

Islam
beliefs and teachings

Ghulam Sarwar



THE MUSLIM EDUCATIONAL TRUST

islam

beliefs and teachings

Ghulam Sarwar

Director, The Muslim Educational Trust



THE MUSLIM EDUCATIONAL TRUST

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FOREWORD

The Muslim Educational Trust from its inception in 1966 has been striving for the Islamic education of the young generation of Muslims in Britain. The presentation of their religious and moral heritage is important as well as complex. To impart Islamic education to the children and to enable them to grow as Muslims in this society offer a great challenge to the British Muslims. A very important aspect of the problem is the need for suitable reading material. It gives me pleasure to say that the book *Islam: Beliefs and Teachings* published by the Trust goes a long way to fulfil this need.

The practical experience of the Trust in the field of Islamic education of Muslim children over many years, has led the Director of the Trust to produce this book. He is himself a seasoned educationist with a long personal experience of teaching. There are quite a few books about the introduction of Islam in western society, but the author of this book laboured hard to make it unique. He has used language which is simple and a style which is appealing to young minds. Starting from the fundamentals of the faith and practice of the Islamic religion, the book projects the key aspects of the life of Muḥammad, the prophet of Islam (may Peace and Blessings of Allah be upon him). There are short and simple Qur'ānic stories of some famous prophets, short sketches of the rightly guided Caliphs, and three great Muslim women. Important information about Islamic morals, festivals and Muslim Ummah included. All the necessary facts about the religion and the followers of Islam have been laid down in small units.

The author has narrated the facts in such a way that there is a moral lesson for the young readers in each unit and through every lesson he motivates the readers to imbibe the spirit of Islam and transform it into practical living.

I hope that this book will be useful for all those who are interested and involved in Islamic education – children, teachers and parents. I thank Allah Almighty who enabled the Muslim Educational Trust to produce this book.

AUTHOR'S PREFACE

Praise be to Allah, the Almighty who by His infinite mercy enabled me to write a much needed book on Islam.

For a long time, I felt the need for a standard text book on Islam suitable for use in secondary schools by the teachers, pupils and parents. I have gone through almost all the available material so far published in English for children. It appeared to me that an attempt should be made to incorporate major aspects of Islam in one book.

The outcome is *Islam: Beliefs and Teachings*. I do not claim it to be the best, but it is the product of very sincere and laborious efforts. How far I have succeeded in my attempt is for the readers to judge.

Books do provide a basis for education and it is the teachers who make them really useful and meaningful. Books on their own can do no miracle for young children unless they are properly geared to use them. I hope the Islamic teachers would remain conscious of this.

Islam: Beliefs and Teachings includes most of the contents of the syllabus which has been published recently by the Muslim Educational Trust.

Although my main aim has been to produce a book for eleven plus school pupils, I hope it would benefit adults also.

I have included a select bibliography of the sources which I have consulted and benefited from.

I am responsible for any mistakes and I would welcome any suggestion on the book.

I am greatly indebted to Mr David Browne, a former school teacher and now a journalist and script writer, who has edited the draft and made very useful improvements in its language and style.

I am also grateful to Maulāna Ḥabībūr Raḥmān, Chairman of the Muslim Educational Trust, for writing the foreword and going through the manuscript and making useful suggestions. I also thank Dr G. M. Khan, Sayyid Hasan Mutahar, Maulāna Suhaib Ḥasan, Mr S. A. Ṣiddiqī and Mr Sultānūl Ḥasan Fārūqī for their suggestions and comments. Brother Helāluddīn and Mr Abul Ḥusain deserve my thanks for neatly typing the manuscript.

I am glad to mention my daughters Parveen, Yasmeen and Nasreen who are

all at junior school yet took great interest in reading my drafts and helped me ease out many difficult expressions.

I will deem my efforts well rewarded if it inspires the young people to understand and practise Islam in a non-Muslim society.

May Allah accept my humble effort and make it a source of my salvation in the Hereafter. Ameen.

13 Ramadān, 1400 AH
25 July, 1980 CE

Ghulam Sarwar

TRANSLITERATION

<i>Arabic letter</i>	<i>Transliteration</i>	<i>Example</i>	<i>Arabic letter</i>	<i>Transliteration</i>	<i>Example</i>
ع	'	Qur'ān	ط	ṭ	Lūṭ
ا	ā	Dāwūd	ظ	ẓ	Zuḥr
و	ū	Dāwūd	ع	'	'Īsā
حی	ī	Khadījah	غ	gh	Maghrib
ب	b	Bilāl	ف	f	Fāṭimah
ث	t	Tirmidhī	ق	q	Fārūq
ث	th	'Uthmān	ل	l	Allah
ج	J	Jannah	م	m	Mūsā
ح	ḥ	Muḥammad	ن	n	Nūḥ
خ	kh	Khalīfah	و	w	Ṣawm
د	d	Dāwūd	هـ	h	Ibrāhīm
ذ	dh	Tirmidhī	ة (silent)	h	Ṣalāh
ر	r	Raḥmān	ی	y	yāsin
ز	z	Zakāh	ء	aw	Yawmuddīu
س	s	'Īsā	ئ	ay	Sulaymān
ش	sh	Shahādah	ئی	iyy	Zakariyyā
ص	ṣ	Ṣawm	ء	aww	Awwāl
ض	d	Ramaḍān			

* We have avoided the transliteration of the words 'Allah' and 'Islam' as they occur too frequently in the book. In both the words 'a' should be prolonged a bit to give the right pronunciation.

Abbreviations

<i>pbuh</i>	stands for peace be upon him
<i>RA</i>	stands for Radī Allāhu Ta'ālā 'Anhu or 'Anha
<i>Bin</i>	means Son of ('Alī bin Abū Ṭālib)
<i>Bint</i>	means daughter of (Khadijah bint Khuwaylid)
<i>AH</i>	stands for After Hijrah
<i>CE</i>	stands for Christian Era

Formula to change AH to CE

$$CE = \frac{32}{33} (AH) + 622$$

$$\text{Example: } 256 \text{ AH} = \frac{32}{33} (256) + 622 = 870 \text{ (approx.)}$$

Formula to change CE to AH

$$AH = \frac{33}{32} (CE - 622)$$

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Example: } 870 \text{ CE} &= \frac{33}{32} (870 - 622) \\ &= \frac{33}{32} 248 = 256 \text{ AH (approx.)} \end{aligned}$$

Note: The Qur'ānic quotations and references have been followed by the number of the Sūrah (Chapter) and then the number of the verse. Example: (2:177) means second Surah, verse no. 177.



In the name of Allah, the most Merciful, the most Kind.

ISLAM

Islam is a complete way of life. It is comprehensive guidance covering all areas of human activity. This guidance is from Allah – the Creator of the Universe. Islam tells us the purpose of our creation, our final destiny and our place among other creatures. It shows us the best way to conduct our private, social, political, economic, moral and spiritual affairs of life.

Islam is an Arabic word which means submission and obedience. Submission is acceptance of Allah's commands. Allah, another Arabic word, is the proper name of God. Muslims should use the word Allah rather than the word God. Obedience means putting Allah's commands into practice. Submission and obedience to Allah bring peace. That is why Islam also means peace. A person who accepts the Islamic way of life and acts upon it is a Muslim.

Islam is the way of peace and harmony. If we look around, we see that everything including the sun, the moon and the stars, the high hills and the mighty oceans are obeying a Law – *the Law of Allah*. We find no disorder or chaos in them. A superb harmony and perfect order is evident in the system of Nature. The sun rises in the East and sets in the West and there has been no change to this rule. The moon and the stars shine at night. Day passes and night comes and the process goes on without any variation. Flowers blossom and the trees have green leaves in the spring. Everything has a set course and nothing can violate it. Have we ever noticed any violation of the Law of Allah by these objects of Nature? No, of course not. Why? Simply because they are made to obey Allah. They have no choice but to obey. This is why we find eternal peace in the system of Nature. But, in the case of human beings, it is different. Allah has given us the knowledge and will to choose between *right* and *wrong*. Not only this, He has also sent messengers and books for our guidance.

Yet, He does not force us to obey Him. He has given us the will to either obey

إِنَّا لِلَّهِ وَإِنَّا إِلَيْهِ رَاغِبُونَ

Innad dina 'Indal lāhil Islam
"Surely, the way of life acceptable to Allah is Islam." (3:19).

.or disobey Him. Why is this so? It is because He wants to test us. After this test there will be a day of reward and punishment. This is the *Day of Judgment*. Those of us who have passed the test will be rewarded with permanent happiness and peace in *Paradise* and those who have failed will suffer a terrible punishment in *Hell*. We can get this reward and escape punishment by obeying and worshipping Allah.

We already know that there is peace and harmony among other objects of Nature, because those things never disobey Allah. So, if we follow the guidance given to us through prophets and messengers, we are sure to have peace in the world we live in.

All human beings, by their very nature, like good things and dislike bad ones. For instance, everyone of us approves and likes truthfulness and hates falsehood. Even a liar does not like to be called a liar. Why? Because telling lies is a bad thing. In the same way, helping others, showing kindness, politeness, respect for parents and teachers, honesty and all other forms of good conduct are always liked and appreciated; but rudeness, cruelty, falsehood, hurting someone, disobedience to parents and teachers, using bad names and other bad conduct are despised and disliked by everyone. So, we can say that human nature likes the *Right* and dislikes the *Wrong*. Right is *Ma'rūf* and wrong is *Mun'kar* in the language of the Qur'ān.

Human nature also loves peace and hates disorder. Peace is the result of obedience to Allah's Law and disorder is the outcome of disobedience. Islam establishes this peace which is part of man's nature and hence, Islam is called the *Religion of Nature* which in Arabic is *Dīnul Fiṭrah*.

In order to obtain peace in society, Islam urges Muslims to work together towards what is right and away from what is evil. This united effort to root out evil and establish the truth is called *Jihād*. *Jihād* means to try one's utmost to see *Truth* prevail and *Falsehood* vanish from the society. The aim of *Jihād* is to achieve the pleasure of Allah. You will learn more about *Jihād* later in this book.

'MOHAMMEDANISM' is a misnomer

Islam is sometimes incorrectly called 'Mohammedanism' and the Muslims as 'Mohammedans'. Other religions have been named after their founder or after the community in which the religion prospered. For example, *Christianity* has been named after *Christ*, *Buddhism* and *Buddha* and *Judaism* after the tribe of *Judah*. But Islam has not been named after Muḥammad (peace be upon him). It is the name of Allah's Guidance for mankind revealed through all the prophets, the last of whom was Muḥammad (pbuh). So, it is wrong to call Islam 'Mohammedanism' and Muslims 'Mohammedans'.

Islam and *Muslim* are the words of the *Qur'ān*. The *Qur'ān* says, "*He named you Muslims before and in this*" (22:78). The message of all the prophets and messenger from Ādam (peace be upon him) down to Muḥammad (pbuh) is the same. They asked people to obey Allah and none other. This message, sent through prophets was completed at the time of Muḥammad (pbuh) who was the last of the chain of prophethood. This completion is mentioned in the *Qur'ān*: "*This day I have perfected your religion for you, completed my favour upon you and have chosen for you Islam as your way of life*". (5:3)

BASIC BELIEFS

Islam requires us to believe in:

- 1 **Allah**
- 2 **His Angels**
- 3 **His Books**
- 4 **His Messengers**
- 5 **The Day of Judgment**
- 6 **Predestination or supremacy of Divine Will (Al-Qadr)**
- 7 **Life after death**

These beliefs have been stated precisely in **Īmān-ul-Mufaṣṣal**, the Faith in detail:

أَمَنْتُ بِاللهِ وَمَلَائِكَتِهِ وَكُتُبِهِ وَرُسُلِهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ
وَالْقَدْرِ خَيْرِهِ وَشَرِّهِ مِنْ اللهُ تَعَالَى وَالْبَعْثِ بَعْدَ الْمَوْتِ ۝

“Āmantu Billāhi, wa Malā’ikatihī, wa Kutubihī, wa Rusuluhī, wal Yawmil Akhirī, wal Qadri, Khayrihī wa Sharrihī minal Lahi Ta’āla, wal Ba’thi Ba’dal Mawt.”

This means:

“I believe in Allah, in His angels, in His books, in the Last Day (Day of Judgment) and in the fact that everything good or bad is decided by Allah, the Exalted, and in the Life after Death”.

The seven beliefs can be grouped into three:

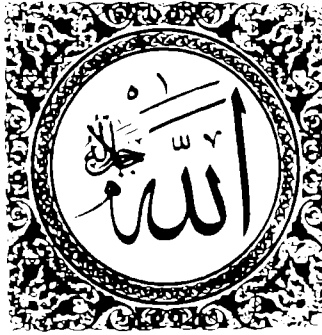
Tawḥid (oneness of Allah)

Risālah (prophethood)

Ākhirah (life after death)

- 1 **Tawḥid** { i Allah
ii Predestination or Supremacy of Divine Will (*Al-Qadr*)
- 2 **Risālah** { iii Angels of Allah
iv Books of Allah
v Messengers of Allah
- 3 **Ākhirah** { vi The Last Day (*Day of Judgment*)
vii Life after Death

Tawḥid, Risālah and Ākhirah have in them the whole of the Islamic system of life. So, we must understand them.



Allah

TAWHID

Tawhīd means the oneness of Allah. It is the main part of *Īmān* (Faith) and is beautifully expressed in the Sūrah al-Ikhlāṣ of the Qur'ān:

“Say, He is Allah, the One. Allah is Eternal and Absolute. None is born of Him, nor is He born. And there is none like Him.” (Sūrah 112).

Tawhīd is the most important Islamic belief. It implies that everything on this earth is from the One and Only Creator, Allah, who is also the Sustainer of the universe and the Sole Source of its Guidance.

Tawhīd is the belief in Allah with all His powers. Allah is All-knowing, All-wise and All-powerful. He is the Merciful and the Kind. He is everywhere. He sees us, but we do not see Him. He is, was and always will be. He is the First and the Last. He has no partner or son. He gives us life and takes it away. We must return to Him after death.

The first part of the declaration of faith is: *Lā ilāha illal Lāh*. It has two aspects: **I Negative II Positive**. *Lā ilāha* is the negative aspect, while *illal Lāh* is the positive one.

LĀ ILĀHA
(there is *no* god)
– Negative –

ILLAL LĀH
(but Allah)
– Positive –

A believer must first cleanse his heart of any other god or any other object of worship, and only then can the faith in the Oneness of Allah take root in his heart.

Tawhīd shapes and regulates the entire course of his life. This is why we must understand the meaning of Tawhīd.

The vast and majestic universe with its flawless system clearly indicates that there is one Creator and one Supreme Controller.

When we think about the unique system and perfect order of the universe, we find there is no conflict. The sun, the moon, and the galaxy obey the same supreme Authority. The whole universe obeys the Laws of this Supreme

Power. There is complete co-operation and harmony in the system. Everything is nicely set in its place. No improvement can be suggested and no flaw detected. This superb and perfect combination of order and beauty is clear proof of the presence of an All-wise and All-powerful Creator and Regulator.

Had there been more than one Creator and Controller of the planets, for example, there would have been conflict and chaos? We notice no such disorder in the universe. The efficient running of a school, the steering of a car or a ship, calls for one headmaster, one driver and one captain. No single institution can be run without problems and conflict with more than one leader, just as no vehicle can be driven by more than one person at the same time.

The universe, made up of many planets and stars is a unit. All its components have a common origin, a common purpose, because the universe was deliberately created by one Absolute Power. Everything in the universe works in harmony and co-operation, like various parts of the human body. The limbs of the human body seem to have different functions, but they all serve the same purpose – keeping the body fit and functioning properly.

IMPACT OF TAWHID ON HUMAN LIFE

The belief in *Lā ilāha illal Lāh* or Tawhīd has far-reaching effects on our life:

a A believer in Tawhīd surrenders himself completely to the will of Allah and becomes His true servant and subject. Allah has created all that is in the earth and the heavens for the service of mankind. When a person surrenders himself to Allah's commands, he gains control over all other creations of the universe.

