defend and revive the true religion of his grandfather.

Allah's Messenger once said, 'Al-Ḥasan and al-Ḥusayn are the chiefs of the youths of Paradise.' (Reported by at-Tirmidhee, *ḥadeeth* no. 3768) He also said, 'Indeed, al-Ḥasan and al-Ḥusayn are my two sweet basils in this world.' (Reported by at-Tirmidhee, *ḥadeeth* no. 3770) He is also reported to have said, 'Al-Ḥusayn is from me, and I am from al-Ḥusayn. Allah loves whoever loves al-Ḥusayn. Al-Husayn is a *sibṭ* among the *Asbaaṭ*.' (Reported by at-Tirmidhee) *Asbaaṭ* is the plural form of the Arabic word *sibṭ*, which means that al-Ḥusayn would have many offspring such that they would become a great tribe. This is exctly what happened.

Review

- Write short notes on the following descendants of the Prophet ﷺ. Mention a few things that were special about them, that set them apart from the rest.

1. Zaynab ؓ
2. Ruqayyah ؓ
3. Umm Kulthoom ؓ
4. Faaṭimah ؓ
5. Al-Ḥasan Ibn ʿAli ؓ
6. Al-Ḥusayn Ibn ʿAli ؓ



7.22. The Leading Companions of the Prophet ﷺ

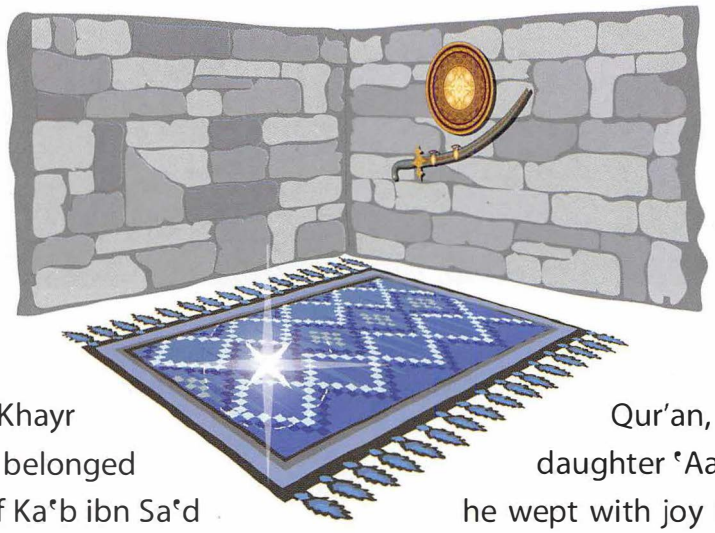
Who is considered a Companion (*ṣaḥaabee*) of the Prophet ﷺ?

As a technical term, the word *ṣaḥaabee* (plural: *ṣaḥaabah*) signifies a companion of the Prophet ﷺ. According to the majority of Muslim scholars, every person who, while being a Muslim, saw the Prophet ﷺ even for a short time, is called a *ṣaḥaabee* (companion of the Prophet ﷺ). The *ṣaḥaabee* occupy high rank in the estimation of *Sunni* Islam, *ḥadeeth* having been handed down by them. To revile them is considered a grave sin.

In precedence among the Companions, the first four Rightly-guided Caliphs occupy the highest rank. With six other *ṣaḥaabah*, they share the pre-eminence of being promised Paradise by the Messenger of Allah ﷺ during their lifetime. They are called *al-ʿAsharatu al-Mubashaharoona bil-Jannah*: the ten to whom Paradise had been promised in their lifetime. They are: Abu Bakr aṣ-Ṣiddeeq, ʿUmar ibn al-Khaṭṭaab, ʿUthmaan ibn ʿAffaan and ʿAli ibn Abee Ṭaalib (The Four Rightly-Guided Caliphs: *al-Khulafaa' ar-Raashidoon*), while the other six were: az-Zubayr ibn al-ʿAwwaam, Ṭalḥah ibn ʿUbaydullaah, ʿAbdur-Raḥmaan ibn ʿAwf, Saʿd ibn Abee Waqqaaṣ, Saʿeed ibn Zayd and Abu ʿUbaydah ibn al-Jarraaḥ. May Allah be pleased with them all.

Other categories among the *ṣaḥaabah* are determined by the different nature of their contribution in the Prophet's mission: *al-Muhaajiroon* (the Migrants), *al-Anṣaar* (the Helpers), *al-Badriyyoon* (those who took part in the Battle of Badr), among others. Muslims constantly make the *tarḍiyah* invocation and follow the mention of any of the *ṣaḥaabah* in speech or writing by saying *raḍiyallaahu ʿanhu* (May Allah be please with him). For a female Companion (*ṣaḥaabiyyah*), the *tarḍiyah* invocation would take the female preposition *ʿanhaa,* and so forth.

7.23. Abu Bakr as-Siddeeq ﷺ



He was Abu Bakr ʿAbdullaah ibn Abu Quhaafah at-Taymee. His surname was ʿAteeq. His father ʿUthmaan, who was also called Abu Quhaafah, and his mother Umm al-Khayr Salmaa bint Sakhr both belonged to the Makkan family of Kaʿb ibn Saʿd ibn Taym. His real name was ʿAbdullaah. Abu Bakr (Father of the maiden) was his *kunyah*.

Abu Bakr ﷺ was three years younger than the Prophet ﷺ. He lived as a rich trader in Makkah. He was one of the first Muslims and one of the Prophet's oldest supporters. Especially characteristic of him was the unshakeable faith with which he considered the Prophet ﷺ as the chosen Messenger of Allah.

Shortly before his emigration to Madeenah, Allah's Messenger ﷺ made his Night Journey (*Israa'*) to Jerusalem and from there he ascended to the heavens (*Miʿraaj*). This event is referred to in Arabic as *Israa' wal Miʿraaj* (Night Journey and the Ascension to the heavens). It is also partially referred to in the Qur'an (*Soorat al-Israa'*, 17:1; *Soorat an-Najm*, 53:16-18). When the Prophet ﷺ spoke of his Night Journey the day after this event, some expressed surprise at his statement, but Abu Bakr ﷺ believed him without any hesitation. Therefore, he earned the epithet *as-Siddeeq*, or the truthful.

During the early days of Islam, Abu Bakr ﷺ used his wealth to help the Muslims through their difficult times and brought freedom for slaves who were persecuted for their faith in Islam.

He was of a gentle character. During the recitation of the Qur'an, he shed tears and his daughter ʿAa'ishah ﷺ reported that he wept with joy at the good news that he might accompany the Messenger of Allah ﷺ on his migration to Madeenah. His daughter ʿAa'ishah ﷺ was the favourite wife of the Prophet ﷺ. He was of an open, right thinking nature. Amid the greatest dangers, he faithfully stood by the Prophet ﷺ, his friend and master. No sacrifice was too great in his sight for the sake of the Prophet of Allah ﷺ.

His life reached its highest peak when Allah's Messenger ﷺ chose him to accompany him when he emigrated from Makkah, and his self-sacrificing companionship was rewarded by his name being immortalized in the Glorious Qur'an as 'the second of the two who lay in the Cave' (*Soorat at-Tawbah*, 9:40) in reference to the cave in Mount Thawr, where he and the Prophet ﷺ hid from the Makkan pursuers on their migration to Madeenah.

In Madeenah, Abu Bakr ﷺ set up a modest house in the suburb of as-Sunh. He was nearly always with the Prophet ﷺ and accompanied him on all his expeditions. The Prophet ﷺ sent him in the year 9 AH to Makkah to conduct the pilgrimage. When Allah's Messenger ﷺ fell

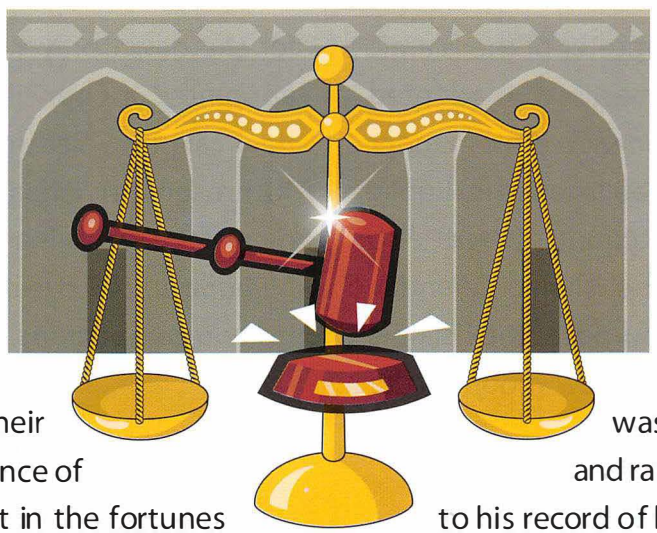
ill, Abu Bakr ﷺ led the prayers in the mosque in his stead, with his express permission. This honour made it possible for ʿUmar and other Companions, after the Prophet's death on *Rabeeʿ al-Awwal* 12, 11 AH/ June 8, 632, to propose Abu Bakr ﷺ as the head of the Muslim community. Abu Bakr thus succeeded the Prophet ﷺ with the title of *Khaleefah* (successor or caliph).

Abu Bakr ﷺ held together the Muslim community after the Prophet's death and managed to prevent the threatening split. He consolidated Islam victories in Arabia and played a profoundly significant role in the first compilation of the Qur'an. As caliph he lived as simply as before, in the beginning in his house in as-Sunh and subsequently in the town itself.

Abu Bakr ruled for only two years and three months (632-634 CE). In response to the refusal of the rebellious tribes to pay their *zakaat* to Madeenah, Abu Bakr ﷺ stated firmly that even if only the hobble of a young camel were withheld in payment of the purifying dues (*zakaat*), he would fight those who refused to pay them.

During his rule, practically all of Arabia was brought under the control of Madeenah. Abu Bakr's official title was *Khaleefatu Rasoolillah* – the successor to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. Abu Bakr ﷺ died on Monday, *Jumaadaa ath-Thaaniyah* 22, 13 AH/ August 23, 634, and as requested by Abu Bakr ﷺ himself, he was laid to rest in ʿAa'ishah's apartment close to where the Prophet ﷺ lay buried.

7.24. ʿUmar ibn al-Khattaab ﷺ



He was ʿUmar ibn al-Khattaab Abu Hafs al-Qurashee al-ʿAdawee. He embraced Islam in 6 AH when he was twenty-six years old. The Quraysh regarded his conversion as a severe blow to their prestige. ʿUmar's acceptance of Islam was a turning point in the fortunes of Islam, for until his conversion, Muslims could not hold their prayers in public. Now, after his conversion, they held their prayers in the courtyard of the Kaʿbah.

ʿUmar participated in all the battles of the Prophet ﷺ. Before his death, Abu Bakr ﷺ appointed ʿUmar as his successor, a decision which met with little resistance from the larger community. There were many good reasons for this acceptance. ʿUmar ﷺ was a strong-willed person and ranked very high indeed due to his record of his early and phenomenal services to Islam. He was unquestionably the greatest Companion of the Prophet ﷺ after Abu Bakr ﷺ.

ʿUmar's immediate goals as caliph included consolidation of the gains made by his predecessor and to build on them. This he

did with great resolution and considerable brilliance. He led the defeat of the Persian and the Roman empires. He extended the rule of Islam from Iran to Egypt, laid down the institutions of the new government and society and transformed the young nation that he inherited into a major world power upon his death ten years later. The evaluation of ʿUmar and his far-sighted policies is captured in a statement attributed to the Prophet ﷺ: 'If there were a prophet after me, it would be ʿUmar.' (at-Tirmidhee, *ḥadeeth* no. 3686, and graded it as '*ḥasan*') The Prophet ﷺ also once light-heartedly remarked that 'even Satan flees from ʿUmar.' (at-Tirmidhee; *ḥadeeth* 3692, and it is '*ḥasan*')

He is known for his profound knowledge of the Qur'an and the *Sunnah* and for his creative insight into *fiqh* (Islamic jurisprudence). The most important title applied to ʿUmar ibn al-Khattaab ﷺ is *al-Faarooq*, roughly 'the one who distinguishes between right and wrong.' This title is commonly understood to point to his role as a richly productive interpreter of the Islamic Law (*Shareeʿah*). It was ʿUmar ﷺ who adopted the title '*Ameer-ul-Mu'mineen*' (Commander of the Believers) and established the Public Treasury and offices of accounts. It was also Umar ﷺ who regulated the Islamic Calendar. He introduced for this purpose the Islamic Year, commencing with the new moon of the first month, *Muḥarram*, of the year in which the Prophet ﷺ migrated from Makkah To Madeenah. The Islamic Calendar counts the days by the nights that precede them.

During his ten-and-a- half year caliphate, Iraq, Iran, and all the Arabian Peninsula were added to the dominion of Islam, and about twelve thousand mosques were built. ʿUmar has related 530 *aḥaadeeth* from the Prophet ﷺ.

ʿUmar ﷺ was not only a great ruler, but also one of the most typical models of all the virtues of Islam. Simplicity and duty were his guiding principles, and impartiality and devotion were the leading features of his administration. He was the caliph of a vast empire, but he never lost the balance of a wise and sober judgement. His sense of justice was strong. Whip in hand, he would tread the streets and markets of Madeenah, ready to punish the offenders on the spot. But even with all this, he was kind-hearted.

ʿUmar ﷺ was assassinated on the morning of *Dhul-Ḥijjah* 27, 23 AH (Nov 5, 644 CE) by Abu Lu'lu'ah, a Persian slave of the governor of Basra, al-Mugheerah ibn Shuʿbah. The slave had made complaints to the Caliph about his duties and wages but had been dismissed. In revenge, he stabbed ʿUmar ﷺ as he was leading worshippers in the mosque for the dawn prayer. On his deathbed, ʿUmar appointed a council, the *Shooraa*, to elect a new caliph, which resulted in the election of ʿUthmaan ibn ʿAffaan ﷺ. Subsequently ʿUmar died of the wounds and was buried on Sunday 1 *Muḥarram*, 24 AH (November 9, 644 CE), beside his two companions in ʿAa'ishah's apartment.



7.25. ʿUthmaan ibn Affaan ﷺ



The six-man electoral council set up by ʿUmar finally elected ʿUthmaan ibn ʿAffan ﷺ as the third caliph. It came about as a result of the unanimous agreement of the Prophet's companions. ʿUthmaan ibn ʿAffaan ﷺ was born in Makkah, in the year 577 CE, some forty-seven years before the Prophet's migration to Madeenah. He was one of the earliest people to embrace Islam and he sacrificed much of his wealth for the sake of his religion. He was always a very close companion to the Prophet ﷺ. He was married to two daughters of the Prophet (s), Ruqayyah and then after her death, Umm Kulthoom. For this distinction, he earned the honorific title *Dhun-Noorayn* (the one with the two lights).

ʿUthmaan ﷺ was very handsome and elegant. He was one of the few people of Makkah who knew how to read and write. He took part in the two emigrations to Ethiopia, along with Ruqayyah ﷺ. He later emigrated to Madeenah. Umm Kulthoom ﷺ died while ʿUthmaan was away from Madeenah, participating in the Tabook expedition. ʿUthmaan ibn ʿAffaan was one of the ten companions to whom the Prophet ﷺ gave the good news of Paradise in their lifetime.