The Qur'ān confirms this when it says, *"See you not, how Allah has made serviceable unto you, whatever is in the sky and whatever is in the earth and has made His bounties flow to you exceeding measure (both) seen and unseen"* (31:20).

b It produces in the believer a high degree of self-respect and confidence. He knows that he depends on none but Allah for the fulfilment of His needs. He firmly believes that Allah alone has the power of providing all his requirements and no-one else has any power to do good or harm to him.

c This belief makes a believer humble and modest. He is never arrogant or haughty. He is fully aware that everything on earth belongs to Allah and he gains control over the rest of the creation only by being a subject of Allah. He also knows very well that whatever he has, is from Allah. So, there is no reason to be proud and boastful.

d Belief in Tawhīd makes a believer dutiful and upright. The believer knows that he must carry out the commands of his Creator to succeed in this life

and in the life hereafter. This awareness keeps him away from neglecting his duties and from other sins.

e It makes a believer contented. He does not become worried because he knows that Allah will take care of all his needs if he is truly obedient.

f It makes a person brave and courageous. It removes from his mind the fear of death or concern for safety. The believer knows that it is Allah who will cause death at the appointed time and none but He can harm the believer's safety. So, if he obeys Allah, he has nothing to worry about. He goes on doing his duty without any fear.

g A believer in Tawḥīd is never narrow in his outlook. He sees himself as part of the vast kingdom of Allah. His horizon and vision expand because of this belief.

h It produces in a believer strong determination, patience and perseverance. The believer becomes single minded and dedicates himself to seeking the pleasure of his Creator.

i The most important effect of the belief in – *Lā ilāha illal Lāh* – is that it makes a person obey and observe Allah's commands. A believer in Tawḥīd is sure that Allah knows and sees everything and he cannot escape Allah's ever-watchful eye for a single moment. In fact, Allah is nearer to him than his own jugular vein. So, a true believer does not commit a sin either secretly or in the darkness of night because he has the firm conviction that Allah sees everything all the time.

A believer in Tawḥīd seeks the pleasure of Allah by making his belief and action go together. Belief without practice has no place in Islam.

Muslims are the believers in Tawḥīd. We are Allah's servants and subjects. Our faith and practice must be the same.

AL-QADR

We, believe that Allah has created the universe and He is its Absolute controller and Regulator. Everything in the universe has a pre-determined set course which we call Al-Qadr. Nothing can happen without the will and the knowledge of Allah. Allah knows the present, the past and the future of every creature. The destiny of every creature is already known to Allah.

But this does not mean that man has no freedom of will. We know that we are the Khalīfah (agent) of Allah on this earth. We also know that Allah does not force us to do anything. It is up to us to obey or disobey Him. Whether we will obey or disobey is known to Him. But, the fact that Allah knows what we are going to do, does not affect our freedom of will. Man does not know what his destiny is. He has the free will to choose the course he will take.

We will be judged on the basis of our intentions on the Day of Judgment. If we follow Allah's guidance, we will be rewarded and if not, we will be punished.

By believing in Al-Qadr we testify that Allah is the Absolute controller of all the affairs of His universe. It is He who decides what is good and what is bad.

RISĀLAH (Prophethood)

Risālah was the method of communication between Allah and mankind. Allah, in His infinite mercy has provided man with guidance to follow the right course and so make this world a happy and peaceful place to live in. A very attractive reward is waiting for those who follow this guidance, in the life after death.

Since the beginning of the Creation, Allah has sent His guidance for mankind through His selected people. These chosen people are called prophets or messengers. They asked the people of their time to obey and worship Allah alone. They taught, guided and trained the people to follow the way of Allah.

Prophets and messengers were human beings. We should never refer to them as the sons of Allah. Allah is one and He has no partner or son. It is a sin to say that Allah has a son or a partner.

The message of all the prophets and messengers is one and the same. As Allah is One, so is His message. This message is: "Worship Allah and there is no god for you but He". In other words, all the prophets preached the message of:

LĀ ILĀHA ILLAL LĀH
(There is no god but Allah).

You may ask, why do we need guidance from Allah? The answer is simple; we human beings are weak and frail; we have no knowledge of the future and the knowledge we do have is limited. Also we are not perfect. You can guess that with so many weaknesses, we are unable to make any guidance for ourselves which can hold good for all times and all conditions. This is the reason why Allah has blessed us with guidance through prophets and messengers.

Not only this, Allah has also sent books of guidance through the prophets and messengers (2:213, 7:25). The Qur'ān is the last book of Allah's guidance. We will learn about it later.

Allah sent prophets and messengers to every nation at different times (10:47, 13:7, 35:24). It was necessary to send prophets at different times to bring forgetful human beings back to the **right path** (*Ṣirat al-Mustaqīm*).

PROPHETS OF ALLAH

According to a saying of Muḥammad (pbuh) the number of prophets is one hundred and twenty four thousand. The Qur'ān mentions only the twenty-five most prominent by name:

Qur'ānic name	<i>Biblical name</i>	Qur'anic name	<i>Biblical name</i>
1 Ādam	<i>Adam</i>	13 Ayyūb	<i>Job</i>
2 Idrīs	<i>Enoch</i>	14 Mūsā	<i>Moses</i>
3 Nūḥ	<i>Noah</i>	15 Hārūn	<i>Aaron</i>
4 Hūd	—	16 Dhū'l-kifl	<i>Ezekiel</i>
5 Ṣāliḥ	<i>Salih</i>	17 Dāwūd	<i>David</i>
6 Ibrāhīm	<i>Abraham</i>	18 Sulaymān	<i>Solomon</i>
7 Ismā'īl	<i>Ishmael</i>	19 Illiās	<i>Elias</i>
8 Ishāq	<i>Issac</i>	20 Al-Yasā'	<i>Elisha</i>
9 Lūṭ	<i>Lot</i>	21 Yūnus	<i>Jonah</i>
10 Ya'qūb	<i>Jacob</i>	22 Zakariyyā	<i>Zechariah</i>
11 Yūsuf	<i>Joseph</i>	23 Yaḥyā	<i>John</i>
12 Shu'ayb	—	24 'Īsā	<i>Jesus</i>
		25 Muḥammad	—

As Muslims, we must believe in all the prophets and messengers (2:4). Allah's guidance to mankind which began with Ādam (pbuh) was completed with Muḥammad (pbuh).

ANGELS

We have already mentioned belief in Angels (Malāikah) in the *Imān-ul-Mufaṣṣal*. Who are the angels? What do they do? Can we see them? How are they different from man?

Angels are a special creation of Allah. They have been created from divine light (*Nūr*) to perform specific functions. By comparison, Ādam, the first man was created from clay, and Jinn from fire. 'Iblīs, the devil is from the jinn.

Angels have been given the necessary qualities and powers to carry out their duties, but they do not have free will. They always obey Allah and can never disobey Him. Man, on the other hand, has been given free will and can choose between right and wrong; this is why man will have to face the test on the day of judgment.

Angels do what Allah commands them. They are the innocent servants of Allah's will. They help men in the use of free will. Man decides what to do and angels help him to carry out the decision.

The duty of Angels is to glorify and praise Allah. They never get tired. They

are always ready to obey Allah. They do not need sleep, nor do they require the things a human being would need.

We cannot see the angels unless they appear in human form. Angel Jibra'īl once appeared before a gathering of the companions of the Prophet in order to teach them about Islam. Angels can take any suitable form to do their duties.

There is a host of angels in the kingdom of Allah. Prominent among them are:

Jibra'īl	(<i>Gabriel</i>)
Mikā'īl	(<i>Michael</i>)
'Izra'īl	(<i>Azrail</i>)
Isrāfīl	(<i>Israfil</i>)

Jibra'īl brought the revelation from Allah to the prophet Muḥammad (pbuh) and to all other prophets. *'Izra'īl* – also called 'the angel of death' (*Malakul mawt*) – is responsible for ending our life. *Isrāfīl* will blow the trumpet at the time of the end of the world and on the day of judgment.

Some angels are busy recording all that we do. They are called the respected recorders (*Kirāman Kātibeen*). Not a single word we say goes unrecorded.

Allah maintains His kingdom in the most superb way, and angels are His most obedient and loyal servants. Angels will welcome in Heaven those of us who always obey Allah's commands and will throw the wrong-doer into Hell.

THE BOOKS OF ALLAH

So far we have learned that we human beings are the servants of Allah and His agents on earth. But we need guidance to carry out our duties as Allah's agents. We are unable to make guidance for ourselves, because we have many weaknesses within us and we are frail and short-sighted. Only Allah is above all these shortcomings and He alone has the power to give us guidance that is valid for all times and places. We know that Allah has not left us without guidance and that He has sent prophets and messengers to show us the right path in life. In addition to this, He also sent books of guidance through them.

Allah's favours and blessings are countless. He has provided us with all that we need. Just imagine how wonderfully He arranged our growth in the tender and affectionate care of our parents from birth to youth. We can also ask who provided us with food when we were in our mother's womb? Who filled our mother's breasts with milk to suckle as soon as we were born? It is Allah, the Merciful, of course.

Allah's greatest favour to mankind is His guidance contained in the books of revelation. The pure, perfect and most useful knowledge can only come from Allah, the most Wise and the Greatest. (2:147, 4:108, 3:174).

A Muslim believes in all the revealed books which are mentioned in the Qur'ān. They are: **Zabūr** (*Psalms*) of Dāwūd, **Tawrāt** (*Torah*) of Mūsā (Moses),

Injīl² (*Gospel*) of 'Īsā (Jesus) and the **Qur'ān** revealed to Muḥammad (pbuh). The Qur'ān, also mentions Suḥūf-i-Ibrāhīm (Scrolls of Abraham).

Of the divine books, only the Qur'ān exists in its original form, unchanged and unmixed. Zabūr, Tawrāt and Injīl are not available in their original language and form. Even their original texts do not exist. These books were compiled by their followers after many years of the death³ of the Prophets to whom they were revealed. Their compilers have modified, changed and distorted Allah's words. They have mixed divine words with those of human beings.

The Bible which is a combination of the *Old Testament* and the *New Testament* has been translated into English from available Greek manuscripts. Any careful reader can easily find out the additions and alterations made to them.

The Bible, as it is available today, has many incorrect things in it.⁴ Its authenticity and divinity are doubtful. It contains misleading and false stories about Prophets. The message of Allah sent through them was either lost or distorted through neglect and folly of their followers. As against this, the Qur'ān contains Allah's guidance for mankind in its original language, unchanged and undistorted. It restates in clear and unambiguous language the message of Allah which the followers of earlier Prophets have lost. The message of Qur'ān is valid for all times and conditions.

Note:

1 The Tawrāt was revealed in Hebrew and the Injīl, most probably, in the Aramaic (Syriac) language.

2 The Bible consists of: the Old Testament and the New Testament. The Old Testament includes five books of the Pentateuch (Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy), Book of Ezra, Psalms and others.

The New Testament includes four gospels: Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. The Gospel of Barnabas which appears to be the most authentic version of Prophet 'Īsā's life is not included in it.

3 The Injīl (*Gospel*) has been compiled after the lifting of the prophet 'Īsā (Jesus) by Allah. According to Christians, 'Īsā was crucified and died as a result. The Qur'ān refutes it and states that Jesus was lifted by Allah (4:157-158).

4 a Prophet Nūḥ (Noah), is described as drunk and naked in the book of Genesis (Ch. 9 verses 20-22)

b Falsehood attributed to Prophet Ibrāhīm (Abraham) (Genesis, Ch. 12 verses 9-21).

c Incest ascribed to Lūṭ (Lot) in Genesis(Ch. 19 verses 31-37).

d Falsehood attributed to Ishāq (Issac) in Genesis(Ch. 26 verses 7-11).

e A comparison of verses 16, 17 of Ch. 19 in Gospel of Matthew with the verses 17, 18 of Ch. 10 of the Gospel of Mark will show the method of distortion by individual compilers.

Source: The New English Bible, Oxford University Press, 1970.



Sūrah Al-Fātiḥa

THE QUR'ĀN

The Qur'ān is the complete book of guidance for mankind. It is the sacred book of the Muslims and the main source of Law in Islam. The whole of the Qur'ān is from Allah. Each word of it is a revealed word. It was sent down to Muḥammad (pbuh) through the angel Jibrā'īl. The Qur'ān is in the Arabic language. It was revealed piecemeal and completed over a period of twenty three years.

No other book in the world can match the Qur'ān in respect of its recording and preservation. The astonishing fact about this book of Allah is that it has

remained unchanged even to a dot over the last fourteen hundred years. The Qur'ān was recorded as soon as it was revealed under the personal supervision of Prophet Muḥammad (pbuh). The Qur'ān exists today in its original form unaltered and undistorted. It is a living miracle in the sense that it survived so many centuries without suffering any change. The Qur'ānic message goes beyond time and space. Every word of it – even the smallest particles and signs are intact in the hearts of thousands of Muslims who continue to memorise and recite it every day. No variation of text can be found in it. You can check this for yourself by listening to the recitation of Muslims from different parts of the world.

Allah the Almighty has Himself taken the responsibility of preserving the Qur'ān and He says, *“Surely, we have revealed this reminder (Dhikr) and Lo, We verily are its Guardian”* (15:9).

The Qur'ān is a living proof of the existence of Allah, the All-powerful. It is also a testimony of the validity of the Islamic way of life for all times. Arabic, the language of the Qur'ān, unlike the languages of other revealed books, is a living, dynamic and a very rich language. Millions of people all over the world speak and use Arabic in their daily life. This is a further testimony to the unchanging character of the Qur'ān.

The subject matter of the Qur'ān is man and his ultimate goal in life. Its teachings cover all areas of this life and the life after death. It contains principles, doctrines and directions for every sphere of human activity. The theme of the Qur'ān consists broadly of three fundamental beliefs – Tawḥīd, Risālah and Ākhirah. Tawḥīd is the basic theme of the Qur'ān. All the prophets and messengers of Allah called people towards Tawḥīd. The Qur'ān gives a picturesque description of the Paradise which will be awarded to the true obedient servants of Allah. The severe punishment to be meted out to the evildoers has also been depicted vividly in the Qur'ān.

The Qur'ān urges people to follow its guidance and teachings. The success of human beings on this earth and in life after death depends on obedience to the Qur'ānic teachings. We cannot perform our duties as the servants of Allah and His agents if we do not follow the Qur'ān. The Qur'ān urges us to work for the supremacy of Allah and for the removal of all evils.

The superb style of the Qur'ān has a tremendous effect of its readers. It totally changes the pattern of life of those who believe and practise its teachings. It leaves a soothing effect on the mind of the reader, even if he does not fully understand its meaning.

The Qur'ān has thirty parts (Ajzā') and 114 chapters (Sūrahs). Chapters revealed when the Prophet was living in Makkah are known as *Makki* and those revealed in Madīnah are called *Madani*.

ĀKHIRAH

We have already mentioned the three most important beliefs in Islam: Tawhīd (oneness of Allah), Riṣālah (prophethood) and Ākhirah (life after death). Now we will look at: *Ākhirah*.

Belief in Ākhirah is very important and is vital for all Muslims. Our life on this earth is temporary and is meant to be a preparation for Ākhirah which is *never ending*. Life on this earth becomes meaningless if good actions are not rewarded and bad conduct punished. Regular attendance in school is of no sense without an examination after a period to decide the success of the pupils. In the same way, our life on earth is meaningless without a test after death on the Day of Judgment (*Yawmul Ākhirah* or *Yawmuddīn*) in the court of Justice of Almighty Allah.

To prepare ourselves for this day of test, we need to follow the guidance given through the prophets. Without life after death, there would have been no need for prophets and messengers.

There are people who do not care whether there is a life after death. Some even do not believe in it at all. These people will suffer terribly for their unbelief. A sensible person cannot possibly say there is no life after death. He can be doubtful but he would be always at a loss, if his doubt proves untrue.

So, the safe course to follow is to believe in what all the prophets and messengers told people to believe. Not to care about Ākhirah is a serious failing. We are certain that all human beings die, so it is quite reasonable to prepare for that eternal life which no doubt will follow death.

Doubts have been expressed by unbelievers about life after death. They cannot understand how Allah can raise men and women after death. If Allah could make human beings out of nothing, why should it be difficult for Him to raise them after death?

The Qur'ān says:

“Does man think that we shall not assemble his bones? Yes, surely, yes, we are able to restore the very shape of his fingers.” (75:3,4).