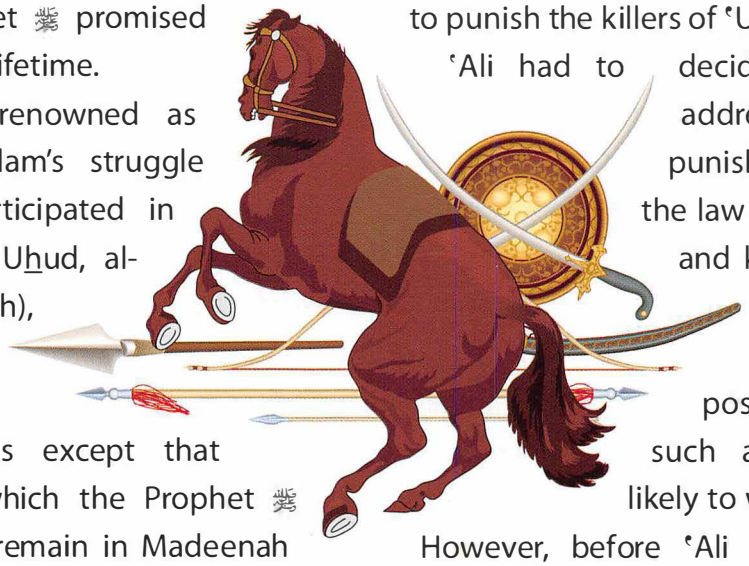
During his caliphate, Armenia, Caucasia, Khuraasaan, Kirman, Sijistan, Cyprus, and much of North Africa were added to the dominion of Islam. The first half of ʿUthmaan's Caliphate was peaceful. Afterwards, revolt began in Iraq and Iran. Civil war arose and the unity of the Prophet's time was shattered. Despite the troubles of his Caliphate, ʿUthmaan is held innocent of them. One of the most significant acts of the caliph was the preparation of the official copy of the Qur'an (*al-Mus'haf al-Uthmaanee* or The ʿUthmaanic Codex) and its distribution to various parts of the state. This ʿUthmaanic Codex superseded all other extant manuscripts.

Unfortunately ʿUthmaan ﷺ was unfairly accused of supporting members of his clan, the Umayyads. This led to a group of rebels coming to his home forcing him to resign. When he refused, they climbed over the walls of his house and martyred him, while ʿUthmaan sat reciting the Qur'an. His blood spilled onto the pages of the Sacred Text and his wife, Naa'ilah bint al-Faraafisah, was wounded while trying to protect him, Naa'ilah cast herself upon her wounded husband, and as she shielded him with her arm, a sword cut severed several of her fingers, which fell upon the ground. A scene of riot followed. Women screamed. The house was gutted.

ʿUthmaan ibn ʿAffaan ﷺ died at the age of eighty-two in the year 35 AH after a reign of twelve years (24-35 AH/ 644-656 CE)

7.26. ʿAli ibn Abee Taalib ﷺ

ʿAli ibn Abee Taalib ﷺ was the Prophet's cousin, the son of Abu Taalib, the Prophet's caring uncle who protected him during the worst trials of his life. He accepted Islam at the tender age of about ten years. ʿAli was born in Makkah, twenty-three years before the *Hijrah* and was raised from the age of five by the Prophet ﷺ. ʿAli married Faatimah, the Prophet's daughter, and the marriage produced the two famous grandsons – al-Hasan and al-Husayn. The Prophet ﷺ gave him the *kunyah* of Abu Turaab (the father of dust). This happened when the Prophet ﷺ once found him sleeping On the dusty ground, so he brushed off his clothes and fondly said to him, 'Wake up, Abu Turaab.' No name was dearer to ʿAli ﷺ than this. ʿAli ﷺ was also one of the ten Companions to whom the Prophet ﷺ promised Paradise during their lifetime.



ʿAli ﷺ became renowned as a warrior during Islam's struggle for survival. He participated in the battles of Badr, Uhud, al-Khandaq (the Trench), Khaybar and in nearly all the Prophet's expeditions except that of Tabook, during which the Prophet ﷺ commanded him to remain in Madeenah in charge of the city and the Prophet's family, while he himself was proceeding to Tabook.

During the siege of ʿUthmaan's house, ʿAli supported him in every possible way. After ʿUthmaan's martyrdom, ʿAli modestly refused to take the power into his hands. But he accepted it later, and on Friday *Dhul-Hijjah* 25, 35 AH (656 CE), allegiance was paid to him in the Prophet's mosque in Madeenah. ʿAli was elected caliph at a time of unrest and mounting difficulties. Upon ʿUthmaan's martyrdom, the city was horror-struck. The Prophet's companions had never expected the tragic end. For several days anarchy reigned in Madeenah. No bed of roses was laid for ʿAli whether at home or abroad, rough and anxious tasks lay before him. He was pressed to punish the men who had stained their hands with the blood of ʿUthmaan. Some people were extremely agitated at the killing of the aged and pious caliph that they demanded that the new caliph punish the killers immediately. Others wanted ʿAli to act cautiously. They wanted him to address the problem of discontent first, and then proceed to punish the killers of ʿUthmaan.

ʿAli had to decide which problem to address first. He wanted to punish the killers for taking the law into their own hands and killing the caliph. But he also wanted to strengthen his own position before taking such an action that was likely to weaken the caliphate. However, before ʿAli could decide which course to follow, the situation worsened. He immediately had to face a rebellion led by Talhah ibn ʿUbaydullaah and az-Zubayr ibn al-ʿAwwaam, in which ʿAa'ishah, the Mother of the Believers, also took part. In the year 36 AH, ʿAli marched against Basrah, in the north of Iraq, where ʿAa'ishah, Talhah and az-Zubayr

refused to acknowledge him. ʿAli defeated them in what is known as the Battle of the Camel. Many of the supporters of ʿAa'ishah ﵂ were killed and she herself was captured. But in accordance with her lofty station, ʿAa'ishah was shown proper respect and was escorted to her home in Madeenah. ʿAa'ishah ﵂ later felt a great remorse for waging the war. She repented to Allah and she asked His forgiveness. In this battle, she rode in a litter on the back of a camel called ʿAskar, and so the battle between her and ʿAli came to be known as the Battle of the Camel.

In the year 36 AH, seven months after the death of ʿUthmaan ﵁, ʿAli entered Koofah. He spent the first four months in Madeenah, three months in the Campaign of the Camel and briefly in Basrah. Koofah was now going to be the seat of ʿAli's government. Then Muʿaawiyah, governor of Damascus and relative of ʿUthmaan, rose against the caliphate of ʿAli, which resulted in the Battle of Siffeen. When ʿAli was on the point of winning, he accepted the proposal of Muʿaawiyah to negotiate the conflict. This was because ʿAli ﵁ wished to avoid further bloodshed. In any case, ʿAli concluded the struggle decisively. Nevertheless, he refused to surrender his authority and established himself at Koofah in Iraq.

On Friday, *Ramadaan* 17, 40 AH/January 24, 661 CE, as ʿAli was preparing to lead the *Fajr* prayer in the mosque of Koofah, he was stabbed by ʿAbdur-Rahmaan ibn Muljam. ʿAli died three days after the attack. He was 63 years old at the time of his death and was buried in Koofah.



ʿAbdur-Rahmaan ibn ʿAwf ﵁

ʿAbdur-Rahmaan ibn ʿAwf ﵁ was one of the very early Muslims. He actually embraced Islam in the very first year of the Prophet's mission. He was one of the first eight people to embrace Islam. He was also one of the ten companions to whom the Prophet ﷺ promised Paradise in their lifetime.

After ʿAbdur-Rahmaan ﵁ accepted Islam, he faced his own share of persecution and challenges of the Quraysh. When Allah's Messenger ﷺ ordered his Companions to migrate to Ethiopia, ʿAbdur-Rahmaan ibn ʿAwf migrated but returned to Makkah. Then again he immigrated to Ethiopia, and from there to Madeenah. He participated in the Battle of Badr, Uhud as well as all the campaigns of the Prophet ﷺ.

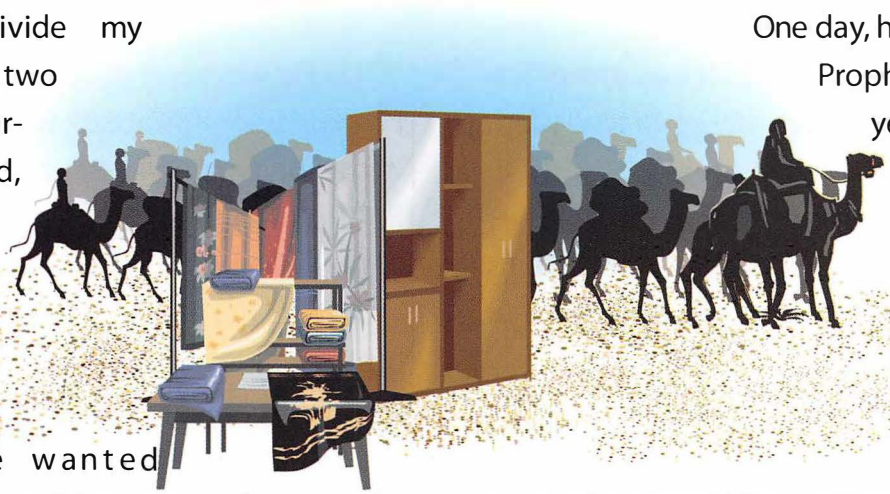
ʿAbdur-Rahmaan ﵁ led the *Fajr* prayer on the expedition to Tabook when the Prophet ﷺ was late in coming to the congregation. When the Prophet ﷺ arrived, he joined the prayer behind him. The Tabook expedition took place in *Rajab*, in the year 9 AH. From the time ʿAbdur-Rahmaan ﵁ embraced Islam until he died at the age of 75, he was a superb model of a great believer, which made ʿUmar ibn al-Khattaab ﵁ count him among the six advisers to whom he assigned for succession after him.

Most of the *Muhaajiroon* (Emigrants) who came from Makkah to Madeenah were particularly poor. This was because on their emigration, they had to leave their possessions behind. So the Prophet ﷺ suggested to the *Ansaar* (the Helpers) that they should share their

means with the poor emigrants. The *Anṣaar* responded to the call with enthusiasm. In fact, about 90 or 100 persons, one half of them from among the *Anṣaar* and one half from among the *Muhaajiroon*, established between themselves bonds of brotherhood, each *Anṣaaree* taking one *muhaajir* as a brother.

Allah's Messenger ﷺ established bonds of brotherhood between ʿAbdur-Raḥmaan ibn ʿAwf and Saʿd ibn ar-Rabeeʿ. Saʿd ibn ar-Rabeeʿ was a very devout companion. He took part in the Battle of Badr and fell in the Battle of Uḥud. After the Battle of Uḥud, the Prophet ﷺ ordered a search for Saʿd's body and he was later found dying. When a man of the *Anṣaar* asked him how he felt, he replied, 'Tell your people that if the Messenger of Allah ﷺ should die in this battle while even one of them remained alive, they will never be forgiven by Allah.'

Imaam al-Bukhaaree reports: 'On taking ʿAbdur-Raḥmaan as a brother, Saʿd told him, "Look, I am the wealthiest of the *Anṣaar*, and I will divide my possessions into two halves." ʿAbdur-Raḥmaan said, 'May Allah bless your family and your wealth. Where is the market?'"



In fact, he wanted to earn his livelihood through trade and did not wish to depend on others. The main marketplace was located in the Jewish quarter of Banu Qaynuqaaʿ. ʿAbdur Raḥmaan ؓ went there and began to trade. He was a very successful trader to his own amazement. He exclaimed, 'If I lift up a stone, I will certainly find gold and silver beneath it.' Trade for ʿAbdur-Raḥmaan, however, was not driven by greed or desire to gather riches. It was work and duty, whose success made him enjoy them. He worked hard in his trade which thrived so much that his trade caravans were arriving at Madeenah from Egypt and Syria, laden with almost everything that the country might need in food and clothes.

ʿAbdur-Raḥmaan was very generous. He spent a lot of his wealth in the cause of Allah. One day, he sold some land for 40,000 *dinars* (gold coins at that time) and distributed it all among the people of Zuhrah tribe, the Mothers of the Believers and the poor Muslims. Next day, he provided the Muslim armies with 500 horses, and on the third day with 1,500 camels. Shortly before his death, he bequeathed 5000 *dinars* in the cause of Allah and 400 *dinars* for each one who was still living of those who had participated in the Battle of Badr. Thus, ʿAbdur-Raḥmaan ؓ was the master of his riches, not its slave.

One day, he came to see the Prophet with traces of yellow perfume on him, and the Prophet ﷺ asked him, 'What is this?' ʿAbdur-Raḥmaan replied, 'I have married a woman from among the *Anṣaar*.' The Prophet ﷺ then said, 'Prepare a wedding feast, even with a single sheep!'

ʿAbdur-Raḥmaan ibn ʿAwf ؓ died in 31 AH/652 CE during the caliphate of ʿAli ؓ.

7.28. Abu ʿUbaydah ibn al-Jarraah ﷺ



Abu ʿUbaydah ʿAamir ibn ʿAbdullaah ibn al-Jarraah al-Qurashee embraced Islam at an early period of the Islamic mission. He immigrated to Ethiopia and participated in the Battle of Badr. He was one of the ten Companions to whom the Prophet ﷺ promised Paradise during their lifetime.

Allah's Messenger ﷺ once said of him, 'Every nation (*ummah*) has a trustworthy man, and our trustworthy man is Abu ʿUbaydah ibn al-Jarraah.' This occurred on the occasion of the deputation from Najraan in 9 AH who asked the Prophet ﷺ to send with them a trustworthy man to be the governor of their country in his name.

Abu ʿUbaydah ﷺ distinguished himself by his bravery and selflessness on account of which the Prophet ﷺ named him *al-ameen* (the trustworthy). He hastened to the Prophet's help in the Battle of Uhud, accompanied him in all his expeditions and commanded the troops on several occasions.

He played a significant role in the election of Abu Bakr, the first caliph. Abu Bakr ﷺ sent him as the head of a number of campaigns to Syria. When ʿUmar became caliph, he gave Abu ʿUbaydah the supreme command over the Syrian army and conquered Damascus, Emesa, Aleppo, Antioch, among other places. Later he became the governor of Syria.

Abu ʿUbaydah ﷺ died of plague in the year 18 AH at Amwaas, at the age of fifty-eight. ʿUmar ibn al-Khattaab ﷺ said on his deathbed, 'Had Abu ʿUbaydah ibn al-Jarraah been alive, I would have entrusted him with the caliphate; and if Allah asked me about it, I would say, "I assigned the caliphate to someone who is known to be trustworthy by Allah and His Messenger."'

7.29. Talhah ibn ʿUbaydullaah ﷺ

Talhah ibn ʿUbaydullaah al-Qurashee at-Taymee ﷺ embraced Islam at about the same time as Abu Bakr ﷺ.

Ten days before the Battle of Badr, he was sent by the Prophet ﷺ together with Saʿeed ibn Zayd on a secret mission to the borders of Syria, and returned too late to take part in the Battle of Badr. During the Battle of Uhud, he saved the Prophet's life at the expense of losing the use of the fingers of one of his hands for the rest of his life. He intercepted an arrow aimed at the Prophet ﷺ with his bare hand, which was shattered and subsequently dried up. Then he bore the Prophet ﷺ, who himself was wounded, on his shoulders out of the thick of the battle and up the hill. Abu Bakr ﷺ later saw that Talhah had received on that day about seventy wounds. The Prophet ﷺ said about him that day, 'Whoever

wishes to see a martyr walking the face of the earth, let him look at Talhah ibn ʿUbaydullaah.'

Talhah ﷺ subsequently took part in all the campaigns led by the Prophet ﷺ. He was one of the ten Companions to whom the Prophet ﷺ promised Paradise in their lifetime.