Life on this earth would be horrible if all people thought that there would be no life after death. There would be no restraint or control on what we do. Belief in Ākhirah has a tremendous influence on the life of a Muslim. He knows that Allah is watching all his actions and he will have to account for them on the Day of Judgment. His conduct and behaviour will therefore be responsible, controlled and careful. He will always try to do those things which Allah will favour and give up those actions which will incur His punishment.

A Muslim believes that he will be rewarded in the life after death for all his good actions. He will live in Heaven, a place of eternal happiness and peace.

The ones who are wrong-doers will be punished on the Day of Judgment and will be placed in Hell, a place of severe punishment and suffering.

To prepare for that day and to be rewarded by Allah the Merciful and the Kind, we need to do what Allah ordained for us and shun all bad habits and wrong actions. We can do this if we follow the guidance given to Muḥammad (pbuh) by Allah. This is the safest course for our success in the Ākhirah.

PILLARS OF ISLAM

Islam has five basic duties which Muslims must perform. They are known as the five pillars of Islam (Arkān al Islam). These pillars are mentioned in the following *Ḥadīth* (a saying of prophet Muḥammad (pbuh):

بُنِيَ الْإِسْلَامُ عَلَى خَمْسٍ : شَهَادَةِ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَأَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا
رَسُولُ اللَّهِ، وَإِقَامِ الصَّلَاةِ، وَإِيتَاءِ الزَّكَاةِ، وَالْحَجِّ وَصَوْمِ
رَمَضَانَ - رَجَزَارِي

“Bunīyal Islāmu ‘ālā khamsin; Shahādati an lā ilāha illal lāhu wa anna Muḥammadar rasūlul lāhi; wa iqāmis Ṣalāti, wa ita'iz Zakāti, wal Ḥajji, wa Ṣawmi Ramaḍān”.

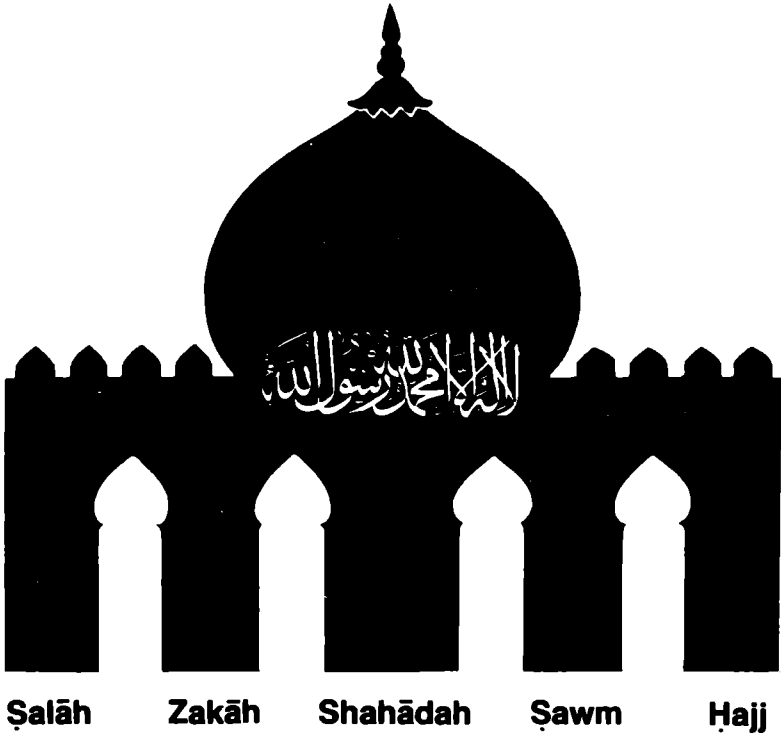
The meaning of this *Ḥadīth* is:

“Islam is based on five things: Declaring that there is no god but Allah and that Muḥammad is the messenger of Allah, the establishment of Ṣalāh, the payment of Zakāh, the Ḥajj and Ṣawm in the month of Ramaḍān.”

The five pillars as mentioned in the *Ḥadīth* are:

As-Shahādah	<i>(declaration of faith)</i>
Ṣalāh	<i>(five compulsory daily prayers)</i>
Zakāh	<i>(welfare contribution)</i>
Ḥajj	<i>(pilgrimage to Makkah)</i>
Ṣawm	<i>(fasting during Ramaḍān)</i>

FIVE PILLARS OF ISLAM



DECLARATION OF FAITH



Declaration of faith

A Muslim declares his faith by reciting:

لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ مُحَمَّدٌ رَسُوْلُ اللَّهِ

LĀ ILĀHA ILLAL LĀHU MUḤAMMADUR RASŪLUL LĀH.

These Arabic words mean: "There is no God but Allah, Muḥammad is the messenger of Allah". This declaration is called **Kalimah Ṭayyibah**. It summarizes the whole of Islamic belief. The first part (Lā Ilāha Illal Lāh) is about the Oneness of Allah (Tawḥīd in Arabic) while the second part (Muḥammadur Rasūlul Lāh) concerns the prophethood (Risālah) of Muḥammad (peace be upon him). The four Arabic words of the first part are: *Lā* which means no; *Ilāha* meaning god; *Ilā* meaning but; and *Allah*. The second part has three words: *Muḥammad*; *Rasul* meaning messenger; and *Allah*.

The first pillar of Islam is As-Shahādah, which concerns belief in Tawḥīd and Risālah of Muḥammad (pbuh). The other four pillars form the main core of 'Ibādah. 'Ibādah, an Arabic term, includes any activity which is done to gain Allah's favour. Ṣalāh, Zakāh, Ṣawm and Ḥajj are the main forms of worship or 'Ibādah. If we perform them regularly and correctly, we come closer to Allah, our Creator and Sustainer.

These four basic duties of Ṣalāh, Zakāh, Ṣawm and Ḥajj comprise the training programme which has been designed for us by Allah so that we can shape our life around As-Shahādah. We already know that we belong to Allah and He is our Master. So, in order to behave like the servant of our Creator, we must practise Ṣalāh, Zakāh, Ṣawm and Ḥajj faithfully.

ṢALĀH

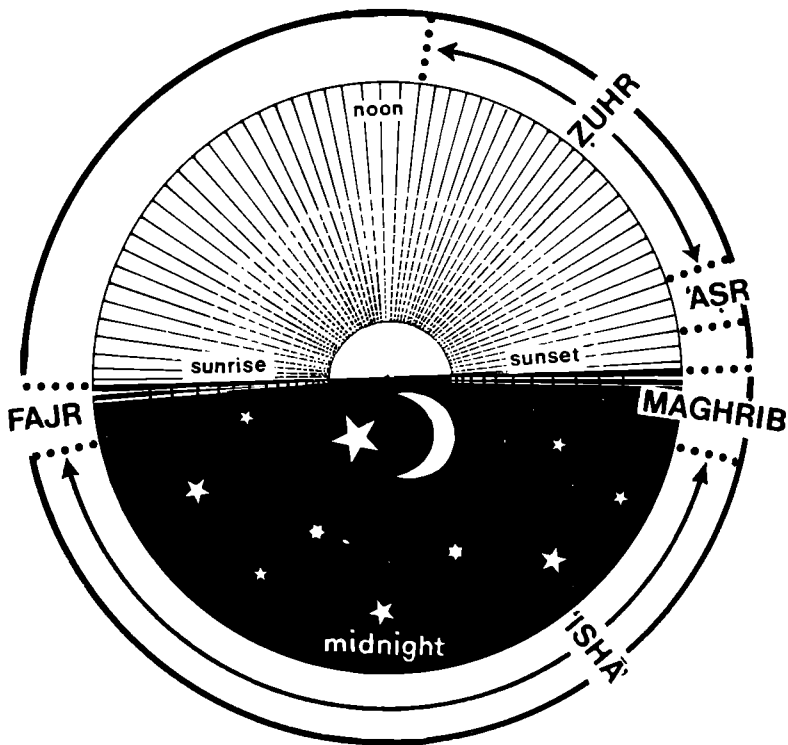
Ṣalāh is the second pillar of Islam. It refers to the five compulsory daily prayers. Ṣalāh is offered five times a day individually or in congregation. We offer Ṣalāh to remember Allah. It brings us closer to Him. The Qur'ān says.

"Establish Ṣalāh to remember me (Allah)" (20:14)

Ṣalāh is the practical proof of our faith in Allah and Islam. It has been made compulsory at certain fixed times (4:103).

The five daily prayers are:

Fajr	<i>(from dawn until just before sunrise)</i>
Zuḥr	<i>(after mid-day until afternoon)</i>
'Asr	<i>(from late afternoon until just before sunset)</i>
Maghrib	<i>(after sunset until daylight ends)</i>
'Ishā'	<i>(night until dawn)</i>



You must know at this stage how to offer Ṣalāh. First, try to understand clearly why we need to offer Ṣalāh. We offer Ṣalāh to remember Allah our Creator and to be close to Him and to gain his favour.

To say your prayer you must be clean and pure. The Qur’ān says: *“Surely Allah loves those who turn to Him and those who care for cleanliness.”* Cleanliness of the body and clothes is called Ṭahārah or purification. You may be clean outwardly and still not be pure – it is especially important to remove all trace of urine or excrement from the clothes worn for prayer.

How can we have cleanliness? We can have a full wash of the whole body with pure water or we can have a part wash, cleaning only parts of the body. The full wash is called **Ghusl**, and the part wash is **Wuḍu** (ablution), in Arabic.

WUḌU

You cannot say your prayers without performing Wuḍu (ablution).

a First have *Niyyah* (Intention) that you are making Wuḍu for Ṣalāh and begin by saying, "*Bismillāhir raḥmānir raḥīm*" (In the name of Allah, the most Merciful and the most Kind). Wash both hands up to the wrists three times, making sure that water has reached between the fingers.



a

b Put a handful of water into your mouth and rinse it thoroughly three times.



b

c Sniff water into your nostrils three times to clean them and then wash the tip of the nose three times.



c

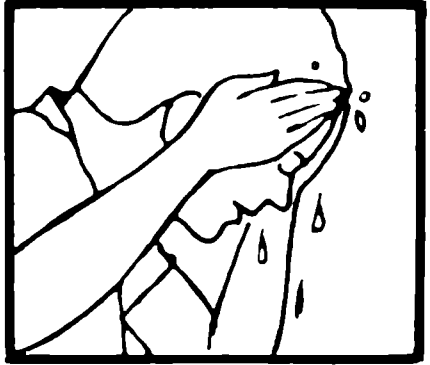


بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

d Wash your face three times from right ear to left ear and from forehead to throat.



d



e Wash your right arm and then your left arm thoroughly from wrist up to elbow three times.

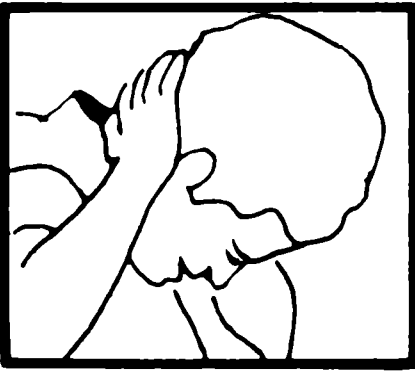


e

f Move the inside of your wet hands over your head starting from the top of forehead to the back and pass your hands over the back of the head to the neck.



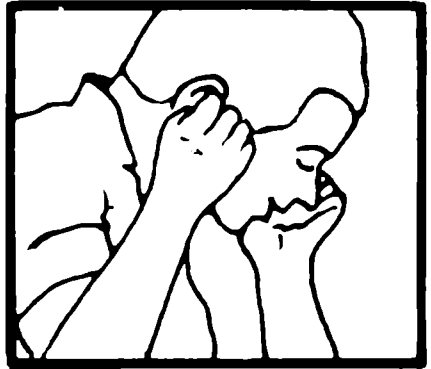
f



f



g Put your wet fingers into the grooves of your ears and ear holes and also pass your wet thumbs behind the ears.



g

h Wash both feet up to the ankles starting from the right, making sure that water has reached between the toes and all other parts of your feet.



h

If you had done a complete *Wuḍu* before putting on your socks, it is not necessary to take them off everytime you want to repeat *Wuḍu*. It is enough to wipe the upper part of the socks with your wet hands. Such *Wuḍu* lasts for 24 hours only (three days for a journey) and a fresh *Wuḍu* must be made after socks are taken off.

You finish your *Wuḍu* by reciting:

“Ash hādu an Lā ilāha illal lāh wa ash hādu anna Muḥammadar rasūlul lāh”

which means:

“I declare that there is no god but Allah and also I declare that Muḥammad is the messenger of Allah”.

A fresh *Wuḍu* is a *must* after:

- 1 Natural discharges – Urine, stools, gas and the like
- 2 Flow of blood or pus and the like from any part of the body
- 3 Vomiting
- 4 Falling asleep.

Tayammum (*Dry Ablution*)

You can perform your prayer by *Tayammum* when:

- a You are sick and cannot use water
- b Water is not available
- c Use of water is harmful

In these cases, what you are required to do is:

- 1 Place both hands lightly on earth, sand, stone or any other object having dust on it.
- 2 Blow the dust off the hands and wipe the face with them once in the same way as done in *Wuḍu*.
- 3 Repeat as in (1) and wipe the right arm up to the elbow with the left hand and left arm with the right hand.

FARḌ (COMPULSORY) ṢALĀH

A Muslim must pray five times a day. The compulsory prayers are called *FARḌ* in Arabic. Each unit of prayer is called a *RAKA’H*. *Fard* prayers are:

FAJR	2 Raka’h
ZUHR	4 Raka’h
‘AṢR	4 Raka’h
MĀGHRIB	3 Raka’h
‘ĪSHĀ’	4 Raka’h
*JUM’AH	2 Raka’h

*(in place of *Zuḥr* on Friday)

SUNNAH PRAYERS

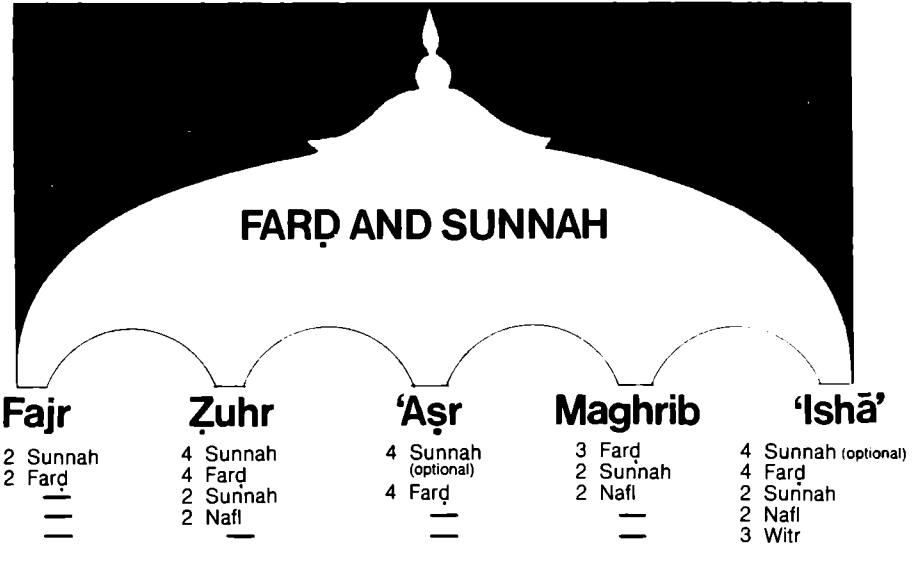
Prophet Muḥammad (pbuh) prayed extra raka'hs in addition to Farḍ prayers. These prayers are called SUNNAH. Prophet Muḥammad (pbuh) always prayed two raka'h before the Farḍ of Fajr and three raka'h after the Farḍ of 'Ishā' even on a journey. The three raka'h after 'Ishā' are called WITR (odd number)

Sunnah prayers are:

Fajr	... 2 raka'h before Farḍ
Zuhr	... 4 before Farḍ and 2 after
'Aṣr	... 4 (optional) before Farḍ
Maghrib	... 2 raka'h after Farḍ
'Ishā'	... 4 (optional) before Farḍ, 2 raka'h after Farḍ and 3 Witr.

Between 'Isha' and Fajr, a prayer called *Tahajjud* was regularly offered by the prophet. It was obligatory for the prophet. Devout Muslims try to follow the practice.