In all the various events and expeditions led by the Prophet ﷺ, Talhah ﷺ was always to be found in the forefront, fighting in the cause of Allah. He was one of the wealthiest Muslims, and he placed his whole fortune in the service of Islam. He spent it liberally, and so Allah increased it for him even more. How often did he give his whole fortune away! He distributed his wealth often among the poor and the needy until there was not a single *dirham* left. Allah the Ever-generous would always return it to him manifold.



Talhah ﷺ was very kind towards his relatives and he supported them all though they were many. He never left an orphan without supporting him. He provided for the marriage of the unmarried people and paid the debt of those who were in debt. During the Battle of the Camel, his own commander Marwaan ibn al-Hakam ordered his death and he was shot with an arrow. He was taken aside and died later of his wound

ʿUmar ibn al-Khattaab ﷺ once said about of him, 'The Prophet ﷺ remained pleased with him until his death.'



Az-Zubayr ibn al-ʿAwwaam ﷺ

Az-Zubayr ibn al-ʿAwwaam ibn Khuwaylid's mother was Safiyyah bint ʿAbdul-Muttalib, and so he was the cousin of the Prophet ﷺ and a nephew of Khadeejah ﷺ the daughter of Khuwaylid. He embraced Islam at the age of fifteen or sixteen, shortly after Abu Bakr and was the fifth convert to Islam. He took part in both migrations, first to Ethiopia and then to Madeenah and participated in all the expeditions of the Prophet ﷺ.



Az-Zubayr ﷺ was one of those Companions to whom the Prophet ﷺ promised Paradise during their lifetime. Once Allah's Messenger ﷺ said, 'Indeed, every prophet has helpers (*hawaariyyon*), and az-Zubayr ibn al-ʿAwwaam is a helper of mine.' (Reported by al-Bukhaaree) The word *hawaariyyoon* (singular: *hawaaree*) is used in the Qur'an to denote the disciples, or companions, of Prophet ʿEesaa (Jesus) عليه السلام. More generally, it means 'one who advises, counsels or acts sincerely, honestly or faithfully, a friend, or true or sincere friend, or an assistant of the prophets. The original meaning of this word is probably 'one who whitens clothes by washing and beating them'. But this the word is used in its general sense, for az-Zubayr as 'helper of the Prophet ﷺ'.

Az-Zubayr ﷺ was one of the six men recommended by ʿUmar as his successors in the caliphate. Az-Zubayr was married to Asmaa', the daughter of Abu Bakr as-Siddeeq ﷺ. Allah's Messenger ﷺ established the bond of brotherhood (*mu'aakhaat*) between az-Zubayr and ʿAbdullaah ibn Masʿood. It is related that az-Zubayr was neither tall nor short. He was light-bearded, dark-toned and hairy.

In his lifetime, az-Zubayr was the wealthiest of all the Prophet's Companions. The inheritance left by az-Zubayr amounted to 40 million *dirhams*. He was extremely generous and spent his wealth in the cause of Allah. Az-Zubayr ﷺ was given permission to wear silk clothes because of some illness. Islam forbids garments made wholly of silk to men.

During the caliphate of ʿAli, az-Zubayr joined Talhah and ʿAa'ishah in the Battle of the Camel against ʿAli. Subsequently he left ʿAa'ishah camp. It was ʿAli himself who met him on the day of the Battle of the Camel, *Jumaadaa al-Aakhirah* 10, 36 AH/ December 4, 656 CE, and asked him to desist from fighting. According to the historian at-Tabaree, after the battle had taken place, az-Zubayr rode his horse, named Dhul Khimaar, and left for Madeenah. He was killed on the way in Waadee as-Sibaaʿ and was buried there. He was sixty-four years old then.

Allah's Messenger ﷺ held az-Zubayr in high esteem. The Prophet ﷺ once sent him to the quarters of Banu Quraydhah to bring him information about them. When he returned, the Prophet ﷺ made use of the expression *'Fidaaka abee wa ummee'*, meaning I would sacrifice my father and my mother for you!



Saʿd ibn Abee Waqqaas ﷺ

Saʿd ibn Abee Waqqaas ﷺ embraced Islam at a very early period, on the same day as Abu Bakr ﷺ, when he was then nineteen years old. He was one of the most intimate companions of the Prophet ﷺ and took part in almost all the Prophet's campaigns. He was one of the ten Companions to whom the Prophet ﷺ promised Paradise during their lifetime.

Saʿd ﷺ was sent by ʿUmar ﷺ in 14 AH to Iraq as commander-in-chief. He conquered that country and founded the town of Koofah in 17 AH. Subsequently



he was the governor of that town and of the whole of Iraq, until he called him back to Madeenah in the year 21 AH.

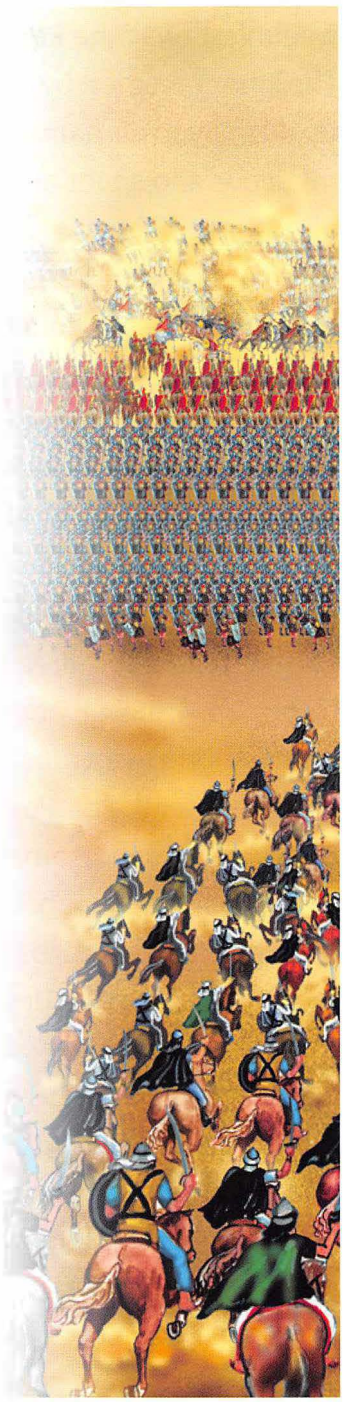
Saʿd ﷺ had many noble qualities which he could be proud of. He was the first of the Arabs who shot an arrow in the path of Allah. This refers to the first military expedition ever sent by the Prophet ﷺ in the year 1 AH. Its commander was ʿUbaydah ibn al-Haarith ibn al-Muttalib and Saʿd was the standard-bearer. It was the first time the Prophet ﷺ employed a standard of his own. The object of the expedition was to intercept a caravan of the Quraysh, on the west coast of Hijaz, but it ended with no more than an exchange of arrow shots.

Saʿd ﷺ was one of the oldest Companions of the Prophet ﷺ. Al-Bukhaaree reports that he once said,

'Often we went forth with the Prophet ﷺ to fight and had no food except tree leaves.' Thus, Sa'd ibn Abee Waqqaas ﷺ suffered much for the sake of Islam. He was considered to be one of the most courageous Arab and Muslim horsemen. He possessed two weapons: his spear and his supplication. In fact, his supplications were always answered.

Sa'd was one of the electors of the third caliph 'Uthmaan. His devotion to the cause of Muslim unity was so great that throughout the civil wars, which followed 'Uthmaan's death he remained secluded in his house and requested his family not to inform him of anything that happened until the whole community would agree upon one leader. He died in his home in al-'Aqeeq, near Madeenah, in the year 55 AH. He was over eighty when he died and left vast wealth behind him and was buried in Madeenah.

7.32. Sa'eed ibn Zayd رضي الله عنه



Sa'eed ibn Zayd ﷺ was an early convert to Islam. He was hardly twenty years old then. Sa'eed's father, Zayd ibn 'Amr ibn Nufayl, had abandoned the religion of his people, the Quraysh. Zayd died while the Quraysh were building the Ka'bah, five years before the Prophet ﷺ began to receive revelations.

Sa'eed ﷺ was the husband of Faatimah bint al-Khattaab, sister of 'Umar, the second caliph. It was inside the house of Sa'eed and Faatimah that 'Umar converted to Islam. Sa'eed ibn Zayd ﷺ was a devout Muslim. He participated with the Prophet ﷺ in the Battle of Uhud, the Battle of the Trench, and all the other expeditions except for the Battle of Badr. This was because he was sent beforehand by the Messenger of Allah ﷺ with Talhah ibn 'Ubaydullah to find out the whereabouts of the Makkan trading caravan. However, Allah's Messenger ﷺ gave him a share of the spoils of Badr and told him that he had all the reward of fighting in the way of Allah there.

After the death of the Prophet ﷺ, Sa'eed ﷺ continued to serve Islam under each caliph. He participated in taking over Caesar's throne and diminishing his kingdom. He exhibited rare and extraordinary heroism in each battle. Sa'eed ibn Zayd ﷺ participated in the conquest of Damascus and was a commander of the armies that captured Palestine and Syria.

Sa'eed ibn Zayd ﷺ died in al-'Aqeeq, a valley west of Madeenah, and people carried him to Madeenah, where he was buried. Several eminent Qurayshites built castles there. He was seventy-odd years old when he died in the year 50 or 51 AH/671 or 672 CE. He was one of the ten Companions to whom the Prophet ﷺ promised Paradise during their lifetime.

7.33. The Prophet's Scribes

The Prophet ﷺ did not know how to read or write. Upon the arrival of *wahy* (revelation), he routinely called for one of his scribes to write down the latest verses. Zayd ibn Thaabit ﷺ narrated that, because of his nearness to the Prophet's Mosque, he was often summoned as scribe whenever the *wahy* descended.

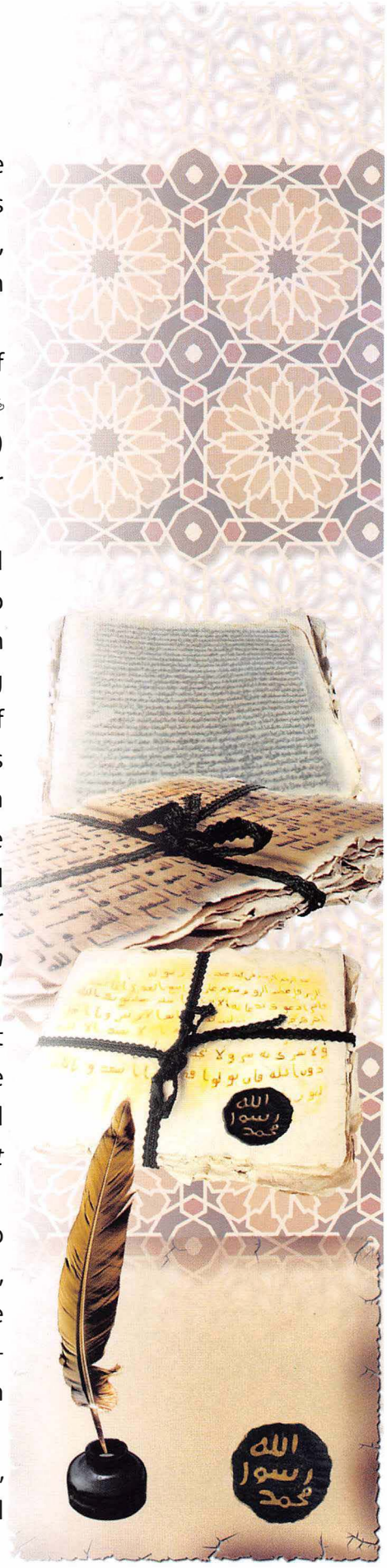
When the verse pertaining to *jihaad* (striving in the way of Allah) was revealed, the Prophet ﷺ called on Zayd ibn Thaabit ﷺ with an inkpot and writing material (the shoulder blade of a camel) and began dictating. There is also evidence of proofreading after dictation.

Once the task of recording of verses was complete, Zayd ﷺ would read them out to the Prophet ﷺ to make sure that no writing error had crept in. Though revealed verbally, the Qur'an consistently refers to itself as *al-Kitaab* (the Book), as something written. In fact, verses were recorded from the earliest stages of Islam, even as the young community suffered countless hardships under the wrath of the Quraysh. Thus verses revealed in Makkah were recorded in Makkah. Muslim scholars have recorded the names of approximately sixty-five Companions who worked as scribes for the Prophet ﷺ at one time or another. For further details, see M. M. al-A'zami, *The History of the Qur'anic Text – From Revelation to Compilation*.

The Arabic word for scribe is *kaatib*, which comes from the root *k - t- b*, meaning 'to gather, to put letters together, to record'. The word *kaatib* denotes one who writes, one who records. The word *kaatib* occurs four times in the Qur'an: once in verse 283 in *Soorat al-Baqarah* and three times in verse 282 in the same *soorah*).

The Prophet's scribes included Abaan ibn Sa'eed, Abu Ayyoob al-Ansaaree, Abu Bakr as-Siddeeq, Abu Hudhayfah, Abu Sufyaan, Abu Salamah, Ubayy ibn Ka'b, Thaabit ibn Qays, Ja'far ibn Abee Talib, az-Zubayr ibn al-'Awwaam, Zayd ibn Thaabit, 'Umar ibn al-Khattaab, 'Uthmaan ibn 'Affaan, 'Ali ibn Abee Taalib and Mu'adh ibn Jabal.

The scribes set down the judgements the Prophet ﷺ gave, wrote letters for him, drew up treaties between him and tribal chiefs and looked after the administrative affairs.



Review

- What does the term *ṣaḥaabee* mean?
- Write short notes on the following companions of the Prophet ﷺ. Mention a few things that were special about them that set them apart from the rest.