Muslims also pray additional raka'hs other than Farḍ and Sunnah. These are called Nafillāh (optional).



Times when you must not pray

- 1 From the beginning of sunrise until after 15-20 minutes later
- 2 When the Sun is at its height (Zenith or Meridian)
- 3 From the beginning of sunset until it is fully set.

HOW TO PERFORM ṢALĀH

Having cleansed yourself by Wuḍu, you can now proceed to perform Ṣalāh. You must have a clean body, clean place and clean clothes before you start to offer Ṣalāh.

1 Stand straight facing the direction of Al-Ka'bah. This standing is called QIYĀM and the direction is called QIBLAH in Arabic.

2 Say NIYYAH (intention) of prayer either verbally or in your mind. Niyyah is said with the words, "I intend to pray ṣalatul . . .for Allah."

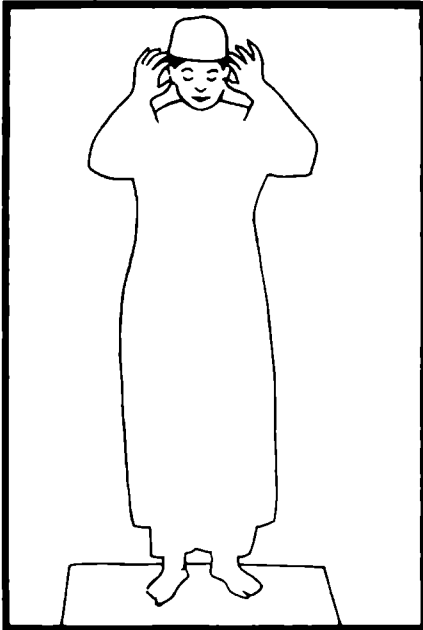
3 Raise your hands up to your ears and say, "ALLĀHU AKBAR" (Allah is the Greatest). This is called TAKBIR AL TAHRĪMAH.

4 Now place your right hand on your left hand just below the navel or on the chest and recite:

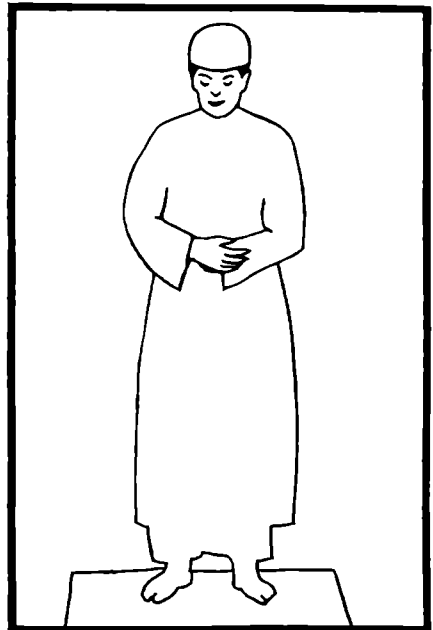
سُبْحَانَكَ اللَّهُمَّ وَبِحَمْدِكَ

وَتَبَارَكَ اسْمُكَ وَتَعَالَى

جَدُّكَ وَلَا إِلَهَ غَيْرُكَ



1, 2 and 3



4, 5 and 6

اللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ¹

SUBḤĀNAKA ALLĀHUMMA WA BI ḤAMDIKA WA TABĀRA KASMUKA WA
TA'ĀLA JADDUKA WA LĀ ILĀHA GHAYROKA;

This means: O Allah, glory and praise are for You, and blessed is Your name, and exalted is Your Majesty; there is no god but You.

Then recite:

أَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ الرَّجِيمِ

A'UZU BILLĀHI MINASH SHAYṬĀNIR RAJĪM

which means: I seek shelter in Allah from the rejected satan.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

BISMILLĀHIR RAḤMĀNIR RAḤĪM

which means: In the name of Allah, the most Merciful and the most Kind.

5 After this, recite sūrah Al-Fātiḥa (opening chapter) of the Qur'ān:

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ ۝ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ ۝ مَلِكِ يَوْمِ
الدِّينِ ۝ إِيَّاكَ نَعْبُدُ وَإِيَّاكَ نَسْتَعِينُ ۝ اهْدِنَا الصِّرَاطَ
الْمُسْتَقِيمَ ۝ صِرَاطَ الَّذِينَ أَنْعَمْتَ عَلَيْهِمْ ۝
غَيْرِ الْمَغْضُوبِ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا الضَّالِّينَ ۝

AL ḤAMDU LIL LĀHI RABBIL 'ALAMIN, ARRAḤMĀNIR RAḤĪM, MĀLIKI
YAWMIDDĪN, IYYĀKA NA'BUDU WA IYYĀKA NASTA'ĪN, IHDINAṢ ṢĪRĀṬAL
MUSTAQĪMA ṢĪRĀṬAL LADHĪNA AN 'AMTA 'ALAYHIM GHAYRIL
MAGHDŪBI 'ALAYHIM WA LAḌ ḌĀLLĪN. (ĀMĪN).

"All praise is for Allah, the Lord of the Universe, the Merciful and the Kind, Master of the day of judgment, You alone we worship, from You alone we seek help, guide us to the straight path – the path of those whom You favoured and not of those who deserve Your anger or went astray."

The recitation of Al-Fātiḥa is essential in all prayers.

6 Now recite any other passage from the Qur'ān. For example:

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

Bismillāhir raḥmanir raḥīm

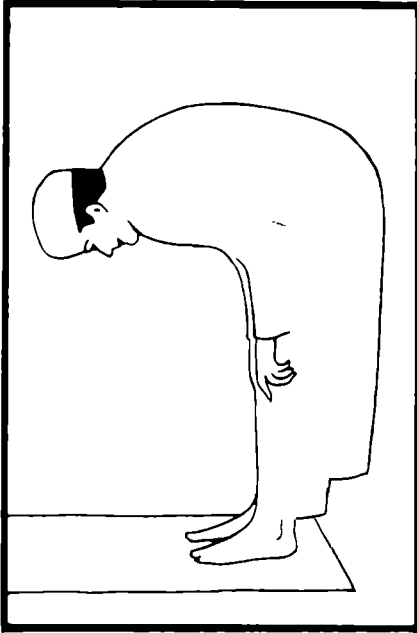
قُلْ هُوَ اللَّهُ أَحَدٌ ۝ اللَّهُ الصَّمَدُ ۝ لَمْ يَلِدْ وَلَمْ يُولَدْ ۝
وَلَمْ يَكُنْ لَهُ كُفُوًا أَحَدٌ ۝

QUL HU WAL LĀHU AHAD, ALLĀHUṢ SAMAD, LAM YALID WA LAM YULAD
WA LAM YA KUL LAHU KUFUWAN AHAD

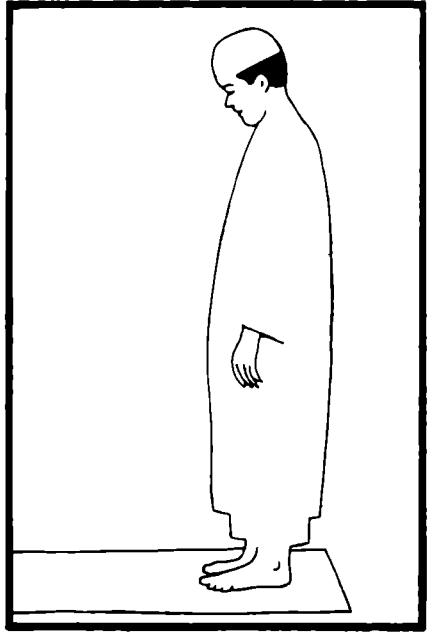
“Say, He is Allah, the One. Allah is Eternal and Absolute. None is born of Him nor is He born and there is none like Him;”

7 Now bow down saying: ALLĀHU
AKBAR² and place your hands on
your knees and say: ṢUBḤĀNA
RABBĀL ‘AZĪM³ (Glory to my Lord,
the Great) three times. This position
is called Rukū.

8 Stand up from the kneeling
position saying: SAMI’ ALLĀHU
LIMAN HAMIDAH⁴ (Allah hears
those who praise Him). RABBANĀ
LAKAL ḤAMD⁵ (Our Lord, praise be
to You). This is called ‘ITIDAL in
Arabic.



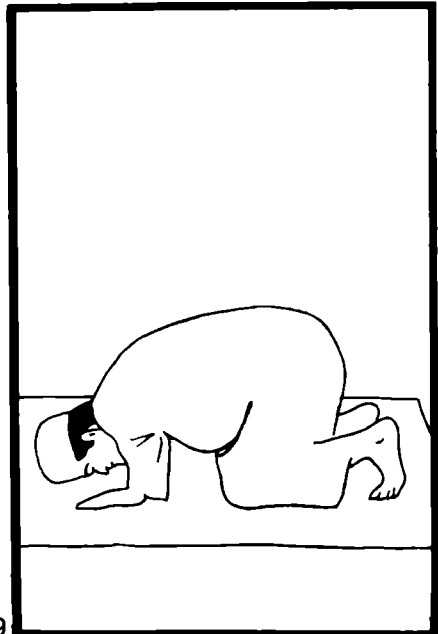
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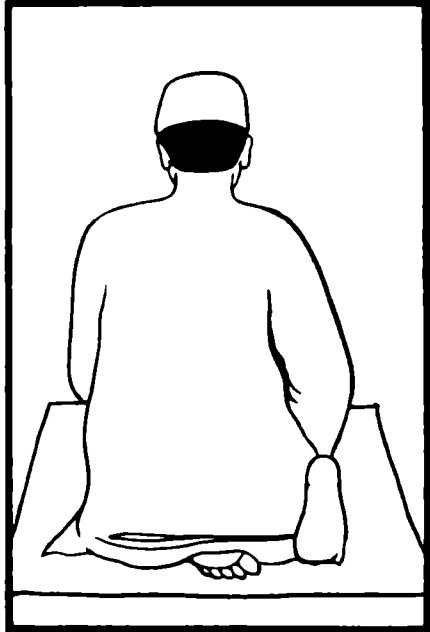
² اللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ ³ سُبْحَانَ رَبِّيَ الْعَظِيمِ ⁴ سَمِعَ اللَّهُ مِنِّي حَمْدَهُ ⁵

9 Prostrate on the floor on your prayer mat saying ALLĀHU AKBAR⁶, with your forehead, nose, palms of both hands and your knees touching the floor. Recite SUBHĀNA RABBĪAL A'LĀ'⁷ (Glory to my Lord, the highest) three times. This position is called SUJŪD. Your arms should not touch the floor.



10 Get up from the floor saying ALLĀHU ADKBAR⁸ and sit upright with your knees bent and palms placed on them. After a moment's rest prostrate again on the floor saying: ALLĀHU AKBAR⁹ and recite SUBHĀNA RABBĪAL A'LĀ'¹⁰ three times. Get up from this position saying ALLĀHU AKBAR¹¹.

9



10

° الله أكبر ° سبحان ربّي الأعلى ° الله أكبر ° سبحان ربّي الأعلى ° الله أكبر ° الله أكبر ° سبحان ربّي الأعلى ° الله أكبر ° سبحان ربّي الأعلى ° الله أكبر °

This completes one Raka'h or one unit of Ṣalāh. The second raka'h is performed in the same way, except that after the second prostration you sit upright as in Fig 6 and recite quietly AL-TASHAHŪD:

التَّحِيَّاتُ لِلَّهِ وَالصَّلَاةُ وَالطَّيِّبَاتُ السَّلَامُ عَلَيْكَ أَيُّهَا النَّبِيُّ
وَرَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ وَبَرَكَاتُهُ. السَّلَامُ عَلَيْنَا وَعَلَى عِبَادِ اللَّهِ الصَّالِحِينَ
أَشْهَدُ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَأَشْهَدُ أَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا عَبْدُهُ وَرَسُولُهُ ○

AT-TAḤIYYĀTU LILLĀHI	– All prayer is for Allah
WAṢ ṢĀLAWĀTU WAT ṬAYYĪBĀTU	– and worship and goodness
AS-SALĀMU 'ALAYKA YA AYYUHANNABĪYYU	– Peace be on you, O prophet
WA RAḤMATULLĀHI WA BARAKĀTUHU	– and the mercy of Allah and His blessings
ASSĀLAMU 'ALAYNĀ	– Peace be on us
WA 'ALĀ 'IBADILLAHIṢ ṢĀLIḤĪN	– and on the righteous servants of Allah
ASH HĀDU AN LĀILĀHA ILLAL LĀHU	– I declare that there is no god but Allah
WA ASH HĀDU ANNA MUḤAMMADAN 'ABDUHU WA RASŪLUHU	– and declare that Muḥammad is His servant and messenger

In a three raka'h ṣalāh (as in Maghrib) or a four raka'h ṣalāh (Ẓuhr, 'Aṣr and 'Ishā') you stand up for the remaining raka'h after Tashahūd. But at the time of Fajr you remain seated after the second raka'h and recite DARŪD (blessings for the prophet):

ALLĀHUMMA ṢALLI 'ALĀ MUḤAMMAD	– O Allah, let your blessings come upon Muḥammad
WA 'ALĀ ĀLI MUḤAMMAD	– and the family of Muḥammad
KAMĀ ṢALLAITA 'ALĀ IBRĀHĪMA WA 'ALĀ ĀLI IBRĀHĪMA	– as you blessed Ibrāhīm and his family

اللَّهُمَّ صَلِّ عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ وَعَلَى آلِ مُحَمَّدٍ كَمَا صَلَّيْتَ عَلَى إِبْرَاهِيمَ
وَعَلَى آلِ إِبْرَاهِيمَ إِنَّكَ حَمِيدٌ مَجِيدٌ ○

اللَّهُمَّ بَارِكْ عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ وَعَلَى آلِ مُحَمَّدٍ كَمَا بَارَكْتَ عَلَى
إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَعَلَى آلِ إِبْرَاهِيمَ إِنَّكَ حَبِيدٌ مَجِيدٌ ۝

ALLĀHUMMA BARIK 'ALĀ
MUḤAMMAD WA 'ALĀ
ĀLI MUḤAMMAD

– O Allah, bless Muḥammad
– and the family of Muḥammad

KAMĀ BARAKTA 'ALĀ IBRĀHĪMA
WA 'ALĀ ALI IBRĀHĪMA

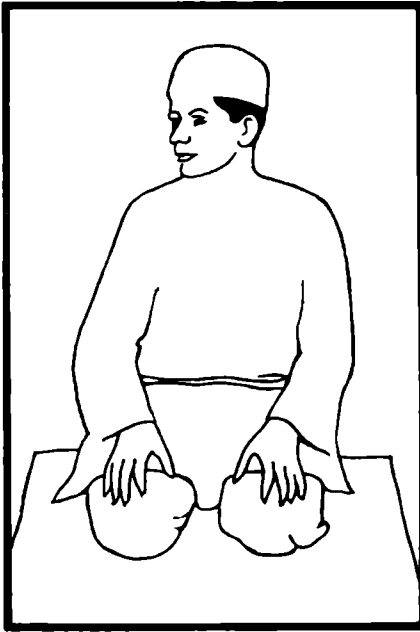
– as you blessed Ibrāhīm and
his family

INNAKA ḤAMĪDUN MAJĪD

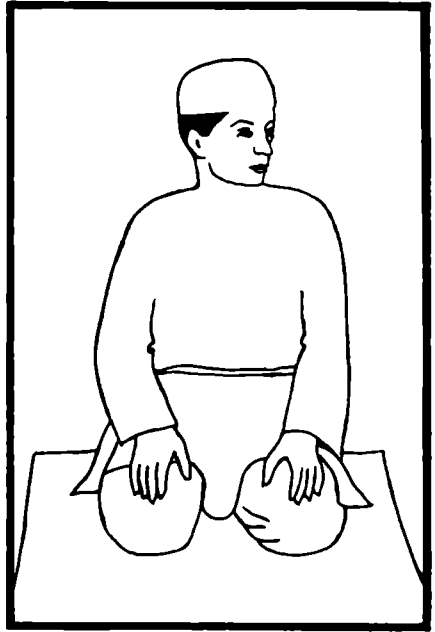
– truly you are the Praise-worthy and Glorious.

After this you may say any DU'Ā (supplication) which you know.

11 Now turn your face to the right saying: ASSĀLAMU 'ALAYKUM WA RAḤMATULLĀH¹² (peace and the mercy of Allah be on you) and then turn your face to the left repeating the words.



11



السلام عليكم ورحمة الله¹²

This completes the two raka'h Ṣalāh. In the four raka'h Ṣalāh of Ḍuhr, 'Aṣr and 'Ishā, the whole procedure is repeated except that when you get up to complete the remaining two raka'h (one raka'h in Maghrib and Witr) after Tashahūd, you only recite Al-Fātiḥa in Farḍ prayers and no other sūrah.

In the prayer of FAJR, MAGHRIB and 'ĪSHĀ' the Qur'ān is recited aloud while in Ḍuhr and 'Aṣr it is recited silently. In all prayers, Tasbīḥ (Subḥāna Rabbīal 'Azīm and Subḥāna Rabbīal alā') and Tashahūd and Darūd are said quietly. When the Fajr, Maghrib and 'Ishā' prayers are said in congregation, the *Imām* (one who leads the prayer), recites the Qur'ān aloud. This applies also to Jum'ah prayer (Friday Prayer in place of Ḍuhr).

LESSON OF ṢALĀH

Ṣalāh is the most important of the five basic duties of Islam. We come closer to Allah, by performing it regularly, correctly and with full awareness of its significance and meaning. At this stage, refresh your memory about the purpose of our creation and the need for performing Islamic duties. Allah has created us to worship Him. He says in the Qur'ān: *"I have not created jinn and human beings for any other purpose except to worship me"* (51:56). So, whatever duty we carry out, we must bear in mind that we are doing it for Allah's sake. Only then, can we expect to gain the desired benefits of the performance of Ṣalāh.

The lessons of Ṣalāh are:

- 1 It brings men and women closer to Allah.
- 2 It keeps human beings away from indecent, shameful and forbidden activities.
- 3 It is a training programme designed to control evil desires and passions.
- 4 It purifies the heart, develops the mind and comforts the soul.
- 5 It is a constant reminder of Allah and His greatness.
- 6 It develops discipline and will power.
- 7 It is a guide to the most upright way of life.
- 8 It is a proof of true equality, solid unity and universal brotherhood.
- 9 It is the source of patience, courage, hope and confidence.

- 10 It is a means of cleanliness, purity and punctuality.
- 11 It develops gratitude, humility and refinement.
- 12 It is the demonstration of our obedience to our Creator.
- 13 It is the solid programme of preparing oneself for Jihād – Striving one's utmost to please Allah.

ZAKĀH

Zakāh (Welfare Contribution) is the third pillar of Islam. The Arabic word Zakāh means to purify or cleanse. Zakāh is to be paid once a year on savings at the rate of two and a half per cent. This rate applies to cash, bank savings and gold and silver jewellery. The rate for cattle and agricultural produce is different.

Payment of Zakāh is a means of keeping our wealth clear of greed and selfishness. It also encourages us to be honest in our earnings and expenditure.

Zakāh is a compulsory payment and is neither charity nor a tax. Charity is optional and taxes can be used by the state for any purpose, but Zakāh has to be spent under fixed headings like helping the poor, the needy, payment of salaries to its collectors, to free captives and debtors, for travellers in need, to win over hearts and for the cause of Allah (9:60).

Zakāh is an act of 'Ibādah. 'Ibādah is an Arabic term which means worship and obedience. It includes all activities of life, if we do them to please Allah. We pay Zakāh to gain Allah's favour.

Zakāh provides us with the opportunity of sharing our excess wealth with those less fortunate than ourselves. In fact we and our wealth belong to Allah. He is the real owner and we are merely the trustees of His wealth. We do our duty as trustees if we pay Zakāh as an obligatory part of 'Ibādah.

In our first lesson we learned that Islam is a complete code of life which includes among other things, the economic side of life. Islam has its own economic principles. Zakāh is one of the basic principles of the Islamic economy, based on social welfare and fair distribution of wealth. In addition to the compulsory payment of Zakāh, Muslims are encouraged in the Qur'ān to make voluntary contributions to help the poor, and the needy and for other social welfare purposes. This voluntary contribution is called Ṣadaqah.

Through the payment of Zakāh, the rich share their wealth with the poor and thus the process of concentration of wealth is checked and fair distribution ensured.

SCHEDULE OF ZAKAH

	Wealth on which Zakāh is payable	Amount which determines the payment of Zakāh (NISĀB)	Rate of Zakāh
1	Agricultural produce	5 WASĀQ (1568kg) per harvest	5 per cent produce in case of irrigated land; 10 per cent of produce from rain fed land.
2	Gold, Silver, ornaments of gold and silver	88 grams of gold or 617 grams of silver	2.5 per cent of value
3	Cash in hand or at Bank	Value of 617 grams of silver	2.5 per cent of amount
4	Trading goods	Value of 617 grams of silver	2.5 per cent value of goods
5	Cows and buffaloes	30 in number	For every 30, one 1-year-old; for every 40, one 2-year-old
6	Goats and sheep	40 in number	One for first 40; two for 120; three for 300; one more for every 100
7	Produce of mines	Any quantity	20 per cent of value of produce
8	Camels	5 in number	a Up to 24, one sheep or goat for each five camels b 25-35, one 1-year-old she-camel c 36-45, one 2-year-old she-camel d 46-60, one 3-year-old she-camel e 61-75, one 4-year-old she-camel f 76-90, two 2-year-old she-camels g 91-120, two 3-year-old she-camels h 121 or more, one 2-year-old she-camel for each additional 40, or one 3-year-old she-camel for each additional 50

ŞAWM

Şawm (fasting), the fourth pillar of Islam, is another act of 'Ibādah. All adult Muslims must fast from dawn to sunset every day of Ramaḍān, the ninth month of the Islamic calendar. This means abstaining from eating, drinking, smoking and conjugal relations during the hours of fasting. Travellers and the sick can defer fasting during Ramaḍān and make up for it later.

Şawm develops self-control and helps us to overcome selfishness, greed, laxity and other vices. It is an annual training programme to refresh us for carrying out our duties towards Allah, the Creator and Sustainer. Şawm gives us the feeling of hunger and thirst. We can thus experience ourselves how it's like to remain in empty stomach. This develops our feeling for the poor and hungry people. Fasting teaches us to control the love of comfort. It also helps us to keep our sexual desires within control. Hunger, comfort and sex are three factors which must be kept under control to behave as Allah's servants.

It helps us to remain truly obedient to Allah's commands. That is why the Qur'ān says: *"O you who believe; Fasting is prescribed for you as it was prescribed for those before you that you are expected to be truly obedient"*. (2:183). A truly obedient Muslim is called a *Muttaqī* and his true obedience or piety – developed through şawm – is known as TAQWĀ' in Islam. Taqwā' keeps a person away from sin.

The month of Ramaḍān is a month of forgiveness, mercy and a means of escaping the punishment of Hell-fire.

The duty of fasting is only for Allah's sake and there is a very pleasing and attractive reward for this in the life after death.

The following acts will break the fast:

- a Deliberate eating or drinking during fasting hours.
- b If anything enters the body through the nose or mouth; this includes smoking or sniffing any powdered substance.
- c Having any conjugal relations during fasting hours.

An injection in the muscle is allowed during fasting. Unintentional eating or drinking due to forgetfulness or rinsing out the mouth or bathing and putting drops in the eye do not make the fast invalid.

A Muslim is expected to remain away from all bad actions during his fast. He should not tell a lie, break a promise or do any deceitful act.

The very purpose of fasting is to make a Muslim able to control his passions, so that he becomes a person of good deeds and intentions. Anger – a common human weakness – can also be brought under control by fasting.

In addition to the compulsory fasting in Ramaḍān, a Muslim may fast during other times of the year. These fasts will be treated as Sunnah.

Fasting is not allowed during menstruation of women. They are required to make up the days lost during this period at some other time. A Muslim must not fast:

- a on the day of 'Īdul Fiṭr
- b on the day of 'Īdul Aḍhā'

The Qur'ān was revealed in the month of Ramaḍān. There is a night in the month which is "better than a thousand months" (97:3). This night is called LAYLATUL QADR (night of power). According to Ḥadīth, this night occurs during the last ten days of Ramaḍān (most probably the odd numbered nights). It is a night of great importance; we should worship as much as we can on this night.

An additional prayer known as TARĀWĪḤ (20 raka'h or 8 raka'h) is offered during Ramaḍān after 'Īshā'. This is a sunnah prayer in which efforts are made to recite as much of the Qur'ān as possible. In many mosques, the whole Qur'ān is recited in Tarāwīḥ prayer. This prayer is generally offered in congregation. Those who cannot join a congregation should offer Tarāwīḥ at home. A pre-dawn meal known as *Suḥūr* is taken in Ramaḍān.

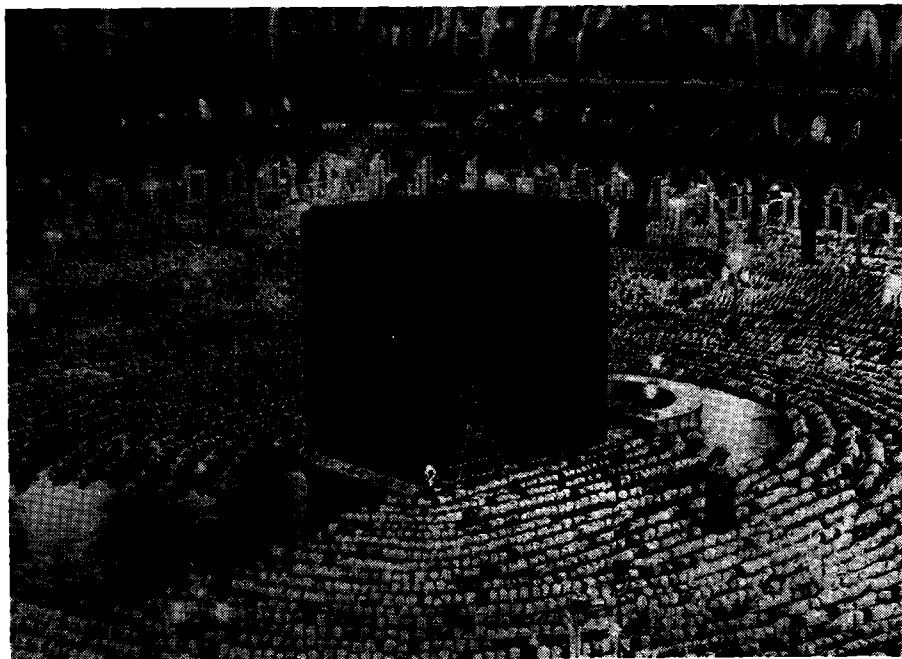
At the end of Ramaḍān Muslims celebrate 'ĪDUL FIṬR, a day of thanksgiving and happiness. It is one of the great occasions for the Muslim community. On this day, Muslims offer special prayers in congregation and thank Allah for His blessings and mercy.

ḤAJJ

Ḥajj is the fifth pillar of Islam. It is a visit to *Al-Ka'bah*, the house of Allah in Makkah, once in a lifetime by those Muslims who can afford to make the journey. It is performed during the period from the 8th to 13th *Dhū'l Ḥijjah*, the twelfth month of the Islamic calendar.

Al-Ka'bah, known as *Baitullāh* (House of Allah), is a cube-like one-storey building which was built originally by Ādam and later rebuilt by Prophet Ibrāhīm (Abraham) and his son Ismā'īl (Ishmael). It is the first house ever built for the sole purpose of the worship of Allah. Allah has blessed this Al-Ka'bah. Muslims who can afford to make the journey and are physically fit come here every year from all over the world.

The occasion may rightly be called the *Annual International Muslim Assembly*. During Hajj, the Islamic brotherhood becomes particularly evident and can be experienced in a special way by everyone who takes part. Barriers of language, territory, colour and race disappear and the bond of faith is uppermost. Everyone has the same status in the house of Allah – the status of His servant.



Al-Ka'bah — The 'House of Allah' at Makkah

Ḥajj has a number of important rituals associated with it, including:

- 1 Putting on Iḥrām**
- 2 Going round Al-Ka'bah seven times**
- 3 A fast walk between Al-Ṣafā and Al-Marwah near Al-Ka'bah**
- 4 Visiting and staying at MINĀ', 'ARAFAH AND MUZDALIFAH**
- 5 Throwing pebbles at three fixed places in Minā'**
- 6 Cutting or shortening hair**
- 7 Sacrifice of an animal (sheep, goat, cow or camel).**

At the time of Ḥajj, while approaching Makkah, a pilgrim must put on Iḥrām before reaching a point called MĪQĀT (station). Iḥrām is two sheets of unsewn white cloth for men. This is a very simple form of dress a pilgrim must wear in place of his normal everyday clothes. For a woman, Iḥrām is her ordinary dress.

This change is very significant. It reminds the pilgrim of his position in relation to Allah. He is a humble servant of his creator. It also reminds him that after death he will be wrapped in white sheets and his favourite or expensive clothes will be left behind.

When he puts on Iḥrām, the pilgrim expresses his intention (Niyyah) by saying "I intend to put on Iḥrām for Ḥajj"

There are then some restrictions on the pilgrim while in the state of Iḥrām. He or she *must not*:

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| a use perfume | – to help forget enjoyment of ordinary daily life |
| b kill or harm animals, even insects | – to feel that everything belongs to Allah |
| c break or uproot plants | – to kill one's urge for aggression and feel a love for nature |
| d hunt | – to develop mercy |
| e marry or take part in a wedding | – to forget normal life and think of the Creator |
| f anything dishonest or arrogant | – to behave like a servant of Allah |
| g carry arms | – to give up aggressive attitude |
| h cover the head (males) | – to express humbleness |
| i cover the face (females) | – to feel a pure atmosphere |
| j wear shoes covering ankles | – to express simplicity |
| k cut hair | } – to express non-inteference with nature |
| l clip nails | |
| m conjugal relations | – to forget worldly pleasure |

All these restrictions make a pilgrim think of Allah and his ultimate goal in life – success in the life after death – and nothing else. While in Iḥram the pilgrim recites *Talbiyah* as follows:

لَبَّيْكَ اللَّهُمَّ رَبَّنَا لَبَّيْكَ لَبَّيْكَ لَا شَرِيكَ لَكَ كَتَبْنَا
 إِنَّ الْحَمْدَ وَالنِّعْمَةَ لَكَ وَالْمُلْكَ لَا شَرِيكَ لَكَ

LABBAYKA ALLĀHUMMA LABBAYK, LABBAYKA LĀ SHARĪKA LAKA LABBAYK, INNAL ḤAMDA WANNI'MATA LAKA WAL MULK, LĀ SHARIKA LAK.

“Here I am O Lord, here I am, here I am, You have no partner, here I am, surely praise, blessings and the kingdom are for You. You have no partner.”

Ḥajj has in it all the lessons of ṣalāh, zakāh and ṣawm. Do you remember why we offer Ṣalāh, pay Zakāh and fast? We offer Ṣalāh to remember Allah, pay Zakāh to please Him and fast only for His sake. During Ṣalāh, we present ourselves to Allah five times a day, but during Ḥajj we have to think of Allah all the time. At the time of Ṣalāh, we face towards Al-Kab'ah, but during Ḥajj we actually go there in person. Zakāh teaches us to pay part of our savings for welfare and other good causes for Allah's sake; but during Ḥajj we must sacrifice much more of our money for the pleasure of Allah.

Ṣawm teaches us to control ourselves during daylight hours from eating, drinking or smoking or having conjugal relations. But in the state of Iḥrām we practice many more restrictions. Eating and drinking are not prohibited in the state of Iḥrām.

What do we learn from all these exercises during Ḥajj? We learn that we belong to Allah, we will return to Him and we must do as He commands us.

JIHĀD

Jihād is the use of all our energies and resources to establish the Islamic system of life, in order to gain Allah's favour. Jihād is an Arabic word which means to try one's utmost. It is a continuous process. In its first state a Muslim learns to control his own bad desires and intentions. We need to strive hard to achieve this. This is Jihād within ourselves and is the basis for the comprehensive Jihād which is concerned with establishing Ma'rūf (right) and removing Mun'kar (evil). It demands the use of all our material and mental resources. Eventually we may be required to give our life for the cause of Islam.

The aim of Jihād is to seek pleasure of Allah. This must not be forgotten because this purpose is the basis of all Islamic endeavours.