  1. Abu Bakr aṣ-Ṣiddeeq ؓ
  2. ʿUmar ibn al-Khaṭṭaab ؓ
  3. ʿUthmaan ibn ʿAffaan ؓ
  4. ʿAli ibn Abee Ṭaalib ؓ
  5. ʿAbdur-Raḥmaan ibn ʿAwf ؓ
  6. Abu ʿUbaydah ibn al-Jarraaḥ ؓ
  7. Ṭalḥah ibn ʿUbaydullaah ؓ
  8. Saʿd ibn Abee Waqqaaṣ ؓ
  9. Saʿeed ibn Zayd ؓ

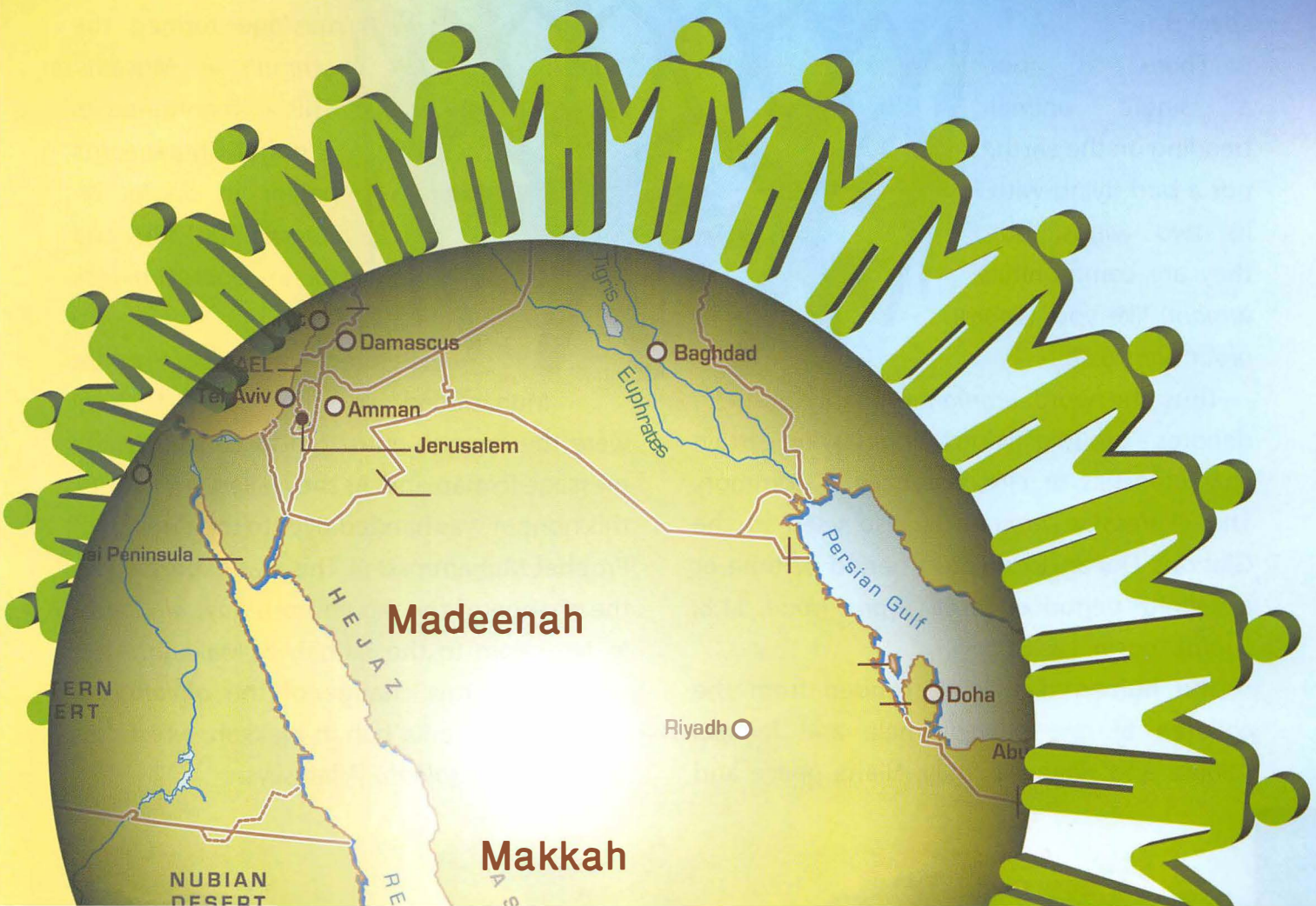
- What does 'Prophet's Scribe' mean? Name a few.

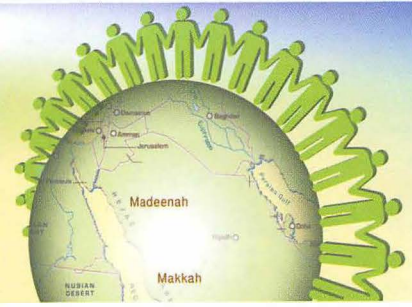
For Further Study and Research

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8 Muslims in Relation to Others

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Muslims in Relation to Others

8

8.1.

The Significance of the Muslim *Ummah*

Ummah is the Qur'anic word for people, community, nation or generation. Its plural form is *umam*. The term *ummah* is used for a group of people who are related by a common creed or geographical or natural similarity. The expression is not limited to human beings, but is used in relation to other species:

'There is not a single animal treading on the earth, nor a bird flying with its two wings, but they are communities (*umam*) like you.' (*Soorat al-Anʿaam*, 6:38)



Thus the word *ummah* primarily denotes a group of living beings having certain characteristics or circumstances in common. The expression *ummah* is also used in the Glorious Qur'an to mean a period of time or a definite period or term (*Soorat Hood*, 11:8; *Soorat Yoosuf*, 12:45)

The human race is descended from the children of one pair of male and female: Aadam and Hawwaa' (may Allah's peace and blessings be upon them). Therefore, the Qur'an declares: 'Mankind was one single *ummah* (community)'. (*Soorat al-Baqarah*, 2:213) Later as the population grew, people were divided 'into nations and tribes, so that you may know each other. Indeed, the noblest of you in the sight of Allah is the most righteous of you.' (*Soorat al-Hujuraat*, 49:13) This was Allah's plan. In His Wisdom, He divided people into different races, languages and different physical features to test them in what He has given them. For Allah's message to reach all nations, Allah sent to each *ummah* a messenger or warner to guide them to the right path. All the messengers brought the same message from Allah, and all those who accepted this message formed the *ummah* as Muslims. This is mentioned in Prophet Ibraaheem's prayer in *Soorat al-Baqarah* (2:128) and also in *Soorat al-Hajj* (22:78).

Before the advent of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, the Banu Israa'eel were the *ummah* entrusted to convey Allah's message to mankind. As they failed in this duty, this honour was handed over to the *ummah* of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ. This was expressed by the change of the *qiblah* from *Bayt al-Maqdis* in Jerusalem to the Kaʿbah in Makkah. After mentioning this change of the *qiblah* (the direction of the Kaʿbah in Makkah, which has to be faced in *salaah*), Allah says:

'And thus We have made you to be a nation of the middle way that you will be witnesses over mankind and the Messenger a witness over you.' (*Soorat al-Baqarah*, 2:143).

The phrase '*ummatan wasatan*' middlemost community or justly balanced indicates the essence of Islam as a median community, avoiding all extremes and remaining moderate and dignified, and leading all mankind to the middle path of justice and peace.

The Importance of the Muslim Community

The status of Islam in the beginning was that of a state within a state in Makkah. Muslims lived in the city state of Makkah. They obeyed their own leader, the Prophet of Allah ﷺ, and turned to him for guidance. After their emigration to Madeenah, they founded a state and framed a constitution for it.

On reaching Madeenah, the Prophet ﷺ found that it was inhabited by many tribes, which had been fighting with each other for decades. Al-Aws and al-Khazraj were the two leading tribes which belonged to Madeenah. They had pledged to obey and defend the Prophet ﷺ in times of ease and adversity, even against their own self interest. But Madeenah also contained the Jews and a sprinkling of Christians. There was no central authority, no organized system and no government. Having secured the support and allegiance of al-Aws and al-Khazraj, the Prophet ﷺ was, in reality, the leader of the commonwealth of Madeenah. He commanded to the people of Madeenah that they should organize themselves for the purpose of defence and justice and choose their leader. The proposal was accepted by the local population and tribes.



The Prophet ﷺ drew up a document which detailed the relations between the *Muhaajiroon* (Emigrant Muslims from Makkah), the *Ansaar* (the Helpers, the Madinan Muslims), the Jews of Madeenah and a sprinkling of Christians. The articles of this document are known in Arabic as *Saheefat al-Madeenah*, which literally means the Document of Madeenah and is commonly translated into English as 'the Constitution of Madeenah'. The document has been preserved in an early biography of the Prophet ﷺ composed by Ibn Is-haaq (d. 150 AH/767 CE), which was made available to us by his student Ibn Hishaam (d. 218 AH/833 CE). The document was dictated by the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, gathering the Emigrants, the Helpers and the Jews into a single, unified *ummah*, with the Prophet ﷺ as its leader and governor. These three parties were called the people of the *Saheefah*, signifying the fact that they were its principal signatories. (For details concerning the *Saheefah*, turn to Dr. Zakaria Bashier's *Sunshine at Madeenah*, pp. 99-120)

The historical significance of the Constitution is considerable because it gives a very clear idea of the nature of the organized society and of interfaith relations thought of this early period. Allah's Messenger ﷺ guaranteed for the Jews their religion and their property and gave them specific rights and duties.

The Qur'an and the *hadeeth* are the sources of guidance for all Muslims on how to conduct their life and behave towards each other. The Glorious Qur'an says,

'O you who believe! Stand out firmly for Allah and be just witnesses and let not the enmity and hatred of others make you avoid justice. Be just. That is nearer to piety, and fear Allah. Verily, Allah is well-acquainted with what you do.' (*Soorat al-Maa'idah*, 5:8)

Muslims and Interpersonal Relations

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said,

'The whole of a Muslim for another Muslim is inviolable: his blood, his property and his honour.' (Reported by Muslim)

'Each of you is a shepherd and each of you is responsible for his flock. The leader is a shepherd and is responsible for his flock; a man is the shepherd of his family and is responsible for his flock; a woman is the shepherd in the house of her husband and is responsible for her flock; a servant is the shepherd of his master's wealth and is responsible for it. Each of you is a shepherd and is responsible for his flock.' (Reported by al-Bukhaaree and Muslim on the authority of ʿAbdullaah ibn ʿUmar رضي الله عنهما)

'The believers are to one another like parts of a building – each part strengthening the others.' (Reported by al-Bukhaaree and Muslim on the authority of Abu Moosaa al-Ashʿree رضي الله عنه)

'You will not enter Paradise until you have faith, and you cannot attain to faith until you love each other.' (Reported by Muslim on the authority of Abu Hurayrah رضي الله عنه)

'Allah will show no mercy to those who have no mercy towards people.' (Reported by al-Bukhaaree and Muslim on the authority of Jareer ibn ʿAbdullaah رضي الله عنه)

'He is not a believer who eats his fill while his neighbour by his side remains hungry.' (Reported by al-Bayhaqee on the authority of ʿAbdullaah ibn ʿAbbaas رضي الله عنهما)

It is very important to realize that the Prophet ﷺ has made no distinction between Muslims and non-Muslims in matters of human and moral obligations relating to matters of life, honour, property and human rights. As ʿAli ibn Abee Taalib رضي الله عنه beautifully put it,

'If you are dealing with a Muslim, you are dealing with a brother in faith; if you are dealing with a non-Muslim, you are dealing with a brother in humanity.'



Review

- Describe the term *ummah*. Why is the Muslim *ummah* known as '*ummatan wasaṭan*'?
- Explain in your own words the Qur'anic verse: 'Mankind was one single *ummah* (community).' (*Soorat al-Baqarah*, 2:213)
- What is the significance of the *ummah* of the Constitution that was drawn up by the Prophet ﷺ?
- What does Islam say about the relationship we share with non-Muslims?



8.2. The Teachings of Islam concerning Personal Modesty

Islam lays some general principles regarding dress and personal modesty. The first condition is that it should be lawful or *ḥalaal*, which carries the double significance of being earned lawfully and not prohibited by Islam.

Definition of the Word *'Awrah*

The Arabic word *'awrah* (pl. *'awraat*) denotes parts of the body which should be hidden from the eyes (lit. nakedness) (*Soorat an-Noor*, 24:31). It has been agreed on the basis of the teachings of the Qur'an and the *Sunnah* that the *'awrah* for a woman is defined as the whole body except for the face and the hands. For a man, the *'awrah* is defined as the area between the navel and the knees. Thus, the basic requirements or criteria are:



a. A man should fully cover his *'awrah*.

b. Men's clothes should be loose enough so as not to describe what they are covering (*'awrah*).

c. They should be thick enough so as not to describe the colour or the skin or the parts required to be covered.

d. They should not be designed in a way to attract attention. The basic rule of modesty and avoiding showing off applies to all believing men and women.

e. They should not be similar to what could be identified as the dress of the disbelievers.

f. They should not be clothes of fame, pride and vanity.

g. Men are not permitted to wear silk and gold. This does not apply to women.

Dress Code for Women



The first requirement is the extent of covering the *'awrah*. The dress should be large enough to cover a woman's whole body (*Soorat an-Noor*, 24:31)

Khimaar (head cover): This is the cloth which must cover all of the hair of the head, the neck and the bosom.

A Muslim woman should not display her beauty and adornment except for that which must ordinarily appear of it, or that which is apparent.

The part of the adornment (*zeenah*) exempted from the above injunction is 'the face and the hands'. Once the Prophet ﷺ said, 'If a woman reaches the age of puberty, no part of her body should be seen but this – and he pointed to his face and hands.' (Reported by Abu Daawood)

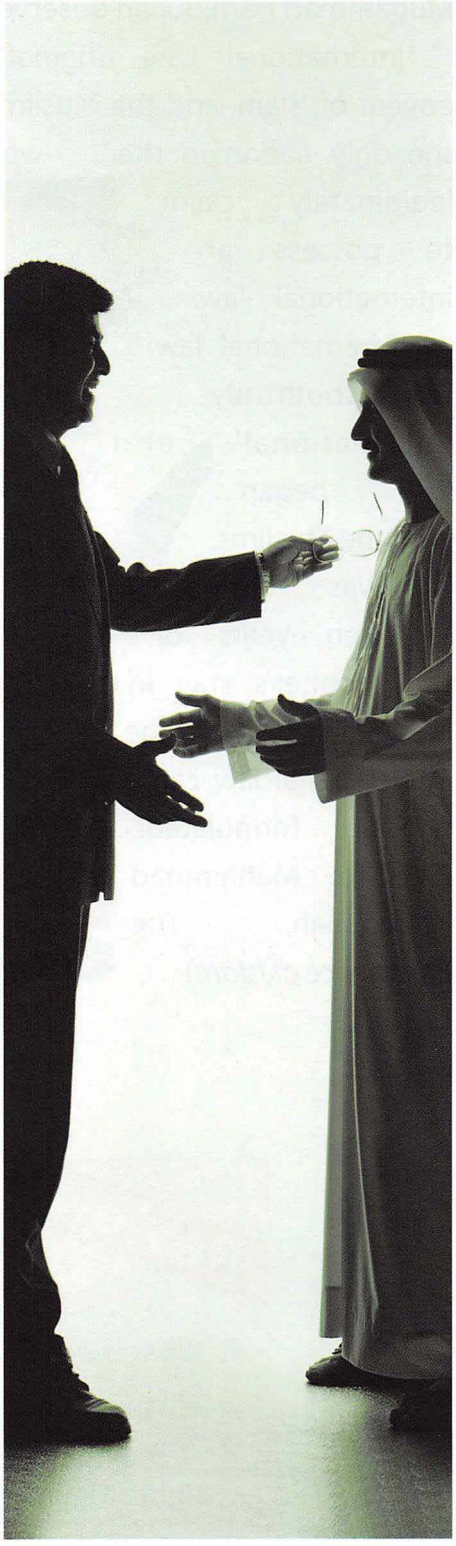
Whatever appears of the woman's body owing to the uncontrollable factors, such as the blowing of the wind, or out of necessity, such as bracelets or even the outer clothes themselves falls under 'that which is apparent' (*Soorat an-Noor*, 24:31). For a detailed discussion concerning a Muslim woman's garments, see *Islamic Dress Code for Women*, published by Darussalam.

Review

- Define the term *'awrah*. What is the *'awrah* for men and women?
- What are the criteria of the dress code for Muslims in general?

8.3. Respect for Others: *Adab*

The Arabic word *adab* means discipline of the mind or every praiseworthy discipline by which a person is trained in any excellence. Good morals and good manners are the real test of a person's excellence. Goodness to one's parents occupies a very high place in the moral code of Islam, the mother coming first, so much so that Paradise is said to be beneath the mother's feet. Kindness and love for children is inculcated, and suffering on account of them is called a screen from Hellfire. Being kind towards one's relatives is a source of blessings in this life and the next. Wives have their rights over their husbands, and they must be kept in good companionship. The Prophet ﷺ once remarked that the best of men are those who are kindest to their wives, and it is recommended that they should help them in her work.



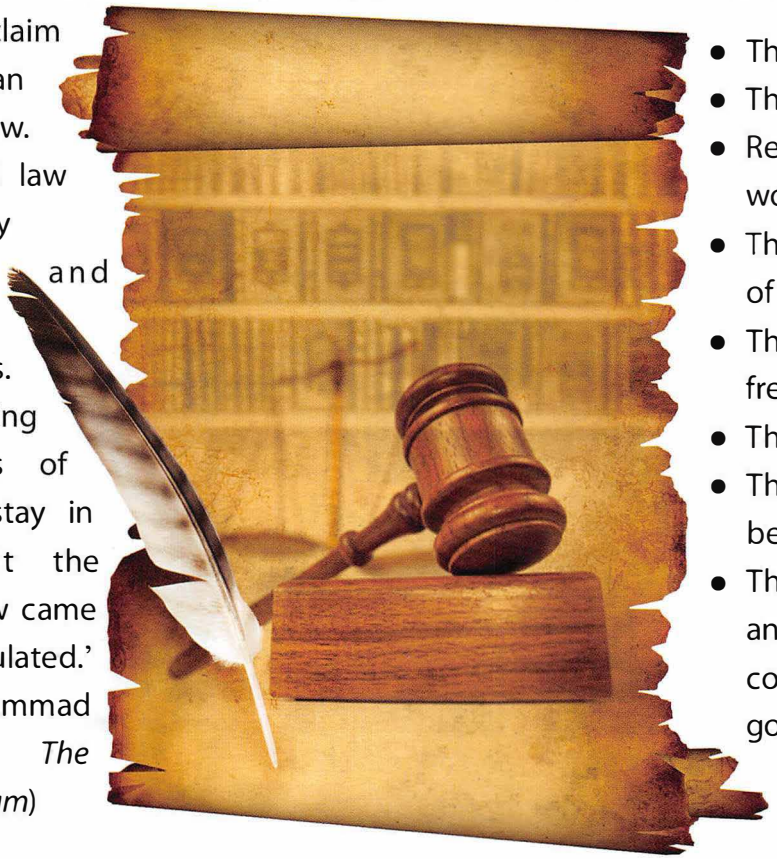
Muslims are brothers – members of one body and parts of one structure – and thus must help one another and honour being inviolable. They are forbidden to hate and boycott each other. A neighbour, whether or not a Muslim, must be treated kindly. One must be kind and generous to one's servants or employees who must in all other matters be treated on a basis of equality. Looking after widows and orphans is an act of high merit. Even an enemy must be treated generously. Indeed, Allah shows mercy to those who show mercy towards his creatures, even to dumb animals.

A Muslim must cultivate the habit of being truthful, for truth is the basis from which virtue springs, while falsehood leads to vice. Islam emphasises the fact that Muslims must be fair and forgiving in their dealings with other people and must avoid everything which hurts them. The Prophet ﷺ made no distinction between Muslims and non-Muslims in matters of human and moral obligations relating to matters of life, honour, property or human rights.

8.4. A Word about International Law

International law operates between independent and sovereign states. Dr. Muhammad Hamidullah observes:

'International Law originated with the advent of Islam, and the Muslims are perhaps the only nation in the world, which can legitimately claim to possess an international law. An international law which is both truly 'international' and 'law' began with the Muslims. It was during the ten years of the Prophet's stay in Madeenah that the international law came to be formulated.' (See Dr. Muhammad Hamidullah, *The Emergence of Islam*)



8.5. Islam and Human Rights

Islam attaches high importance to the preservation of human rights and the fundamental freedom of the individual in society. When we speak of human rights in Islam, we mean those rights granted by Allah.

The basic human rights are:

- The right to life
- The right to the safety of life
- Respect for the chastity of women
- The right to a basic standard of life
- The individual right to freedom
- The right to justice
- The equality of human beings
- The right to cooperate and not to cooperate. This concerns the practice of good and evil
- Protection of honour
- Freedom of conscience and belief
- Protection of religious sentiments

Review

- What is *adab*? Mention briefly a few traits that a believer must have.
- Why are the human rights granted by Allah superior to any rights that man can chart out?

8.6. Women and their Rights in Islam



Islam confers on women numerous rights: to be educated, to inherit and to divorce, among other things. In fact, Islam released women from slavery, honoured and protected them and improved their position in many ways.

The Qur'an gives protection to women. It forbids the Bedouin custom of killing infant girls. It grants women rights which women in the West gained only thirteen centuries later. The most important of these was the married woman's right to dispose of her property including, of course, the bridal gift (*mahr*) paid over to her by her husband at the time of the wedding. In fact, the Qur'an granted women a share in family inheritance in the seventh century. European women had to wait until the nineteenth century before they gained legal rights over their own property. It is only just over a hundred years since the British parliament passed the Married Women's Property Act, which for the first time gave wives a degree of independence from their husbands.

In Islam, a widow or a divorced woman could marry again. It is quite possible for an unhappy wife to get a divorce from her husband. Such dissolution of marriage at the wife's instance is called *khul'*.

Islam holds women in high esteem. The Qur'an regards men and women as equal in personal and basic values, but they have different functions that are complementary. A woman is the masterpiece of Allah's creation. She is that creation into whose delicate hands is the future of the world entrusted. Once a woman asked the Prophet ﷺ, 'Men go to war and have a great reward for it. So what do women have?' He ﷺ said, 'When a woman is pregnant, she has the reward of someone who spends the whole night praying and the whole day fasting; when labour pains strike her, no one knows how mush reward Allah gives her. For having to go through this, and when she delivers her child, then for every suck it draws from her, she receives reward for keeping a soul alive.' He ﷺ also said that if a woman dies in childbirth, she is counted as a martyr; and the reward for martyrdom is Paradise.

The real foundation of women's dignity is the same as that of men. Both are equally liable to fall into wicked ways and both are equally capable of following the right path. Both are equal in worth but different in certain qualities in their roles. The path of progress is open to both alike. The reward for achieving this is the same for both. In some things, men excel women, while in others women excel men. Women in Islam have the right to demand a say in the house and in public life, to conduct business and to have access to information, knowledge and education.

Whatever may be said by certain misguided Muslims, education is not simply a right, but an obligation for women just as it is for men. To seek knowledge throughout his or her life is a duty incumbent upon every Muslim, regardless of gender.

There is, however, one thing that Islam dislikes: the distortion of human nature. Fairness and justice is that round pegs should be fitted into round holes and square ones into square holes. The alternative is uncomfortable and troublesome for all concerned. It is unfortunate, however, that sometimes practice and principles conflict in the Muslim world concerning the position of women. This is a serious matter for those who neglect their obligations. As the Prophet ﷺ stated,

'The believers who show the most perfect faith are those who have the best character, and the best of you are those who are best to their wives.' (Reported by at-Tirmidhee)

It follows that the 'worst' Muslim is one who treats his wife badly. Among several other reasons, there is essentially one reason for the abuse of women: misunderstanding or indifference regarding the teachings of the Qur'an and the *Sunnah* of the Prophet ﷺ. Women in the Prophet's household, that is, the Mothers of the Believers, provide ideal models for Muslim women as well as for men. They were caring, committed and were involved in life around them. Above all, they had immense dignity. Even the closest among the Prophet's companions were often surprised by the freedom which the Prophet ﷺ allowed his wives and by the respect he showed for their wishes.

But then what about equality? This term has become a slogan ever since the French Revolution. It has become, as it were, associated or linked with sameness. Or one could ask: Are a tiger and a lion equal? The question has no meaning. It is illogical and absurd to debate it. In fact, a woman is not the same as a man; she is different. Islam has given men and women different roles in life. Science also testifies that there are several physical differences between men and women. A woman is biologically different from a man because the two sexes have different roles to play in society.

Women's place has traditionally been the home. The responsibility for the maintenance of the family in a Muslim society is the man's. It is his duty. The wife herself is responsible for the care of her home. It is her responsibility to make the life of her family sweet and joyful. Thus the question of equality and inequality of man and woman raised in this regard is irrelevant. Every human being is unique. Arguments as to whether men and women are equal in Islam lead nowhere. Men are superior in one context, women in another. Perhaps one ought to conclude simply that both are superior. The Glorious Qur'an says,

'In a fair manner, women have the same rights against their men, as men have against them; but men have a degree above them.' (*Soorat al-Baqarah*, 2:228)

The sky from which life-giving rains fall has a degree above the earth, but they complement each other. In this life, a man, as distinguished from a woman, has a three-fold function. He leads the prayers, he fights when it is necessary to defend the home and he toils to earn his family's bread. The third of these three functions, however, is changeable.

Allah's Messenger's first wife and primary support in the early years of his mission was a successful and wealthy tradeswoman. But the first two functions are not changeable and the man who fails to fulfil them has no 'degree' at all.

The Prophet ﷺ once observed that Paradise lies under the feet of mothers. Hence, motherhood enjoys immense respect in Islam. He also mentioned once that the whole world is to be enjoyed, but the best thing in the world is a righteous woman. In Muslim society, women are respected and are provided special protection. Generally, women emerge as powerful mothers who control the lives of the members of the family with skill and confidence. As husbands grow older and more involved with matters outside the home, wives' authority increases.

It is worth mentioning here, however, that Islam must not to be judged by the bad practices of some Muslims. It is true that many Muslim women feel oppressed by their husbands and in many Muslim societies in general. Because many such women, who are ignorant of the beautiful Islamic teachings regarding women, seem to hate Islam and attribute the oppression to which they subjected to Islam.

Review

- In Islam, women are liberated, not subjugated. Discuss.
- Men and women are equal but not identical. Explain in the light of the duties given to men and women in Islam.
- Why is motherhood given a superior status in Islam?

8.7. Relations with *Ahl al-Kitaab* or the People of the Book

Ahl al-Kitaab (the People of the Book) is a Qur'anic expression. *Ahl al-Kitaab* are mainly the Jews and the Christians on account of their possessing and believing in Divine Books of revelation, namely the Torah (*at-Tawraah*), the Gospel (*al-Injeel*) and the Psalms (*az-Zaboor*). These provide the basis for the identification of the People of the Book (*ahl al-Kitaab*), meaning those with revealed religions. While it is true that they transmit their books in a falsified form, the acceptance of which as revealed Books gives them a privileged station above followers of other religions.

Islam has always stressed that *Ahl al-Kitaab* must not be disturbed in their public worship and must be treated humanely. It is worthy of mention that after the death of the Prophet ﷺ, who had himself expelled the Jews from Madeenah on account of their breach of pacts, permanent stay in Arabia itself was forbidden to them. The Qur'an criticizes both the Jews and Christians for their misdeeds but also invites them to reach a common meeting ground to discuss the issues of mutual interest. (*Soorat Aal-ʿImraan*, 3:64) It also instructs Muslims to engage with them in good argument about the faith. (*Soorat al-ʿAnkaboot*, 29:46)

Muslim men are allowed to marry Jewish and Christian women, and it is permissible for Muslims to eat their food as well (*Soorat al-Maa'idah*, 5:5). Tolerance to such a degree is characteristic of Islam, and it is hardly impossible to find such a characteristic among other faiths and communities. Despite the fact that Islam takes the People of the Book to task for their unbelief and misdeeds, it permits a Muslim man to marry a Christian or Jewish woman who may retain her own faith even though she becomes the head of his house, the mother of his children, the source of his comfort and his mate for life.

A warning, however, is in order here. In order of preference, a believing, practising Muslim woman who loves her religion is preferable to a nominal Muslim woman who has inherited Islam from her parents. It is obvious that a Muslim woman, regardless of who she is, is better suited to a Muslim man than a woman of Christian or Jewish faith, regardless of her merits.

Here a question may be asked: why is it that Islam allows Muslim men to marry Christian



or Jewish women but does not allow Muslim women to marry Jewish or Christian men? It is important to realize that Muslims do not believe that Jesus (Prophet ʿEesaa ﷺ) was the son of God, but they do consider him, as they consider Moosaa and Ibraaheem and all the other prophets, a true prophet of Allah, all of them having been sent to their own people in the same way as the Last Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ was sent to all mankind. So if a Jewish or Christian woman marries a Muslim, she may rest assured that none of the persons who are holy to her will ever be spoken of disrespectfully among her new family.

While on the other hand, should a Muslim woman marry a non-Muslim man, it is certain that he whom she regards as Allah's Messenger will be abused and perhaps even by her own children: for, don't children usually follow their father's faith? It would not be fair, therefore, to expose her to such pain and humiliation. This touches the kernel of a very important problem. While Islam guarantees freedom of belief and practice to a Muslim man's Christian or Jewish wife, safeguarding her rights according to her own faith, other religions, such as Judaism and Christianity, do not guarantee the wife of a different faith freedom of belief and practice. It is, however, important to note that while there is an express permission to marry women who profess a revealed religion (*Ahl al-Kitaab*), there is a clear prohibition to marry idolaters or idolatresses. (*Soorat al-Baqarah*, 2:221)

Concerning the slaughtered food of the Scriptuaries, or *Ahl al-Kitaab*, the Glorious Qur'an declares:

'This day, also made lawful for you are all wholesome things. Thus, the food of those who have been given the scripture is lawful for you, and your food is lawful for them.' (*Soorat al-Maa'idah*, 5:5)

It is important to note that the implication of the verse 'also made lawful for you are all wholesome things' is that what has been forbidden does not belong to the category of the wholesome or the good things of life (*aṭ-ṭayyibaat*). Hence, the permission to partake of the food of the followers of other revealed religions excludes, of course, the forbidden categories of meat mentioned in verse 3 of *Soorat al-Maa'idah*. It is interesting to note that the verse 'and your food is lawful for them' contains the kernel of this problem. What is meant here is what is lawful to you, O Muslims, is also lawful to the People of the Book, and not all that they have made lawful to themselves, such as pork. Therefore, if pork is offered to a Muslim, they cannot say that Allah has declared that the food of the People of the Book is lawful to the Muslims. Rather, since pork is unlawful to the Muslims, it is unlawful to them as well, and they are sinning by consuming it.

Review

- What should our dealings be like towards *Ahl al-Kitaab*?
- Why, according to Islam, do you think a Muslim man is allowed to marry a Christian or Jewish woman, and not vice versa?
- Although Allah has permitted the food of the People of the Book for consumption, where should a Muslim draw the line?

8.8. Principles of Finance in Islam

The Arabic word for trading is *bay'*, which means both buying and selling. Islam emphasises that every man must earn his own living and every profession is, therefore, honourable, even that of the hewer of wood. Allah's Messenger ﷺ said,

'No one has ever eaten better food than that which he eats from the work done by his own hand.' (Reported by al-Bukhaaree)

'If one of you should take his rope and bring a bundle of firewood on his back and then sell it, with which Allah should save his honour, it is better for him than begging of people whether they give him or do not give him.' (Reported by al-Bukhaaree)

Among means of livelihood, trade occupies the most prominent place, the honest merchant being one of the righteous servants of Allah. Allah's Messenger ﷺ said, 'The truthful, honest merchant is with the prophets, the truthful and the martyrs.' (Reported by at-Tirmidhee) This is because the truthful, honest merchant works for the benefit of humanity, and thus finds a place with those righteous servants of Allah whose lives are devoted to the benefit of humanity.