In our earlier lessons we learned about the basic duties of Ṭmān, Ṣalāh, Zakāh, Ṣawm and Ḥajj. All these duties teach us to obey Allah and gain his favour so that we pass the test on the day of judgment, and receive the reward of entering the Paradise – the place of permanent happiness, joy and peace.

Regular and conscious performance of the four basic duties will inspire us to live and die for the cause of Islam, which we believe to be the only right course for the success in life here and hereafter. In other words, all Islamic duties should prepare us to engage in Jihād. Jihād is the end result of our efforts in Ṣalāh, Zakāh, Ṣawm and Ḥajj. We cannot think of Islam without Jihād.

We would like to see truth prevail and untruth vanish, but we are aware that this cannot happen on its own; we have to do our utmost to achieve it. The

performance of other Islamic duties will be meaningless if they do not lead us towards the target of Jihād.

The method of Jihād is the one practiced by the prophet Muḥammad (pbuh). His life is the perfect example for us and we will learn about it later.

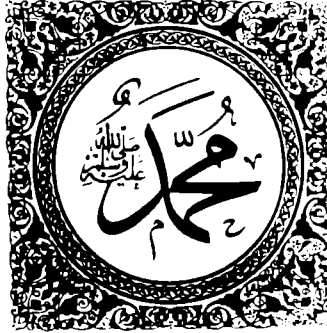
Our duties as Muslims is to carry out Allah's commands and to urge others to do the same. This duty has been given to us by Allah in his own words in the Qur'ān:

"You are the best of Ummah (community) you have been raised for mankind so that you command what is right and forbid what is evil, and you believe in Allah." (3:110).

We should ask others to be obedient to Allah in an appealing and convincing way. Your own life-style will count for much here. It is most important that you try hard to practise what you say. Allah does not like those whose words and deeds are not the same. The Qur'ān says, *"Why do you ask of others the right conduct and you yourselves forget?"* (2:44). In another place in the Qur'ān Allah says, *"O you who believe! Why do you say that which you do not? It is most hateful to Allah that you say that which you do not"* (61:2, 3).

These verses clearly direct us to compare our own deeds with our words. To achieve this, we must carry out our duty to do good ourselves and urge others to do the same. This will enable us to remove our weaknesses and deficiencies. None of us is perfect, but our imperfections would gradually decrease if we do our very best to persue our duty of Jihād.

LIFE OF MUḤAMMAD (pbuh)



Muḥammad

“Indeed, in the Messenger of Allah, you have for you, the best example.”
(33:21)

“We sent you (Muḥammad) not but as a mercy for mankind.” (21:107)

So far you have been learning the basic things about Islam. Now it is time to learn about our great and dear prophet, Muḥammad (peace be upon him). It is through Muḥammad (pbuh) that Allah has blessed us with Islam.

No other person in the history of mankind has left so deep an impact on the life of his followers as Muḥammad (pbuh), the last messenger of Allah. His life is the best example (Uswatun-Ḥasanah) for us to follow. He has shown us how to obey Allah the Lord of the Universe. Allah says in the Qur’ān:

“Say (O Muḥammad), if you love Allah, follow me; Allah will love you and forgive your sins, Allah is Forgiving and Merciful.” (3:31).

It means that Allah will be pleased with us only if we practise Islam as practised by Muḥammad (pbuh). He has been described in the Qur’ān as ‘the blessing for the mankind’, (Raḥmatul lil ‘alamin).

Muḥammad’s (pbuh) duty, according to the Qur’ān, was to establish the supremacy of Islam and remove all that was inconsistent with the teachings of Islam. (69:9). In other words, you can say that Muḥammad (pbuh) was made the messenger of Allah to see that truth prevails and falsehood vanishes. As Muslims, we also must work towards the establishment of the supremacy of Allah’s Law and remove evil from society. This is Jihād, which we learned about earlier.

The difference between Muḥammad (pbuh) and us is that he received guidance direct from Allah through revelation, but we did not. Muḥammad

(pbuh) was not only a messenger but a man as well. He was not a super human being, but a mortal man and the last of the messengers of Allah. (18:110).

BIRTH AND CHILDHOOD

Muḥammad (pbuh) was born in the noble tribe of the *Quraysh* in Makkah in Saudi Arabia in 571 CE (Christian Era). His father, 'Abdullāh, died before his birth and he lost his mother, Āminah, when he was only six. A few days after his birth he was given to the care of Ḥalīmah, his foster-mother who suckled him and took care of him for about two years. It was the custom of the tribe of Quraysh to give their new born babies to foster-mothers for breast-feeding.

After the death of his mother, his grandfather, 'Abdul Muṭṭalib, looked after him. From early childhood, then, Muḥammad (pbuh) suffered one shock after another. His grandfather died when he was only eight years old so Muḥammad (pbuh) was now looked after by his uncle, Abū Ṭālib, a leader of the Quraysh and a merchant.

The name *Muḥammad* means *praiseworthy*.

A BUSINESS TRIP TO SYRIA

Muḥammad (pbuh) was growing up in the affectionate care of his uncle, Abū Ṭālib, when at the age of twelve he accompanied him on a business trip to Syria. When their caravan reached Buṣrā in Syria, a Christian priest called *Baḥīra* invited them to a dinner. This was unusual. Abū Ṭālib and his caravan had passed this way before, several times, but was never before asked in by the priest. All the members of the caravan went to the dinner, except Muḥammad (pbuh), who stayed behind, probably to look after the camels and the merchandise. Baḥīra insisted on having Muḥammad (pbuh) join in the dinner. When he did, Baḥīra asked him a few questions, and Muḥammad (pbuh) answered precisely and to the point.

When he heard the answers, Baḥīra – a person well versed in Christianity and the Bible – could identify from his reading that the boy Muḥammad (pbuh) was going to be a prophet in the future. He advised Abū Ṭālib to take special care of his nephew. When they finished their trading, Abū Ṭālib lost no time in returning to Makkah with Muḥammad (pbuh).

TEENAGER AND THE BATTLE OF FUJJĀR AND ḤILF AL-FUḌŪL

When Muḥammad (pbuh) was fifteen, a local war broke out during the Ḥajj season between the tribes of Quraysh and Hawāzin. According to Makkan tradition, war was forbidden in the pilgrimage season (Ḥajj). Despite this, the war lasted four years with intervals, and caused tremendous hardship to people of both sides. Life was becoming intolerable because of the unnecessary bloodshed.

The reason for the war seemed silly to Muḥammad (pbuh), and he felt quite

disgusted at the senseless bloodshed. It caused an awakening in many people and inspired them to take steps to stop the war and make peace.

At the initiative of Al-Zubayr, Muḥammad's (pbuh) uncle, a meeting was called at the house of 'Abdullāh Ibn Jud'ān, who was an influential and wealthy person.

A society called 'Ḥilf al-Fudūl' (Alliance for charity) was formed at this meeting, to help the oppressed, the poor and the needy. Muḥammad (pbuh) was present at the meeting and took the following oath:

"I uphold the pact concluded in my presence when Ibn Jud'ān gave us a great banquet. Should it ever be invoked, I shall immediately rise to answer the call".

The participation of Muḥammad (pbuh) in Ḥilf al-Fudūl is a proof of his concern and interest in the welfare activities, even in his youth.

A word of advice for you here. As young people, when you study the life of Muḥammad (pbuh), you should decide to take part in the welfare of people in general and the welfare of your fellow youngsters in particular. You should study the life of Muḥammad (pbuh), take lessons from it and put them into practice. If you look around you, you will find many unjust and wrong things are taking root in society. You should decide as a young person to do whatever you can to remedy the injustices and wrong-doing.

YOUNG SHEPHERD

While still a boy, Muḥammad (pbuh) tended sheep and during this period had plenty of time to think and contemplate. He moved around with his flock in the vast expanse of the Arabian desert. It provided him with a unique opportunity to have a clear vision of nature, and to see the wonders of the creation of Allah.

Muḥammad (pbuh) was very proud of having spent his youth as a shepherd. He used to say, "Allah sent no prophet who was not a shepherd. Mūsa (Moses) was a shepherd, Dāwūd (David) was also a shepherd." The reason for this might be that Allah wanted His messengers to have experience of life as a shepherd, to help deal with human beings with rare patience, in preaching Allah's message. It is very difficult to control a flock of sheep, goats or camels which do not have any understanding or sense of right and wrong. It needs a lot of patience and care to handle animals. The experience was eventually very useful for the messengers in their task of propagating the message of Allah.

MARRIAGE

As Muḥammad (pbuh) grew up, he helped in running the business of his uncle, who was managing his family with some difficulty. During this time, Muḥammad (pbuh) received an offer from a noble lady named *Khadijah*, to look after her business affairs, Muḥammad's (pbuh) fame as an honest and upright young man had now become well known in Makkah, which is why Khadijah made the proposal.

Muḥammad (pbuh) accepted the offer and set out for Syria with the goods of Khadijah, accompanied by another of her employees, called *Maysarah*. This was Muḥammad's (pbuh) second business trip to Syria.

He had sold the goods and bought what he was told to, before returning to Makkah. He made big profits for Khadijah on this trip because of his intelligence, skill and honesty. It was almost double what anyone else had earned for Khadijah in the past. During the journey, his companion Maysarah, noticed that Muḥammad (pbuh) was protected from the heat of the sun by clouds.

On their return, Maysarah hurried to Khadijah and told her about his experience of Muḥammad (pbuh) and about the big profits he made for her.

Khadijah, the daughter of *Khuwaylid*, was a determined, intelligent and noble woman. She was deeply impressed by the ability, character and performance of Muḥammad (pbuh).

Khadijah decided to send a proposal of marriage to Muḥammad (pbuh). On the advice of his uncle, Abū Ṭālib, Muḥammad (pbuh) consented to the proposal and the wedding ceremony went ahead.

Now Muḥammad (pbuh) was a family man and the marriage marked the beginning of a new phase in his life. He was twenty five years of age when he married. Khadijah was forty and a widow.

They had six children – two boys, Qāsim and 'Abdullāh (also known as Tāhir and Tayyib) and four girls, Zainab, Ruqaiyyah, Umm Kulthūm and Fāṭimah. All his sons died before prophethood and the daughters lived into Islam, embraced it and later migrated to Madinah.

PHYSICAL FEATURES

Muḥammad (pbuh) was a handsome man of medium build – neither very tall nor short. He had a large head, very black thick hair, a wide forehead, heavy eye brows and large dark eyes with long eye lashes. He had a fine nose, well placed teeth, a thick beard, a long handsome neck and a wide chest and shoulders. His skin was light coloured and he had thick palms and feet. He walked steadily with firm steps. His appearance had the mark of deep thought and contemplation. His eyes gave the feeling of the authority of a commander.

REBUILDING AL-KA'BAH

The Ka'bah needed repairs or rather rebuilding after a sudden flood had damaged it and cracked its walls. The task was divided among the four tribes of the Quraysh. Muḥammad (pbuh) took an active part in the work. The rebuilding progressed and the walls were raised until it was time to place the Black Stone (ḤAJR AL-ASWAD) on the East wall of the Ka'bah.

But there were arguments who should have the honour of placing this holy

stone in its place. The situation became tense and there was almost a possibility of civil war over the issue. To avoid bloodshed, an idea put forward by the oldest man of Makkah – Abū Umayyah – was accepted. He proposed to all the people present: “Let the first man to enter the gate of the mosque next morning decide the matter in dispute among us.”

What a pleasant surprise! The first man to enter the mosque was Muḥammad (pbuh)! All the people shouted in a chorus, “This is the trustworthy one” (Al-Āmīn, in Arabic). “This is Muḥammad (pbuh).”

When he came to them, he was asked to decide the matter and he agreed.

He said to them, “Give me a cloak.” When they brought him a cloak, he spread it on the ground, placed the Black Stone over it and said, “Let the elders of each clan hold on to one edge of the cloak.” They did so and carried the stone to its place. Muḥammad (pbuh) then picked up the stone and put it in its place on the wall of the Ka’bah. In this way he acted as a sort of umpire among his people and averted a bloody civil war. The rebuilding continued and was completed by the Quraysh. Muḥammad (pbuh) was then thirty five years old.

This event shows beyond any doubt that even before his prophethood, Muḥammad (pbuh) was the judge and referee of the Quraysh at the time of their disputes and crises. He earned the good names of *Al-Āmīn* (the trustworthy) and *Al-Ṣādiq* (the truthful). The irony was that after his prophethood, many of these same people turned against him because of their ignorance, and became too stone-hearted to listen to the call of the truth.

SEARCH FOR THE TRUTH

Muḥammad (pbuh) was a soft spoken, gentle person who loved to think and meditate. He was unusual, compared with others of his age, in that he had no interest in the temptations of worldly life, which was appropriate for the person who was destined to be the guide and the teacher for mankind.

Muḥammad (pbuh) used to retreat in seclusion and solitude to a cave, *Ḥirā’*, the mount *Nūr* every year. There he passed his time in meditation and devotion. He used to pass the month of Ramaḍān in this cave. He sunk himself into deep thoughts about the mysteries of nature. It was an eager longing and serious search for the truth.

Why did he do this? He did it because he did not find the answers to the questions arising in his inquisitive mind about man, his creation and his ultimate goal.

He got quite fed up with existing social and political structures. The religions of the Jews and the Christians at that time were so corrupted by the rabbis and priests that they no longer had any appeal to reason and wisdom. He was unable to adjust himself to the senseless bloodshed, tribal disputes, oppression of the helpless by the powerful, idol worship and the degraded status of women.

The Makkans worshipped idols made by themselves. Muḥammad (pbuh) used to think about the stupidity of idol worship. The idols could not move, talk or do anything. How could they respond to the requests of human beings?

All these appeared nonsense to Muḥammad's (pbuh) thinking mind. The retreat in the cave *Hirā'* was to find answers to these deep-rooted feelings in his own self. It was a search for comfort, consolation, peace, tranquility and right guidance. Could it be anything else? Of course not. Muḥammad's (pbuh) mind was full of feelings, sympathy and concern for the welfare of the people of Makkah. How could his upright mind rest while turmoil, injustice, falsehood and exploitation were rampant in Makkah?

The idols, including the three biggest, Al-Lāt, Al-'Uzzā, Al-Hobl, were lifeless stones unable to help themselves if somebody happened to break them. But the Makkans worshipped them, asked their help, took oaths in their name, fought for them. Muhammad's (pbuh) curious mind was striving for the truth, to get rid of the social misdeeds and change the existing social and political order.

It was during the days of his retreat in the month of Ramaḍān that Allah, the Lord of the Universe, favoured Muḥammad (pbuh) with His blessing – the first revelation of the Qur'ān.

RECEIVING THE TRUTH

Muḥammad (pbuh) had reached the age of forty when one night, while meditating in his mountain retreat in the cave *Hirā'* in Ramaḍān, an angel appeared before him.

"Read!" said the angel.

"I am not a reader," replied Muḥammad (pbuh). At this, the angel hugged him and squeezed him so hard that he thought he would die of suffocation. He was then released and the angel again said, *"Read!"* Muḥammad (pbuh) gave the same reply. The angel squeezed him harder and then released him. The angel asked him a third time, *"Read!"* Muḥammad (pbuh) repeated his reply, *"I am not a reader."* The angel hugged him again even harder for the third time and then released him saying:

**"Read in the name of your Lord who created.
Created man from a clot of blood.
Read, your Lord is most Generous.
Who has taught the use of the pen.
Has taught man what he did not know."** (96:1-5).

Muḥammad (pbuh) recited the verse and felt as though the words were written on his heart. These are the first revealed verses of the Qur'ān.

He became greatly troubled at this strange happening. He thought he might be possessed by evil spirits. He looked around and saw nothing. He was fearful and terrified. He stood motionless.

Muḥammad (pbuh) looked at the sky and was surprised to see the angel

Jibra'īl flying in the shape of a giant man. The angel said, "O Muḥammad (pbuh), you are the messenger of Allah and I am *Jibra'īl*." And wherever he looked, Muḥammad (pbuh) saw *Jibra'īl* flying in the distance. He stood still until the angel disappeared.

Muḥammad (pbuh) rushed home in a panic and sat close to Khadījah. He told her all that happened. Khadījah, his noble, loving and caring wife, had faith in the character of her husband and comforted him, saying, "Rejoice, O son of my uncle, and be of good heart. Surely by Him in whose hand is Khadījah's soul, I have hope that you will be the prophet of this people.

"You have never done any wrong to anyone. You are kind to others and you help the poor. So Allah will not let you down." Muḥammad (pbuh) was wrapped up in blankets and he fell asleep."

Khadījah then went to her cousin, *Waraqah bin Nawfal*, who was a Christian and had knowledge of the scriptures of the Torah and the Gospel. *Waraqah* heard all that had happened from Khadījah and cried, "By Him who dominates *Waraqah*'s soul, if your report is true, O Khadījah, this must be the great spirit that spoke to Moses. Muḥammad (pbuh) must be the prophet of this nation. Tell him that he must be firm."

Khadījah returned home doubly confident, and found Muḥammad (pbuh) still asleep. Suddenly she noticed that he was shivering, breathing deeply and perspiring.

As he opened his eyes, Muḥammad (pbuh) heard the angel say, "*O you who lie wrapped in your mantle, arise and warn! Glorify your Lord. Purify yourself. Give up uncleanness. Give not in order to have more in return. For the sake of your Lord, endure patiently.*" (84:1-7).

Seeing him in this position, Khadījah pleaded with Muḥammad (pbuh) to rest a little longer. But Muḥammad (pbuh) was now reassured and said in a firm voice, "O Khadījah, the time of slumber and rest is past. *Jibra'īl* has asked me to warn men and call them to Allah and to His worship. But whom shall I call? And who will listen to me?"

Khadījah encouraged and assured Muḥammad (pbuh) about the success of his prophethood and declared her own acceptance of Islam. She thus became the first Muslim.

What a marvellous thing! Khadījah accepts her husband as the prophet of Allah! Who can better testify to the integrity of a person than his wife? She knew Muḥammad (pbuh) better than anyone else did, and could testify to his honesty and trustworthiness. No man can hide his weakness from his wife because she knows him so closely and intimately.

ISLAMIC MOVEMENT BEGINS

The revelation marked the beginning of Muḥammad's (pbuh) role as a

messenger of Allah. It was also the starting point of the Islamic movement carried out by him during the rest of his life. The first phase of the movement lasted for three years, from 610 CE (the year of revelation) to the end of 612 CE.

To begin with Muḥammad (pbuh) preached the message of Allah only to his friends, his closest relatives and those whom he could trust. 'Alī, his cousin, the son of Abū Ṭālib, was the second Muslim and the third was Zāyed, son of Ḥarithah (Muḥammad's servant). Abū Bakr was the first from among Muḥammad's friends to become a Muslim. Notice here the composition of the early Muslim brotherhood.

First – *Khadījah* Muḥammad's (pbuh) wife accepts Islam; second – 'Alī, his cousin; third – Zāyed his household servant. Outside the household, it was *Abū Bākr*. All of them were his near and dear ones.

TEN YEAR OLD 'ALĪ ACCEPTS ISLAM

This briefly is how 'Alī, the cousin of the prophet and then a boy of only ten, accepted the truth. Allah taught Muḥammad (pbuh) through angel Jibra'īl (Gabriel) how to make ablution (*wuḍu*) and how to pray. Muhammad (pbuh) in turn taught Khadījah and both of them used to offer Ṣalāh together.

'Alī saw the prophet and his wife kneeling and prostrating and reciting the Qur'ān. 'Alī was amazed at this unusual scene and then asked the prophet after the prayer, "To whom did you prostrate yourselves?" The prophet answered, "We have prostrated ourselves to Allah who has sent me as prophet and has commanded me to call human beings unto Him."

The prophet then invited 'Alī to worship only Allah and to accept the message of Allah revealed to him.

He also recited to him something from the Qur'ān. 'Alī, felt excited and thrilled but thought for a moment and said that he would consult his father Abū Ṭālib about this. He passed the night agitated and restless, thinking about the call of Muḥammad (pbuh). Next morning, he rushed to the prophet and declared his faith in Islam. The young boy said, "Allah created me without consulting Abū Ṭālib my father. Why then should I consult him in order to worship Allah?"

Is it not exciting for you too to learn this? Would you also then decide to work for Islam to make living on this earth meaningful and purposeful? Rest assured, this is the way to peace. 'Alī the first Muslim boy, accepted this peace – Islam.

EARLY MUSLIMS

You should know some of the names of great people who accepted Islam and later became the great personalities in the history of Islam.

Early Muslims included: 'Alī bin Abū Ṭālib, Zāyed bin Ḥarithah, Abū Bakr bin Abū Quhāfah, 'Uthmān bin 'Affān, Sa'ad bin Abī Waqqās, 'Abdur Raḥmān bin 'Auf, Ṭalḥa bin 'Ubaydullāh, Abū Dharr, Zubayr bin 'Awwām, Abū 'Ubaydah bin

Jarrāh, Arqam bin Abī Arqam, Ṣuhaib Al-rūmī, ‘Abdullāh bin Mas’ūd, Khabbāb bin Aratt, ‘Uthamān bin Maz’un, Ja’far bin Abū Ṭālib and Na’eem bin ‘Abdullāh.

Women also were not left behind. Among the great women to be Muslims were: Khadījah Bint Khuwaylid, Fātimah Bint Al-Khaṭṭāb, Āsmā’ Bint Abū Bakr, Fātimah bint Al-Mujallil, Fukayha bint Yasār, Asmā’ Bint Umayas, Asmā’ bint Salama, Ramla bint Abū ‘Auf, Umayna bint Khalaf.

END OF THE FIRST PHASE

During the first phase of the Islamic Movement, Muḥammad (pbuh) preached the message of Allah discreetly and it was spreading gradually among all age-groups especially the youth in Makkah. People of Makkah began to talk about Muḥammad (pbuh) and his message. They did not take it seriously in the beginning. They thought the Muslims had a fantasy that would soon die away and the worship of idols would eventually triumph.

Three years passed and the message of Allah continued to spread far and wide in the valley of Makkah.

You will see in the following pages how Truth became victorious and falsehood vanished. Islam is the Truth; worship of idols is falsehood.

ISLAMIC MOVEMENT BECOMES PUBLIC

Three years after the revelation, Allah commanded the prophet, “*Proclaim what you have been ordered and turn away from the polytheists.*” (15:94). This was the command to make the call to Allah open and public and was the beginning of the second stage of the Islamic movement.

‘ALĪ AND THE DINNER

The prophet prepared himself to meet the new situation with strong determination and faith. He invited his kinsmen to a dinner and after the dinner addressed them saying:

“O sons of ‘Abdul Muṭṭalib, I know of no Arab who has come to his people with a nobler message than mine. I have brought you the best of this world and the next. Allah has ordered me to call you to Him. So, who of you will stand by me in this matter?”

The elders in the dinner were not responsive. They were about to leave when the young boy ‘Alī stood up and said, “I am the youngest of you; I may be a boy, my feet may not be strong enough, but O Muḥammad (pbuh), I shall be your helper. Whoever opposes you, I shall fight him as a mortal enemy.” The elders laughed loudly and dispersed.

Consider the courage of the boy ‘Alī! How strongly and firmly he spoke about his faith! Should you not as youngsters follow the example of ‘Alī? To uphold the Truth and work for it is the best of everything in this world.

THE PROPHET ON MOUNT ŞAFĀ

Muḥammad (pbuh) now prepared to call the Makkans to the message of Allah. He climbed on the top of *Al-Safā* and shouted to the people who seeing him standing there, gathered below. Muḥammad (pbuh) told them, "O men of Quraysh, if I were to tell you that I see an army ready to attack on the other side of the mountain, would you believe me?"

They answered, "Yes, why not? We trust you and never found you telling a lie."

Muḥammad (pbuh) said, "Know then, that I am a warner and that I warn you of severe punishment. O Banū 'Abdul Muṭṭalib! Banū 'Abdul Manāf! O Banū Zuhrah! O Banū Taym! O Banū Makhzūm! O Banū Asad! Allah has commanded me to warn you, my nearest kinsmen, that I can assure you of good on this earth and in heaven if you declare that there is no god but Allah'. *Abū Lahab*, his uncle, became red with anger and spoke bad of his nephew. He said, "Damn you! Did you assemble us for this?"

Muḥammad (pbuh) was severely shocked and looked toward his uncle for a moment. Allah comforted His messenger and informed him of the fearful punishment awaiting Abū Lahab. Allah revealed. "*May the hands of Abū Lahab perish; doomed he is. His wealth and his properties shall not save him. He shall be thrown into a flaming fire of hell.*" (111:1-3).

The open invitation to Allah's message brought hostility and opposition to the prophet and his followers. A new stage of the Islamic movement began. We will see how the followers of Islam overcame this opposition with valour, vigour and steadfastness. Indeed, it is rare that we find such proof of sacrifices for the noble cause of Allah.

HOSTILITY BEGINS

The Makkans who for a long time took no serious notice of the movement, became very hostile to the open call of Muḥammad (pbuh). They now realised a threat to their idolatry and began to harass the followers of Islam in order to stop its increasing popularity. Hardly a day passed without some new followers joining the faith. This trend further increased the fury of the idolaters.

The Quraysh first tried to settle the matter through Abū Tālib and asked him to withdraw his support from Muḥammad (pbuh). Delegations of the influential people went to meet Abū Tālib twice for this purpose. He listened to them calmly and sent them back with conciliatory words. Abū Tālib asked Muḥammad (pbuh) not to put him under so much strain, for he was the leader of the Quraysh. The prophet faced a dilemma but remained firm and said to his uncle, "O my uncle, by Allah if they put the sun in my right hand and the moon in my left, and ask me to give my mission, I shall not do it until Allah has made it victorious or I perish therein!"

Abū Tālib was moved by the firmness of his nephew and said, "Go and say

what you please, for by Allah, I shall never withdraw my support from you."

The first Muslim to suffer in the hands of unbelievers of Makkah was Sa'ad Bin Abī Waqqās. He was struck with a sword in a fight with the enemies as they attacked the prophet and his followers at prayer in a mountain pass. The prophet was once preaching in the area of the Ka'bah and he was attacked. During the encounter *Hārith Bin Abī Hālah* tried to pacify the mob but was attacked and killed. He was the first Muslim to give his life for Islam.

Bilāl bin Rabāh, an Abyssinian slave was tortured by his master for accepting Islam. He was thrown onto the sand under the burning sun with a heavy stone laid on his chest for no other reason than his acceptance of Islam. Bilāl gallantly faced his torture and used to proclaim, "Allah is one, Allah is one!" Abū Bakr freed him from his infidel master.

Others who suffered terribly in the hands of unbelievers were: *'Ammār*, *Abū Fakīha*, *Ṣuhaib Rūmi* and *Khabbāb*. The infidels even did not spare women Muslims. Among the women tortured were: Sumayyah, Lubnā, Nahdiyah and Umm 'Ubays.

The prophet himself was ridiculed, insulted and accused of being a sorcerer, a poet, and of being possessed. Once he was almost strangled by an unbeliever while praying. Suddenly Abū Bakr arrived to rescue him. Abū Lahab's wife, Umm Jamīl used to throw rubbish and thorny bushes from her house at Muḥammad's (pbuh) door and way, and all that Muḥammad (pbuh) could do was remove them.

Muḥammad (pbuh) continued his preaching with even more enthusiasm and firmness, and the hostility of the unbelievers also intensified. The Makkans did all they could to stop him and his followers. But nothing worked. The Islamic movement continued to flourish among the Makkans despite the false propaganda, persecution and harrassment from the idolaters.

During this period, Ḥamzah, the young uncle of the prophet joined the Islamic movement. His acceptance of the faith added strength to Islam, for Ḥamzah was a brave man. His acceptance of Islam compelled the Quraysh to abandon some of their harrassment.

THE OFFER OF 'UTBAH BIN RABI'AH

'Utbah bin Rabi'ah a leader of the Quraysh, put some proposals to the prophet. He suggested, "If what you want is money, we will gather for you our property, so that you may be the richest of us; if you want honour, we will make you our chief, so that no-one can decide anything apart from you; if you want sovereignty, we will make you king."

The prophet declined these suggestions and recited verses from Sūrah 41 (*Hāmīm Al-sijdah*) of the Qur'ān. 'Utbah returned to his companions with a changed face and reported to them that he heard from Muḥammad (pbuh) what

he had never heard before. No worldly temptation could keep the prophet away from the Truth.

ANOTHER CUNNING PROPOSAL

The Quraysh failed in all their attempts to discourage Muḥammad (pbuh) and the Muslims from their faith. Harassment, ridicule, torture and false proaganda proved futile, and the Muslims simply became more determined. The leaders of the Quraysh now hatched a shrewd plan. They proposed to the prophet that he should adore their gods and they in return would adore his God; in this way there would come about a compromise and hostility would cease.

Allah commanded the prophet to tell the unbelievers in clear terms that there could be no such compromise on matters of basic principles. Muḥammad (pbuh) was asked to declare them, "*You have your religion, and I have mine.*" (109:6). The plan of mixing the truth with untruth was defeated.

EMIGRATION (HIJRAH) TO ABYSSINIA (ETHIOPIA)

The infidels, frustrated in their attempts to make a compromise with the prophet, increased the intensity of their persecutions. The threat to life and property intensified. The poor Muslims were particularly insecure and vulnerable. Muḥammad (pbuh) advised those Muslims who felt insecure to emigrate to Abyssinia where Najjāshī (Negus), a noble king, ruled. Eighty three Muslims, not counting children, emigrated to Abyssinia in groups. The first group was of ten people. This is the first emigration (Hijrah) of the Muslims who had to leave their country for the sake of Allah.

EFFORTS TO GET THE EMIGRANTS BACK

A delegation of the Quraysh consisting of 'Amr Ibnul 'Aaṣ and 'Abdullāh Ibn Abū Rabī'ah, went to the Negus and tried to get the emigrant Muslims back.

They bribed the courtiers of the Negus and made accusations against the Muslims to succeed in their mission. They alleged that the emigrants were apostates and followers of a new religion which no-one had heard of before. The Negus wanted to know the whole matter and called for the Muslims. He asked, "What is the new religion which you follow and caused you to leave your country?"

Ja'far bin Abū Ṭālib, answered on behalf of the Muslims, "O King, we were in a state of ignorance and immorality, worshipping stones and idols, eating dead animals, committing all sorts of injustice, breaking natural ties, treating guests badly, and the strong among us exploited the weak.

"Then Allah sent us a prophet, one of our own people, whose lineage, truthfulness, trustworthiness and honesty were well known to us. He called us to worship Allah alone and to renounce the stones, the idols, which we and our ancestors used to worship. He commanded us to speak the truth, to honour our promises, to be helpful to our relations, to be good to our neighbours, to abstain from bloodshed, to avoid fornication. He commanded us not to give false

witness, not to appropriate an orphan's property or falsely accuse a married woman. He ordered us not to associate anyone with Allah.

"He commanded us to hold prayers, to fast, to pay Zakāh. We believed in him and what he brought to us from Allah, and we follow him in what he asked us to do and forbade us not to do.

"Thereupon, our people attacked us, treated us harshly and tried to take us back to the old immorality and worship of idols. They made life intolerable for us in Makkah, and we came to your country to seek protection to live in justice and peace."

Hearing this, the Negus wanted to listen to part of the Qur'ān which came down from Allah to the prophet.

Ja'far recited to him Sūrah *Al-Maryam* (Mary), the 19th chapter of the Qur'ān. The Negus wept until his beard was wet, listening to the Qur'ān. Then he said, "What you have just recited and that which was revealed to Moses must have both issued from the same source. Go forth into my kingdom; I shall not deport you at all."

Thus the spiteful efforts of the pagans against the Muslims were doomed to failure once again.

'UMAR ACCEPTS ISLAM

'Umar bin Al-Khaṭṭāb, a strong and tough person in his late twenties, became a Muslim in the sixth year of the prophethood of Muḥammad (pbuh). His acceptance of Islam is remarkable in the sense that he went out with a vow to kill the prophet. On his way to kill Muḥammad (pbuh), Na'eem told 'Umar that he should rather take care of Fāṭimah and Sa'eed who had become Muslims. Fāṭimah and Sa'eed were 'Umar's sister and brother-in-law. 'Umar became enraged with anger when he heard this and changed his course to arrive at his sister's house.