Islam requires the sellers to be just in weighing their goods:

'Give full measure when you measure, and weigh with a balance that is straight: that is the most fitting and the most advantageous in the final determination.' (*Soorat al-Israa'*, 17:35)

It is to be noted that this instruction applies not only to commercial transactions, but also to all dealings between people. The seller is also required to be generous in dealing, and even giving respite to those in easy circumstances and forgiving those in straitened circumstances. The Prophet ﷺ said,

'May Allah have mercy on the man who is generous when he buys, when he sells and when he demands his due.' (Reported by al-Bukhaaree)



'A man from among those who were before you was called to account. Nothing in the way of good was found for him except that he used to have dealings with people and, being well-to-do, he would order his servants to let off the man in straitened circumstances [from repaying his debt]. He (the Prophet ﷺ said that Allah said: "We are worthier than you of that (of being so generous). Let him off."' (Reported by al-Bukhaaree)

If there is any defect in the goods sold, it must be made clear to the purchaser. The kinds of sale prevalent before Islam, in which the buyer was deprived of the occasion to examine the thing purchased, were made unlawful. The taking of oaths in selling goods is strictly forbidden. Special instructions are given as to the sale of food-grains because they are the prime need of every individual, rich or poor. Speculation in this prime need of humanity is not allowed, and it is necessary that cereals must be sold only after their possession has been obtained. Allah's Messenger ﷺ said, 'Whoever withholds cereals that may become scarce and dear is a wrongdoer.' (Reported by Muslim) This bad practice is technically known in the *hadeeth* as *ihtikaar*, and some grain merchants, as well as other traders, practise it to increase the price of grains when they come into their possession. Speculation means if someone speculates financially, they buy property, stock or shares in the hope of being able to sell them again at a higher price and thus make profit.

In our own days, banks have made too many risky loans, which now cannot be repaid, and they speculate in property whose value has now dropped. Thus withholding food grains to raise their price artificially is prohibited. Deceiving a purchaser through a third party offering a higher price is strictly unlawful. Perfect honesty is thus enjoined in all business transactions. However, auction or open sale to the highest bidder is allowed. Likewise, raising the price of milk producing animals by leaving them unmilked before their sale is prohibited. This is actually a trick by which a purchaser is deceived and tempted to pay a higher price.

Such a sale may be cancelled. Advance prices or earnest money could be paid only when the measure or weight and time of delivery are specifically determined. Trade in idols and the things which are forbidden as food, such as wine and swine is unlawful. There is, however, an express guidance that the skin of a dead animal should not be thrown away and benefit should be derived from it. Islam came to erase idolatry and, therefore, it could not allow trade in idols. Islam, in fact, looks upon every profession as a service to humanity besides being the means of earning a livelihood.



Islam Forbids *Ribaa* (Usury)

The Qur'an states,

'Allah has permitted trading and forbidden *ribaa*.' (*Soorat al-Baqarah*, 2:275)

Pillars of Trade



The pillars of trade are five:

1. The Seller: This must be the owner of whatever they sell or they should have the permission to sell what they are selling. The seller should be a responsible person.

2. The Buyer.

3. The Merchandise: The goods intended for sale must be lawful, pure and capable of being delivered. They should be known to the buyer as to what they are, even if they are known by their description.

4. The Contract: This is the verbal offer and acceptance; for instance, the buyer says: 'Sell me such-and-such a thing.' Then the seller responds, 'I have sold it to you.'

5. Mutual Consent: No business transaction is valid without the mutual consent of both parties.

All unlawful means of acquiring property are denounced:

'O you who believe, do not consume one another's wealth unjustly but only [in lawful] business by mutual consent.' (*Soorat an-Nisaa'*, 4:29)

Bribery and misappropriation are strictly forbidden:

'Allah commands you to make over trusts to their owners.' (*Soorat an-Nisaa'* 4:58)

Gambling is prohibited as being a false or dishonest means of acquiring wealth. All kinds of lotteries and the playing of roulette, however small the sum involved, fall within the game of chance and are, therefore, forbidden in Islam. They not only promote the habit of indolence and are thus negation of honest labour, but also reduce some members of society to extreme poverty, while others prosper at their expense.

Usury, which has been dealt with earlier, is also forbidden for the same reason. The word *ribaa* (usury and interest) means an addition over and above the principal lent. Therefore, it apparently includes all kinds of interest, whether the rate is low or high, and whether the interest is or is not added to the principal sum, after fixed periods. Interest is oppressive for the debtor, a fact which is borne out by the history of indebtedness in all countries. Islamic finance or Islam economics has a wealth of extremely useful information for our modern economists and MBA's.

Review

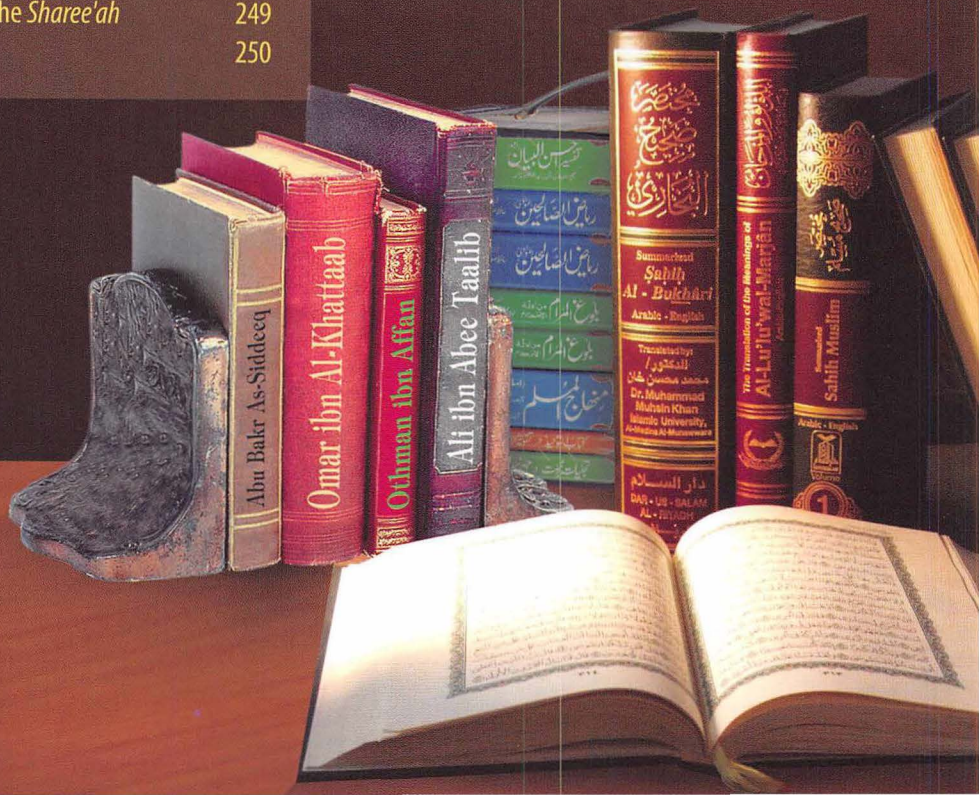
- Explain in your own words the *hadeeth*: 'No one has ever eaten better food than that which he eats from the work done by his own hand.'
- Give the significance of the verse: 'Give full measure when you measure, and weigh with a balance that is straight: that is the most fitting and the most advantageous in the final determination.' (*Soorat al-Israa'*, 17:35)
- List a few examples of the forbidden trades.
- What is the wisdom behind forbidding *ribaa*?

For Further Study and Research

1. ʿAbdur- Rahman I. Doi, *Shareeʿah: The Islamic Law*, A S Noordeen, Malaysia, 2007.
2. Dr. Ibrahim Abdullah al-Marzouqi, *Human Rights in Islamic Law* , Diane Pub Co, Darby, PA. 2000.
3. Dr. Zakaria Bashier, *Sunshine at Madeenah*, the Islamic Foundation, UK. 1990.
4. *Islamic Dress Code for Women*, Research Division, Darussalam Publishers and Distributors, Riyadh, 1999.
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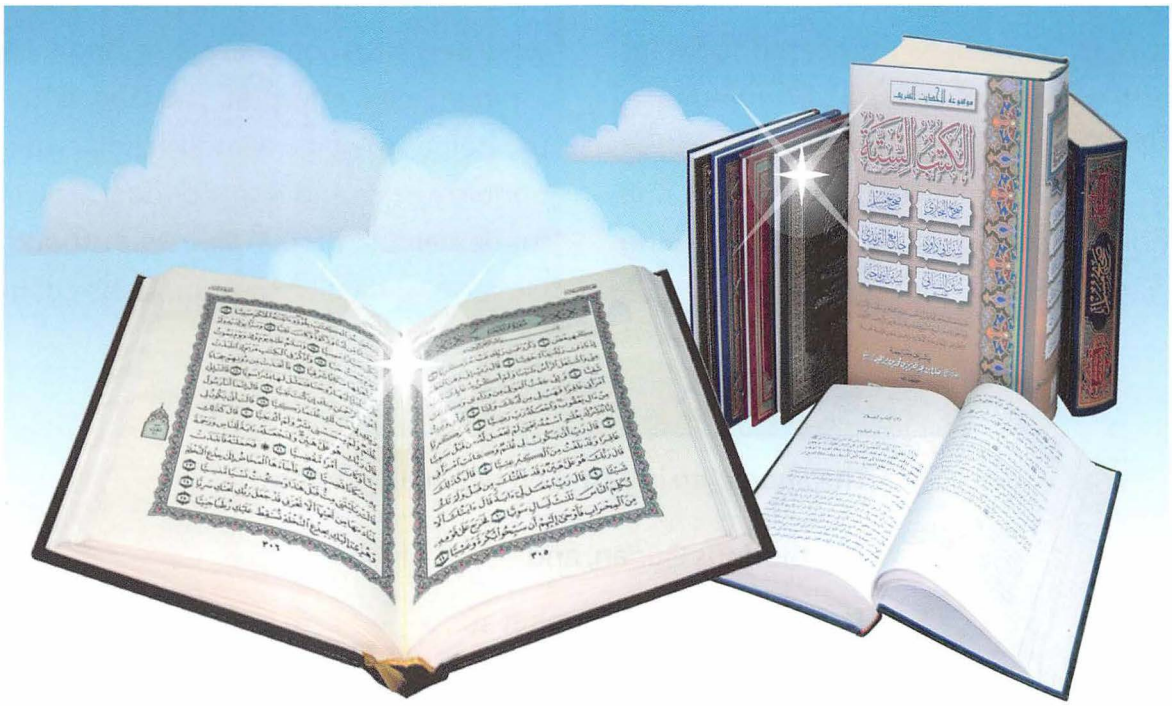
9 The Sources of *Sharee'ah*: Sources of Religious and Legal Authority in Islam

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The Sources of *Sharee'ah*: Sources of Religious and Legal Authority in Islam 9

9.1. The Meaning of *Sharee'ah*



Linguistically, *Sharee'ah* means 'a way', 'a path' and 'the clear, well-trodden path to a watering place'. In Islamic terminology, it is used to refer to the matters of religion that God has legislated for His servants through His Messenger ﷺ. Thus, after accepting Allah's *Deen*, the way one is required to follow is the *Sharee'ah*—the way of legislation from Allah: 'Now We have set you [O Muhammad] on a clear path (*Sharee'ah*), so follow it.' (*Soorat al-Jaathiyah*, 45:18)

Thus *Sharee'ah* is the divinely appointed system, legislation from Allah, or code of conduct to guide mankind straight to the path of peace in this world and to eternal bliss in the life to come. The affairs of this world are seen by the Lawgiver in the light of the interests of the other world, that is, life after death.

The Difference between *Deen* and *Sharee'ah*

The main difference between these two terms is that whereas *Deen* always was, has been, and still is one and the same, many *sharaa'i'* (plural of *Sharee'ah*) from Allah were revealed. Some were subsequently replaced or changed, but there was no change in the *Deen*. All prophets and messengers presented the same *Deen*, but their *sharaa'i'* varied to some extent; for instance, the prescribed ways of performing the prayers and observing fasts were different during the time of the earlier prophets. Thus, *Deen* remained the same throughout, while precise details of following it have varied.

Can the *Sharee'ah* be Changed now?

No, the *Sharee'ah* brought by Allah's Last Messenger ﷺ cannot be changed because it is the Divine Law, Allah's legislation, and all its commands are so made that none of them ever conflicts with the real nature and genuine needs of people. The Creator and Sustainer of mankind knows what the true and basic needs of His creation are. With the passage of time, new situations may arise, and the Muslim *Ummah* may interpret the *Sharee'ah* under the guidance of its learned scholars in order to uphold justice and right conduct. However, the fundamentals of the *Sharee'ah* found in the Qur'an and the *Sunnah* cannot be changed.

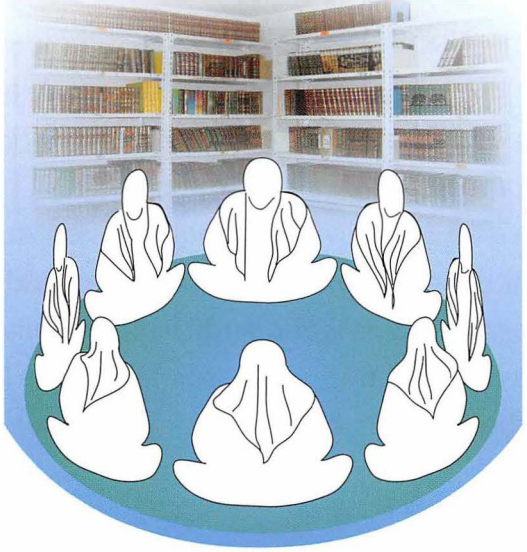
The Bases of *Sharee'ah*

The *Sharee'ah* is based on two main sources:

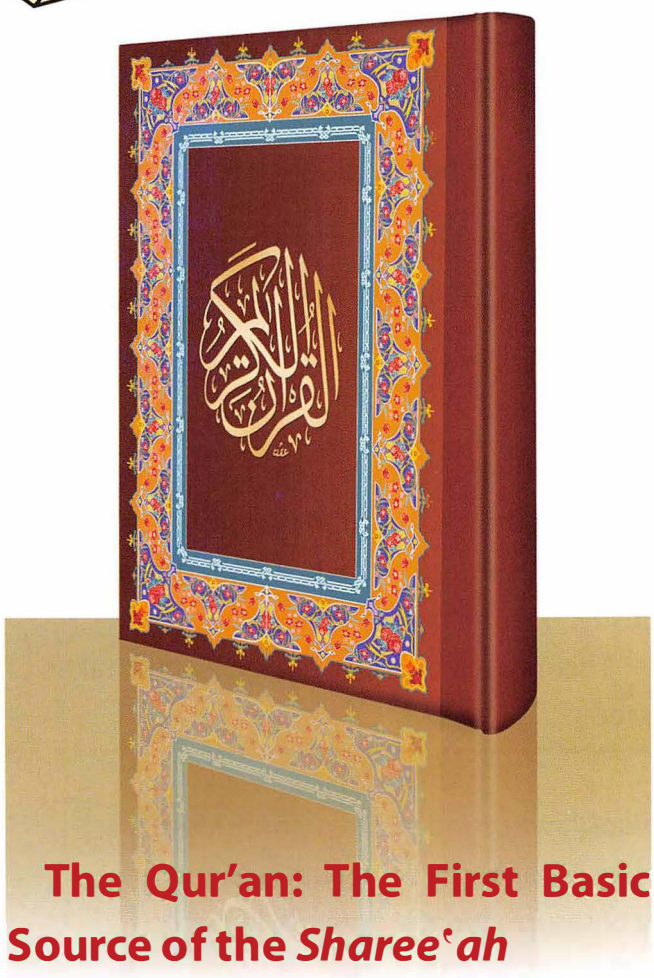
- The Glorious Qur'an, and
- The *Sunnah* of the Prophet ﷺ.

The *Sharee'ah* also has the following two secondary sources:

- *Ijmaa'* (consensus of Muslim scholars), and
- *Qiyaas* (analogical reasoning)



9.2.



The Qur'an: The First Basic Source of the *Shareeʿah*

The Qur'an is the book containing the speech of Allah revealed to Prophet Muhammad ﷺ in Arabic and transmitted to us by continuous testimony. It provides proof Muhammad ﷺ is a true messenger sent by Almighty Allah. It is the most authentic and genuine guide for mankind as well as the first source of the *Shareeʿah*. Indeed, it is the original source from which all principles and commands of Islam are drawn. All other sources explain the Qur'an, which is the greatest blessing to mankind.

The Qur'an contains 114 *soorahs* of unequal length. The shortest *soorah* consists of only three *aayaat* (singular: *aayah*), while the longest one consists of 286 *aayaat*.

The Arabic word *aayah* has many meanings which include, among other things, sign, indication, miracle, indicator, example and model. Hence, the word *aayah* is used in different meanings in the Glorious Qur'an. Its wide usage can be seen by the fact that *aayah* in its singular form occurs in the Qur'an 86 times, while its plural form *aayaat* occurs 295 times. Thus, the Qur'an is the 'Book of Signs'. Its translation into English as verse or verses is not accurate.

Every now and then, the Qur'an reminds us to reflect on ourselves in the vast universe to see the signs Almighty Allah has scattered:

'We will show them Our signs in the horizons and within themselves until it becomes clear to them that this is the truth. Is it not sufficient that your Lord is witness over all things?' (*Soorat Fussilat*, 41:53)

Two Types of Qur'anic *Aayaat*: *Muḥkamaat* and *Mutashaabihaat*

There are two types of Qur'anic verses: those that are clear and decisive in their meanings (*muḥkamaat*; singular: *muḥkamah*), and those which have various interpretations, applications or values (*mutashaabihaat;* singular: *mutashaabihah*).

The term *muḥkamah* (masculine: *muḥkam*) means 'clear and decisive'. Thus a *muḥkam* verse is one that is clear in its meaning, decisive in its clarity and understanding and thus not open to interpretation. It is a verse whose interpretation is known and its meaning is understood, clear and precise. The *muḥkamaat*, basic or fundamental, verses are the foundation of the Book; they are the 'Mother of the Book'.

The *mutashaabihaat* (sing. *mutashaabih*) verses are called as such because their meanings are not well-established, as they generally relate to the things that cannot be seen by human beings. No one can fathom their real meaning except Allah. However, we are required to believe in all of them.

The word *mutashaabihah* (masculine: *mutashaabih*) comes from the trilateral root *sh - b - h*, which means 'resemblance, likeness or similarity between two objects', 'to be or become alike', and 'unclear, which cannot be understood in more than one way'.

It is obvious that objects which resemble one another are difficult to distinguish. They are, therefore, unclear. It is important to note that *mutashaabih* does not mean allegorical, as some translators of the meanings of the Qur'an claim. (See, for instance, Marmaduke Pickthall's Translation, *Soorat Aal 'Imraan*, 3:7)

An example of a *muḥkamah* verse is

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ

Al-ḥamdu lillaahi rabbil-ʿAalamieen (All praise is due to Allah, Lord of all the worlds) (*Soorat al-Faatiḥah*, 1:1)

The following is also another example of a *muḥkamah* verse:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُواْ إِذَا تَدَايَنتُم بِدَيْنٍ إِلَى أَجَلٍ مُّسَمًّى فَاكْتُبُوهُ وَلْيَكْتُب بَّيْنَكُمْ كَاتِبٌ بِالْعَدْلِ

'O you who believe, whenever you give or take credit for a specified period, write it down. A writer should write it down between you justly.' (*Soorat al-Baqarah*, 2:282)

This relates to both the giver and taker of credit.

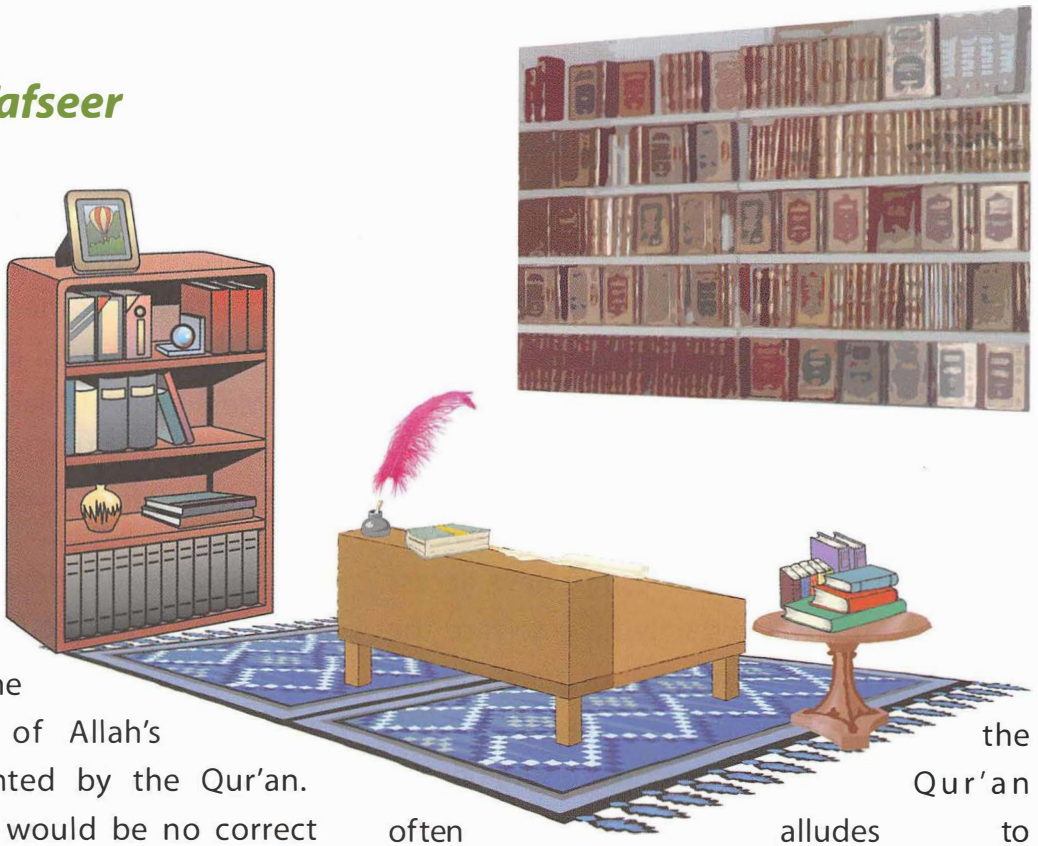
Thus, those *aayaat* that deal with *ḥalaal* (lawful) and *ḥaraam* (forbidden) matters, inheritance, promises, and the like, belong to *muḥkamaat* category, while those concerning the true nature of resurrection, judgment, life after death, and the like, belong to the *mutashaabihaat* category.

In short, the Qur'an is the real foundation on which the whole superstructure of Islam rests. It is the absolute and final authority in every discussion relating to the principles and laws of Islam. It is perfectly right to say that the Qur'an is essentially the sole source from which all the teachings and practices of Islam are drawn.

Review

- What is meant by the word *Shareeʿah*?
- What is the difference between *Shareeʿah* and *Deen*?
- Mention the various sources upon which the *Shareeʿah* is based?
- Explain the term *aayaat*. Mention the two types of *aayaat* in the Qur'an and explain their meanings.

9.8. Tafseer



Tafseer, the interpretation and explanation of the text of the Noble Qur'an, is the most important science in Islam. The right application of Islam is based on the right understanding of Allah's guidance as represented by the Qur'an. Without *tafseer* there would be no correct understanding of various passages of the Qur'an.

The Arabic word *tafseer* is derived from the root verb '*fassara*', which means 'to explain, to interpret'. Thus, *tafseer* means explanation or interpretation of the Glorious Qur'an. The term *tafseer* is usually translated into English as exegesis – the detailed explanation. Hence, an exegete is the person who explains and interprets. The term *tafseer* occurs only once in the Qur'an (*Soorat al-Furqaan*, 25:33) The word *mufassir* (plural: *mufassiroon*) refers to the person who undertakes the task of *tafseer*; that is to say, the exegete or commentator. Thus, *tafseer* would mean the science through which the Book of Allah can be understood.

One can seek the explanation of the Qur'an from the Qur'an itself. In *A Concise Children's Encyclopaedia of Islam* we read:

'The first thing to do to understand the Qur'an is to refer to the Qur'an itself because the Qur'an often alludes to something briefly in one place and then explains it in detail in a different place. The second thing to do is to refer to the explanations of the Prophet ﷺ who not only communicated the words of the Qur'an but also explained their meanings. The third thing to do is to refer to the explanations provided by the Prophet's companions because they understood the Qur'an better than anyone else, witnessed its revelation, knew the circumstances in which it was revealed and learned its meanings directly from the Prophet ﷺ. The fourth thing to do is to refer to the *tafseer* given by scholars in the next two generations after the companions: *At-Taabi'oon* (successors) and *Taba'-ut-Taabi'een* (their successors) because their *tafseer* was not influenced by foreign ideas and is, to be sure, the purest exposition in the spirit and the letter of the Qur'an.'



The English Language and *Tafseer*

There are a number of excellent commentaries on the Qur'an in Arabic from which the Arabic reader may benefit. However, the English reader, who does not have access to such works, will certainly have to face the harsh reality that the number of quality works in English explaining the Qur'an is insufficient, to say the least. The following are some of the works which the English reader may consult in order to deepen his understanding and knowledge of the Qur'an.

1. *Tafseer ibn Katheer* by Ismaa'eel ibn ʿAmr ibn Katheer ad-Dimashqee (d. 774/1372), one of the most famous scholars of his time, under the title *Tafseer al-Qur'aan al-Adheem*, which has been printed on various occasions in four or eight volumes. Its abridged version has been edited by Muhammad ʿAli as-Saaboonee. Maktabah Darussalam has produced a complete English translation of an abridged version of Ibn Katheer's commentary, and it is available in ten beautifully printed volumes.

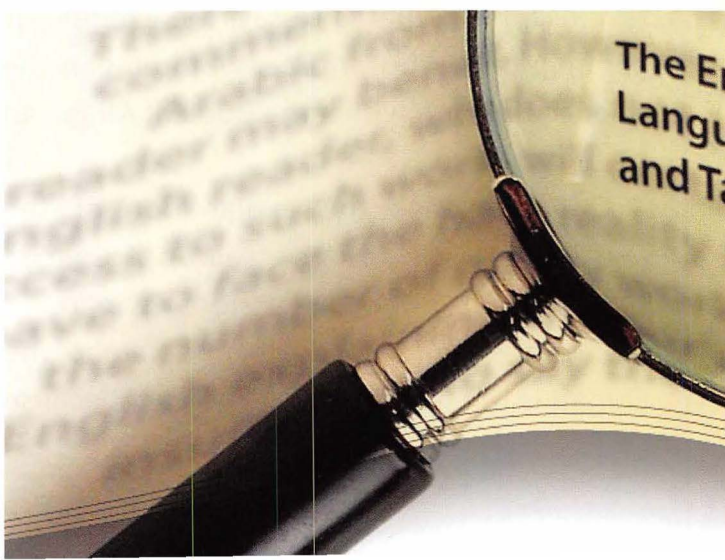
2. *Towards Understanding the Qur'an*: This is the English version of *Tafheem al-Qur'an* by Abul-Aʿlaa al-Mawdudee (d. 1979). Two different English translations from Urdu are available. The revised one with an excellent English translation is being published by The Islamic Foundation, UK. To date, eight volumes have been published.

3. *Interpretations of the Meanings of the Noble Qur'an* by Dr. Muhammad Taqiyy-ud-Deen al-Hilaalee and Dr. Muhammad Muhsin Khan. One characteristic that distinguishes this *tafseer*/translation from other works available in English is that the translators have done their best to stick to the meanings of the verses of the Qur'an as are found in what is reported from the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, the Companions and their followers. This work has been published by Darussalam in 9 volumes.

4. *Tafseer-ul-Qur'an: Translation and Commentary of the Holy Qur'an* by Maulana Abdul Maajid Daryabadi. This work is available in four volumes.

5. *Maʿaarif-ul-Qur'aan: A Comprehensive Commentary on the Holy Qur'an* by Maulana Mufti Muhammad Shafi'i. This commentary, which is an English version of the original Urdu work, is available in 8 large volumes and has been published by Maktaba-e-Darul Uloom, Karachi, Pakistan.

6. *Tafseer Ishraaq al-Maʿanee* by Syed Iqbal Zaheer. This fourteen-volume work, which has been published by Iqra Welfare Trust, Bangalore, India, is written by a contemporary writer who lives and works in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. It contains explanatory material from old and new *tafaaseer* (plural form of *tafseer*).



9.5. Translations of the Meanings of the Qur'an in English

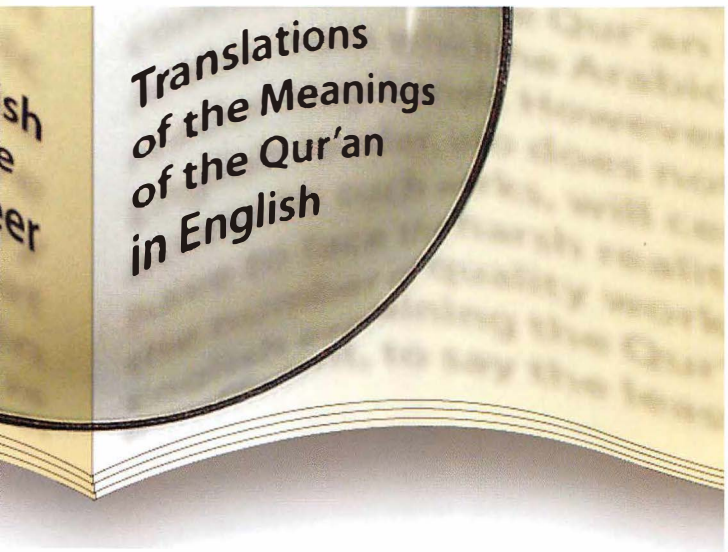
Some of the most popular English translations are:

1. *The Meaning of the Glorious Qur'an* by Muhammad Marmaduke Pickthall, a convert from Christianity to Islam, who was a novelist, esteemed by D. H. Lawrence and E. M. Foster, as well as a journalist, headmaster, and political and religious leader. The English translation is to some extent faithful to the Qur'an in its presentation and, like any other translation, does have a few errors. The text stands with no explanations or footnotes.

2. *The Holy Qur'an: Translation and Commentary* by ʿAbdullah Yusuf ʿAli. This work has appeared in more than thirty-five editions of record and probably many unregistered ones. It has been twice revised, once in the USA by Amana Publications in 1989 and at nearly the same time in Saudi Arabia by the Presidency of Islamic Researches, *Ifta*, Call and Guidance and the King Fahd Holy Qur'an Printing Complex in 1990.

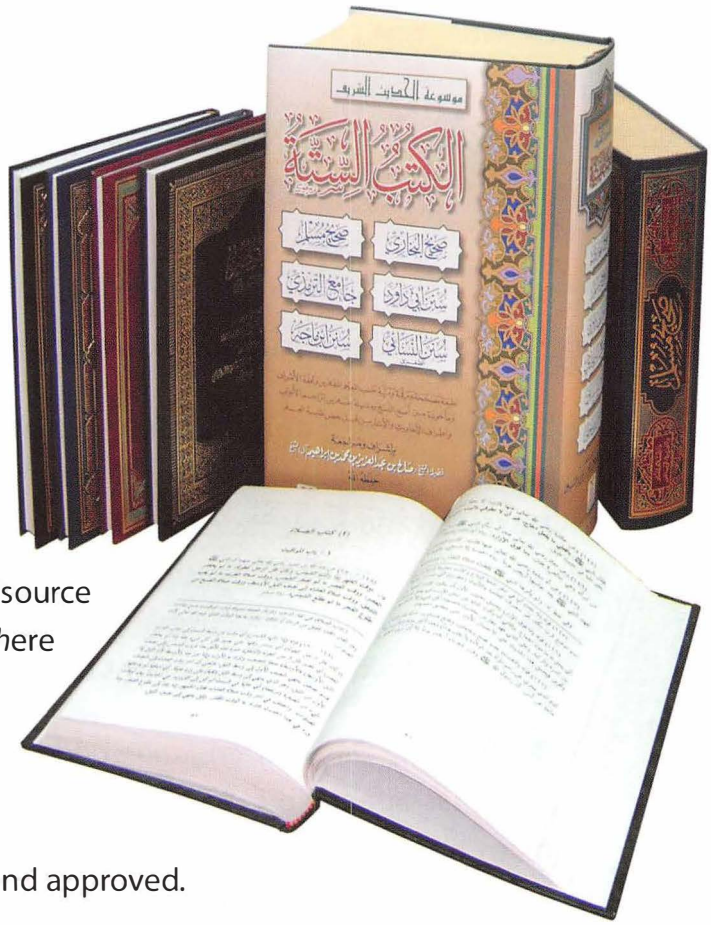
3. *The Noble Qur'an: A New Rendering of its Meaning in English* by Abdalhaqq and Aisha Bewley. This is a, simple and readable translation without explanatory notes.

It is worth noting here, however, that no matter how hard translators try to render the meanings of the Qur'an into English, or any other language for that matter, they will by no means produce a translation that is similar in beauty, style, grandeur as the Qur'an itself. As the author of *A Concise Children's Encyclopaedia of Islam* puts it:



'The Qur'an is perfect only as revealed in Arabic. Translations are the result of human effort and human imperfection; they also lack the inspired wonderful style normally found in the Qur'an. Translations are therefore only commentaries on the Qur'an, or "translations of its meaning", not the Qur'an itself.'

9.6.



The *Sunnah* of the Prophet ﷺ, the Second Basic Source of the *Shareeʿah*

Sunnah, or *ḥadeeth*, is the second primary source from which the laws of *Shareeʿah* are drawn. *T*here are three types of *Sunnah*:

1. ***Sunnah Qawliyyah*:** That is, what the Prophet ﷺ said,
1. ***Sunnah Fiʿliyyah***: That is, what he did, and
1. ***Sunnah Taqreeriyyah*:** That is, what he saw and approved.

The Qur'an generally deals with the broad principles of religion, going into detail only in very rare cases. The details are provided by the Prophet ﷺ himself, either by showing in his practice how a command ought to be carried out, or by giving an explanation in words. The two most important religious institutions of Islam, for instance, are the prayer (*salaat*) and the purifying dues *(zakaat*). However, when the commands relating to *ṣalaat* and *zakaat* were delivered, no details were supplied. It was the Prophet ﷺ himself who, by his own example, gave the details of the prayers and the rules and regulations for the payment and collection of *zakaat*. These are but only examples. It should be remembered that Islam covers the whole sphere of human activity. Hundreds of points had to be explained by the Prophet's example in action and word.

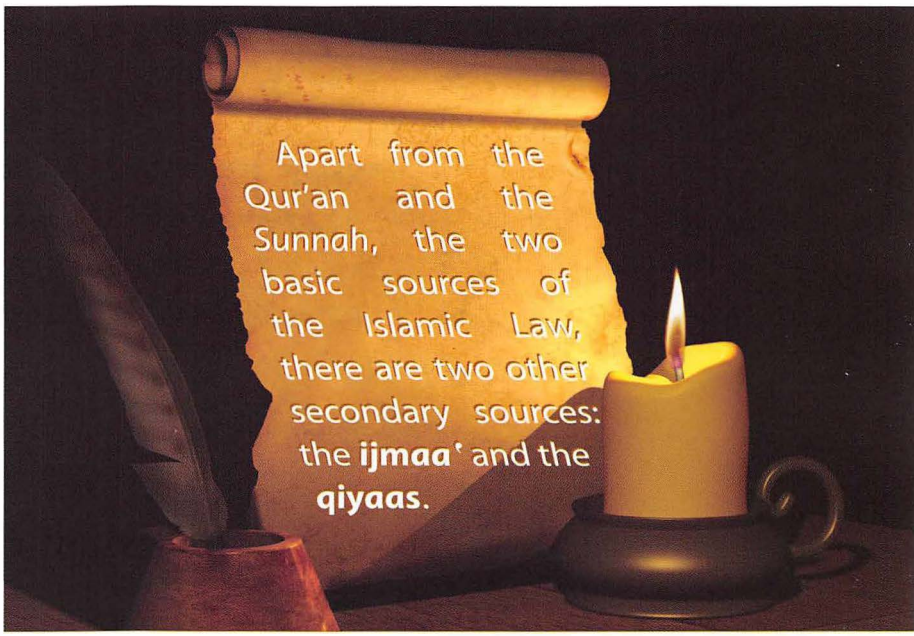
The Prophet's example is the best model which every Muslim is required to follow. Therefore, a person who accepts Islam stands in need of both the Qur'an and the *Sunnah*. For Muslims, the Prophet ﷺ is the perfect example for all time and the best of humankind. The Qur'an declares him to be a 'beautiful model' and an excellent example to follow' (*Soorat al-Aḥzaab*, 33:21) who was sent as a 'mercy to the worlds' (*Soorat al-Anbiyyaa'*, 21:107).

When ʿAa'ishah ﵂, the Prophet's wife, was once asked about the Prophet's character, she simply replied that his character was the Qur'an itself. In fact, his entire life, whatever he said or did, was according to the teachings of the Qur'an. Thus, by studying all the events of his life as well as his teachings together with all the authentic *hadeeth*, we get a complete *tafseer* of the Qur'an put into practice by the Messenger of Allah ﷺ himself. We have already discussed the authority and importance of the *Sunnah* in an earlier chapter. It can be pointed out here that Allah's Messenger ﷺ said, 'Indeed, I have been given the Book and what is similar to it.' (Reported by Abu Daawood and classified as '*saheeh*' by *Shaykh* al-Albaanee) This means that the Prophet ﷺ received two forms of revelation: the first one is recited in the Glorious Qur'an and the second is his *Sunnah*, which although not recited, is still considered revelation from Allah.

Review

- What is *tafseer*?
- What are the foremost sources of *tafseer*?
- What is the difference between a *tafseer* and a translation?
- What is *Sunnah*?
- What are the three different types of *Sunnah*?

9.7. The Other Secondary Sources of the *Shareeʿah*



a. The *Ijmaa'* (Consensus)

Ijmaa' is the consensus of legal opinions of the learned Muslim scholars (*'ulamaa'*) after the death of the Prophet ﷺ. It can be defined as the consensus of opinion of the Companions of the Prophet ﷺ and the agreement reached on the decisions taken by the learned scholars, those who have a right, in virtue of their sound knowledge, to form a judgement. The Prophetic tradition (*hadeeth*) which states 'My community will never agree upon an error' is often cited in support of the validity of *ijmaa'*.

Ijmaa' is derived from the Arabic word *jam'*, which means 'collecting or gathering together' and carries the two-fold significance of composing and setting an unsettled thing. *Ijmaa'* is the result of a strenuous effort made by Muslim scholars who are well-versed in the Qur'an and the *Sunnah* and who work together to reach an agreement formula for solving a particular problem.

b. *Qiyaas*

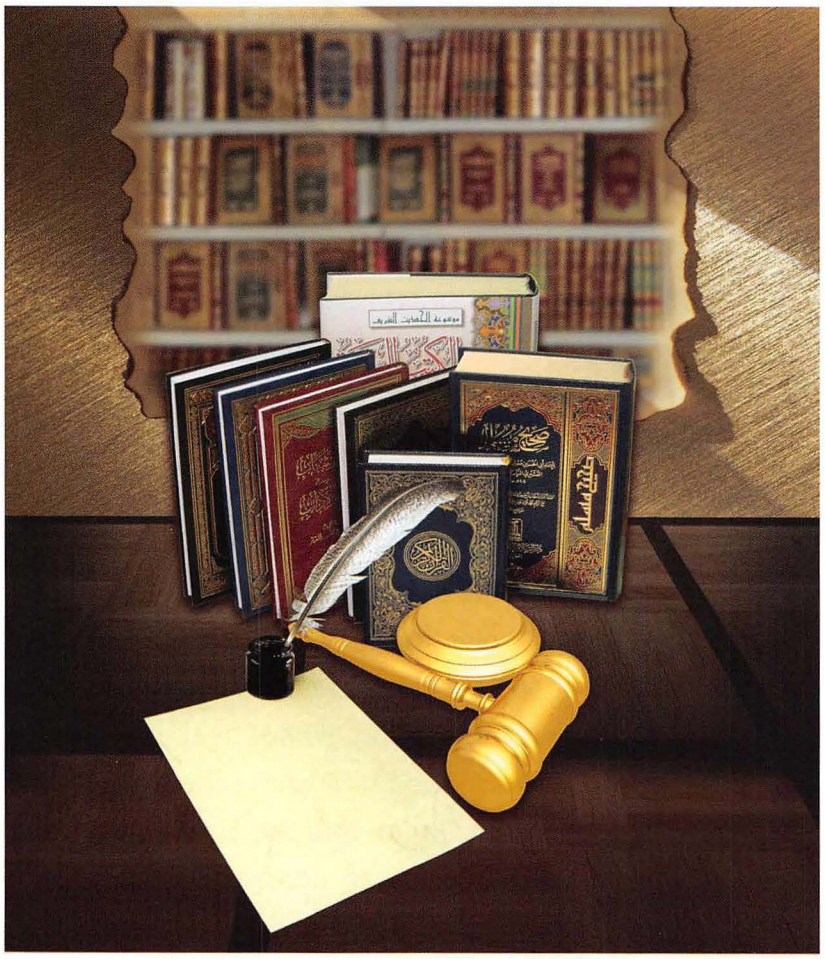
The second of the two secondary sources of the *Sharee'ah* is *qiyaas*. *Qiyaas* literally means 'measuring by or comparing with, or judging by something'. Briefly, it may be described as reasoning based on analogy. If you make or draw an analogy between two things, you show that they are similar in some way.

A case comes up for decision, which is not expressly provided for either in the Qur'an or in the *hadeeth*. The jurist looks for a case resembling it in the Qur'an or in the *hadeeth*, and, by reasoning on the basis of analogy, arrives at a decision; for example, no one 'fixed' heroin in the time of the Prophet ﷺ, so he never considered it. Through the use of *qiyaas*, however, Muslim scholars are able to compare the intoxicating drugs with alcohol and conclude that drug-taking is forbidden in the *Sharee'ah*, just as alcohol is forbidden.

If the Qur'an has forbidden wine, this means that by analogy it has forbidden any form of intoxicating drink or substance whose effect is just like wine, namely, one which causes intoxication.



Fiqh (Islamic Jurisprudence)



The term *fiqh* comes from the trilateral root *f – q - h*, which means 'to understand, to learn, to acquire knowledge, comprehension'. Of this root, two forms occur in the Glorious Qur'an twenty times: *tafaqaah* 19 times and *yatafaqqah* once. *Yafqahu* means 'to understand, to comprehend' (*Soorat Hud*, 11:91), *yatafaqqahu* means 'to endeavour to gain understanding, to seek knowledge' (*Soorat at-Tawbah*, 9:122). Thus *fiqh* means the science of the application of the *Sharee'ah*. An expert in *fiqh* is called a *faqeeh*. In *fiqh*, actions are discussed, and there are five categories of behaviour in descending order of lawfulness.



1. *Fard* or *Waajib* (Obligatory): This refers to an action which the Lawgiver strictly requires to be done. A person who performs an obligatory act out of obedience to Allah is rewarded, while a person who does not do it without a valid reason deserves to be punished.



2. *Mandoob* or *Mustahabb* (Recommended): This refers to an action which the Lawgiver recommends to be done but does not strictly require it. A person who performs it out of obedience to Allah is rewarded, and a person who does not do it will not be punished.



3. *Mubaah* (Permissible): This refers to an action which the Lawgiver has neither requested nor forbidden. Therefore, doing it is absolutely permissible. If a person does it to enable himself to perform an act of obedience to Almighty Allah, or refrains from it for the same reason, he will certainly be rewarded for doing so. However, if he does it as a means to perform an act of disobedience, he will be committing a sin.



4. *Makrooh* (Disliked): This refers to an action which is the opposite of a recommended (*mandoob*) act. A person who refrains from such an act out of obedience to Allah will be rewarded, and a person who does it will not deserve to be punished.



5. *Haraam* (Unlawful): This refers to an act which the Lawgiver strictly forbids. A person who commits an unlawful act deserves punishment, while a person who refrains from it out of obedience to the command of Allah will be rewarded.

Review

- What is *ijmaa'*?
- Mention an example where *ijmaa'* is used.
- What is *qiyaas*?
- Mention an example where *qiyaas* is used.
- What is *fiqh*?
- List the categories of *fiqh*.

Muslim scholars distinguish between three levels of the unlawful:

1. *Al-Kufr* (Disbelief): Sins which take a person out of the fold of Islam; for instance, to deny the existence of Allah, any of His Attributes, any verse of the Qur'an or any of the prophets mentioned in the Qur'an, or to revile Allah or His Messenger ﷺ. These are merely a few examples; you may consult authentic books on the subject of *fiqh*.

2. *Al-Kabaa'ir* (the Major Sins): *Al-kabaa'ir* (singular: *kabeerah*) are acts which are expressly forbidden in the Qur'an or by Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, or for which there is a *hadd* punishment under Islamic law. A *hadd* punishment is a punishment specified by Allah in the Qur'an. These sins include worshipping or associating others with Allah in worship (*shirk*), committing murder, committing suicide, disobeying one's parents and not observing the five daily prayers.

3. *As-Saghaa'ir* (the Minor Sins): *As-Saghaa'ir* (singular: *sagheerah*) are acts which are displeasing to Allah but for which no specific punishment or severe warning has been issued. In this case, a Muslim's conscience and heart help them to know that an act is sinful. The minor sins are not, however, to be taken lightly, as disobeying Allah is always a serious matter. These sins can easily lead someone to commit a major sin, and repeatedly committing a minor sin will change its status to that of a major sin.

Repentance wipes out sins, but there are three conditions which a repentant person must meet so that Allah may accept his repentance:

1. to desist from the sin,
2. to regret having done it, and
3. to resolve never to commit it again

This, however, applies only to those sins which involve the rights of Allah, that is, in which no other person is affected. If they relate to the rights of another person, then a fourth condition is to be met, namely, to return the rights or property one has wrongfully taken.

It is interesting to realize that the merit of an act varies. Fasting, for example, is unlawful on *'Eed-ul-Fitr* day, obligatory before it, and recommended after it. Dressing one's best is good on *'Eed* day or on Friday, but not during the prayer for seeking rain (*salaat-ul-istisqaa'*), and so forth.

Islamic *fiqh* is a very interesting and rewarding subject.

Review

- What are the three conditions for repentance to be accepted?
- Muslim scholars distinguish between three levels of the unlawful. What are they?
- Mention some acts which may be categorised as 'minor sins'.
- Mention some acts which may be categorised as 'major sins'.
- What is the one major sin, do you think, which Allah never forgives unless the person who commits it abandons it altogether?

Further Reading

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