As he approached the house, he heard the recitation of the Qur'ān. Khabbāb bin Aratt was reading Sūrah *Tā Hā* (the 20th chapter) to them. 'Umar entered the house without knocking and angrily cried out, "What is this balderdash (nonsense) I heard?"

Fāṭimah and Sa'eed refused to say. They had hidden Khabbāb before 'Umar came in. 'Umar was furious and began to hit his brother-in-law, and injured Fāṭimah when she tried to protect her husband.

Seeing his sister blood-stained, 'Umar paused for a while and wanted to see the sheet of the Qur'ān from which they were reciting. Fāṭimah asked him to get cleaned up. 'Umar washed himself before he was given the sheet.

While reading he was deeply moved at the rhyme and rhythm and the content. He decided to accept Islam and said, "Lead me to Muḥammad (pbuh), so that I may accept Islam." Khabbāb came out from hiding and led him to

Arqam's house where the prophet was staying at that time. Arqam's house was the centre of Islam at the time. The prophet welcomed 'Umar at the gate and asked him his intention. 'Umar expressed his wish to be a Muslim and the prophet was very pleased.

'Umar was a very powerful man. His entry into Islam gave a strong impetus to the Muslims. Before him, Ḥamzah, the prophet's uncle, became a Muslim. He was also a powerful man. The entry into Islam of these two great and brave men was a turning point in the history of the early Islamic movement.

BOYCOTT AND CONFINEMENT

The Quraysh were seething at the gradual increase in the strength of the Muslims. They plotted another assault and decided on a total boycott of the family of Hāshim and Muṭṭalib. They were confined in a pass named *Shi'bi Abī Ṭālib*. The boycott continued for three years and the clans of Hāshim and Muṭṭalib suffered badly during that time. Eventually the boycott had to be withdrawn because of differences among the Quraysh themselves. The clans of Hāshim and Muṭṭalib demonstrated great firmness during the boycott.

The document of boycott which was kept in the Ka'bah was eaten up by white ants, all except the name of Allah.

The prophet continued his work amid intimidation and persecution. Truth must prevail over falsehood. The call to Allah must subdue paganism. The popularity and strength of Islam were on the increase.

YEAR OF SORROW

Time passed and Muḥammad (pbuh) at the age of fifty, in the tenth year of his prophethood, had to face more sorrow and grief.

His uncle Abū Ṭālib died. It was Abū Ṭālib who always gave Ṭālib protection to his nephew. Muḥammad (pbuh) was heartbroken. Still more sadness was in store. The prophet lost his most loving and caring wife, Khadījah, who had stood by him like a solid rock, to comfort, support and encourage him at times when no-one else did so. And she was the first to accept him as the messenger of Allah.

It was a terrible blow to Muḥammad (pbuh). But the prophet had to endure. Death is the eternal process of Allah. All men and women die and so must we, one day.

The prophet had become used to shocks and grief, ever since his childhood. Providence tested him all through his life. The responsibility of prophethood needed unmatched endurance and patience. The prophet passed all the most difficult tests of life, including persecution, torture and death blows.

ṬĀYEF – THE MOST DIFFICULT DAY

The stone-heartedness of the people of Makkah saddened the prophet. He

now decided to try the people of Ṭāyef, a city sixty miles to the west of Makkah, to see if they would support him.

On arriving in Ṭāyef, accompanied by Zāyed bin Harithah, he went to three important people of the city and invited them to Islam. All three refused and insulted him. They even incited street urchins to drive him out of the city.

The urchins pelted stones at the prophet's legs and feet. They hooted at him and drove him out. He was weary, sad and very unhappy and took shelter in a garden where he prayed.

The owners of the garden witnessed the whole episode and felt sorry for him in his tired and bruised condition. They offered him hospitality and sent grapes for him through their servant, 'Addās.

The prophet used to say that the day in Ṭāyef was the most difficult day of his life. But look at his greatness; he was bruised, hurt, bloodstained, yet never pronounced one word of curse for the people who had abused him.

AL-MI'RĀJ (The Ascent)

After the severe shocks of the death of Abū Ṭālib and Khadījah, and the cruel treatment received at Ṭāyef, Muḥammad (pbuh) longed for some comfort. It was not long before he got it. It happened in the form of a remarkable and eventful night journey to *Jerusalem* called **Al-Isrā'**, and the ascent to heaven in the same night called **Al-Mi'rāj**.

Mi'rāj was a memorable event for the prophet. Allah honoured him by this unique and extra-ordinary journey. During the journey Muḥammad (pbuh) saw with his own eyes the glory of Allah and the working of the universe. It was a great moral boost which he needed most. It further strengthened his faith that Allah was always with him. No amount of shock could prevent him from his task of calling people to Allah.

The prophet himself gave vivid details about the journey and the ascent. He said that one night the angel *Jibrā'īl* awoke him from sleep and took him to *Jeusalem* riding an animal which looked like a horse with large wings. The name of the animal was *Buraq*.

At Jerusalem, he met all the prophets including Ādam, Ibrāhīm, Musā, 'Isā' and Hārūn. He led them in prayer. He was then taken to different heavens and he saw the Paradise and the Hell. The most important of all was his experience of the glory and the magnificence of Allah. He had many more experiences. It is beyond the grasp of ordinary people like us to understand every aspect of the journey. But it was not impossible for the last messenger of Allah to grasp the significance of these things. He had to have such experiences to act as Allah's messenger.

Five times daily prayers were laid down for Muslims at the time of Mi'rāj. The whole miraculous journey lasted for a short time of the night.

Next morning, when Muḥammad (pbuh) told his experience, the Makkans laughed at him and started saying that Muḥammad (pbuh) must have gone crazy. The Muslims believed him, however, although some of the new entrants to the faith became a bit doubtful and the unbelievers, as usual, refused to accept the truth. Muḥammad (pbuh) gave graphic details of the journey and a caravan which he had met on his way to Jerusalem confirmed the details he gave.

Remember here that Muḥammad (pbuh) was nicknamed by his own people as *Al-Āmīn* (the Truthful) and *Al-Ṣādiq* (the Trustworthy). Later, these same people behaved quite strangely. Muḥammad (pbuh) after receiving his prophethood had done everything according to Allah's wish.

FIRST COVENANT OF AL-'AQABAH

During his open, public preaching, Muḥammad (pbuh) met a group of people from *Madīnah* (then called *Yathrib*) at the time of Ḥajj, and he invited them to accept Islam. They responded to his call and became Muslims. There were six of them. They returned to Madinah as believers and invited others of their tribes to join the new faith.

Next year twelve people from Madinah came during Ḥajj and the prophet entered into an agreement with them at a place called *Al-'Aqabah* in 621 CE. This agreement is known as '*the Covenant of Al-'Aqabah*'. In this pledge, they agreed to obey none but Allah, neither to steal nor commit adultery, neither to kill their children nor commit any evil, and not to disobey Allah. They were told by Muḥammad (pbuh) that if they lived under this covenant, Allah would be pleased with them and reward them with paradise.

SECOND COVENANT OF AL-'AQABAH

A second covenant with the Muslims of Madinah was concluded in 622 CE in the same place, *Al-'Aqabah*. In all, seventy three people including two women took part in this pledge. This covenant was an extension of the first. It was agreed that the Muslims of Madinah would protect and help the prophet against all odds, as they would protect their own women and children. All dangers which would arise out of this covenant were explained by Al-'Abbās, prophet's uncle, to the Madinite Muslims in clear terms. But still the Madinite Muslims said, "We take him (the prophet) despite all threats to property, wealth and life. Tell us O Prophet of Allah! what will be our reward if we remain true to this oath?"

The prophet answered, "Paradise".

They stretched out their hands to him and he to them, and in this way the covenant was concluded.

The second covenant included clauses about war situations which made it a duty of the Madinite Muslims to defend the prophet in the event of external attack from Makkah.

EMIGRATION TO MADĪNAH

The conclusion of the second covenant of *Al-'Aqabah* was another turning-point in the history of the Islamic movement. The Muslims now had a place in which to take shelter, an ally in time of war and danger.

The unbelievers eventually came to know about the covenant after it had been concluded. It was done in secrecy so that the infidels could not have an opportunity to foil it. When they found out, they reacted in anger and resorted to torturing some of the people from Madīnah.

The prophet now changed the strategy of his work. For thirteen years, he had tried his best to preach the message of Allah to the people of Makkah. But the Makkah soil was not fertile for this. Madīnah provided him with fresh, receptive ground in which to sow the seed of Islam, and he planned to use this opportunity.

He commanded the Muslims of Makkah to start emigrating to Madīnah and strengthen the bond with the Muslims there. The Muslims of Madīnah are known as *Ansār* (helpers) and those of Makkah as *Muhajirūn* (emigrants) in Islamic history. Following the command of the prophet, the Makkah Muslims started moving to Madīnah individually and in small groups. The unbelievers tried ferociously to stop this and became even more malicious.

Think of the emigration! Muslims left their homes for the sake of Allah and His pleasure! At the moment of need, this was what was required of them. As Muslims, we also must be ready to do the same for the sake of our faith. Life on this earth will have meaning and purpose only when we can attain this attitude.

THE HIJRAH OF THE PROPHET

After most of the companions of the prophet had left for Madīnah, Muḥammad (pbuh) was waiting for permission from Allah to emigrate himself. Abū Bakr, his closest friend sought permission to leave for Madīnah but stayed behind on the prophet's advice. 'Alī, the cousin of the prophet also stayed behind. Abū Bakr was to accompany the prophet later on. He was very lucky.

The unbelievers now plotted to kill Muḥammad (pbuh). The permission to migrate to Madīnah also had come. Muḥammad (pbuh) secretly left Makkah at night in 622 CE with Abū Bakr. A specially-formed group of unbelievers laid in wait at night around the prophet's house to kill him as he came out. 'Alī was left behind to sleep in the prophet's bed and the prophet quietly left, making the unbelievers look very foolish. In the morning, they found 'Alī in the prophet's bed and were dumb-founded.

The prophet and his companion Abū Bakr had left just before dawn and proceeded to the cave *Thawr*, to the south of Makkah. They stayed in the cave for three days where Abu Bakr's servant brought them food in the evening. They left the cave Tahwr on the third day and started for Madīnah.

The unbelievers, fooled by the wit of the prophet, now sent for a thorough search on the road to Madīnah and offered a prize of 100 camels for the capture of Muḥammad (pbuh). One *Surāqah* was almost successful, but failed in the end. His horse fell down three times in his pursuit to kill Muḥammad (pbuh) and in the end he gave up his sinister aim, taking the falls as bad omens.

After a tiresome, exhausting and very difficult journey, the prophet accompanied by Abū Bakr reached *Qubā'*, a place near Madīnah. They stayed there for two weeks and the prophet founded a mosque in *Qubā'*. Where 'Alī had joined them.

The prophet entered Madīnah and allowed his camel to kneel where it liked. It knelt first in a place which was owned by two orphans, and got up to finally kneel in front of the house of Abū Ayyūb Ansāry, which became the first residence of the prophet in Madīnah.

The people of Madīnah who had anxiously awaited the arrival of Muḥammad (pbuh), became very happy and excited when they found him among them. They gave him a hero's welcome.

The Hijrah of the prophet started a new chapter in the history of the Islamic movement. It has two sides: the sad and heart-breaking scene of leaving the beloved birth place on one side, and a feeling of security and hope for the work of Islam more freely than before, on the other.

The *Islamic calendar* starts from the day of the Hijrah of the prophet Muḥammad (pbuh) from Makkah to Madīnah.

Hijrah was the beginning of a new role for the prophet as a statesman and a ruler. With this ended his fifty three years of life in Makkah, of which he spent thirteen eventful years as the prophet of Allah.

THE PROPHET AT MADĪNAH

Muḥammad's (pbuh) arrival in Madīnah was a memorable event for the people of the city. They felt elated and were jubilant because they had Allah's messenger among them.

Madīnah was known at that time as Yathrib. It came to be known as *Madīnatun Nabī* – the prophet's city – after Muḥammad's (pbuh) arrival. Later it became known simply as *Madīnah* – The City.

The Makkan migrants added a new dimension to the life of Madīnah. The city now had three communities: the *Ansār* (the Helpers) of the tribes of *Āws* and *Khazrāj*, the Jews from the tribes of *Qaynuqā'*, *Nadīr* and *Qurayzah*, and the migrants from Makkah. The migrants (Muhajirūn) had to be absorbed by the local community of the Ansār.

The companions of the prophet had reached Madīnah before Muḥammad himself (pbuh), and were living with the Ansār as guests. With the arrival of the

prophet, this situation changed to a more stable one. The migrants (Muhajirūn) had brought almost nothing with them.

The prophet's first task was to form a solid bond of faith and brotherhood between the Ansār and the Muhajirūn.

He called a meeting of both communities and asked the Ansārs to become brothers of the Muhajirūn. He also suggested that they should share their property and other belongings with their migrant brothers. The Ansār did as they were asked by the prophet. This was a rare event unmatched in human history; such was the powerful influence of Islam.

The Ansār practically shared their property with the Muhajirūn equally, on the basis of a shared faith.

Muḥammad (pbuh) became the leader of the city. With the cementing of the bond of brotherhood, he had virtually inaugurated the Islamic Society. Madīnah now was the capital of the Islamic community, the first Islamic state.

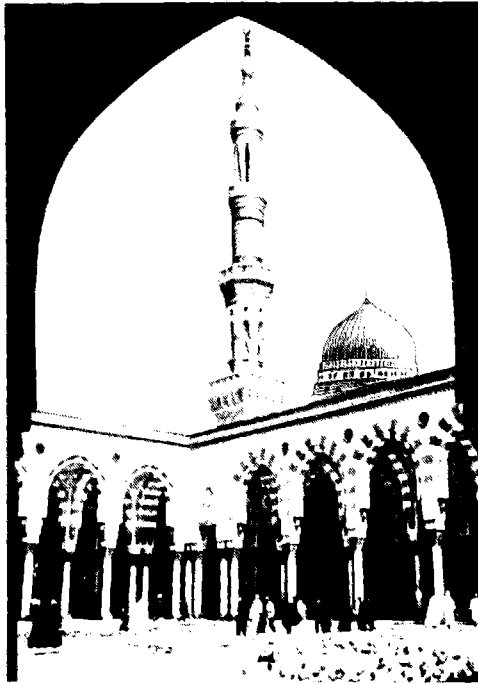
The Islamic State of Madīnah knew no distinction between the ruler and his subjects. Every citizen belonged to Allah and enjoyed equal rights. Islam does not recognise any preference of one over another except on the basis of piety. "The noblest among you to Allah is the one who is the most virtuous," says the Qur'ān. In the Islamic state of Madīnah, there was no discrimination on the basis of colour, class or descent.

After laying the foundations of the Islamic state, Allah's messenger took steps to secure the internal peace of the new state. A treaty with the Jews was signed, but the Jews, of course, did not live up to their pledge and later betrayed it.

THE MOSQUE

The prophet now decided to construct a mosque in Madīnah. Soon, work began at a place which was purchased from its orphan owners. This was the place where the prophet's camel had first knelt before it finally knelt in front of the house of Abū Ayyūb Ansāry. The prophet's residence was built next to the mosque.

Muḥammad (pbuh) himself took part in the construction as an ordinary labourer. In fact it was difficult to identify him from other workers on the site. Muḥammad (pbuh) never hesitated to do any ordinary work. He used to mend his own clothes, repair his own shoes, do the shopping and milk the goats. In this respect he left for us a shining example.



*Al-Masjid an-Nabawī
The Prophet's Mosque at Madīnah*

ADHĀN (CALL TO PRAYER)

You may recollect that prayer of five times a day was laid down for Muslims at the time of the Mi'rāj (the Ascent). In Madīnah, Muslims were now a cohesive and united community and the prophet felt it necessary to call the believers to pray in congregation. Muslims would collect themselves together for prayer when the time came. Many suggestions were put forward, and the prophet finally asked *Bilāl*, the Abyssinian Muslim who had a melodious voice, to shout aloud the following words:

Allah is the Greatest! (4 times)

I declare that there is no god but Allah! (twice)

I declare that Muḥammad is the messenger of Allah! (twice)

Rush to Prayer! (twice)

Rush to success! (twice)

Allah is the Greatest! (twice)

There is no god but Allah.

This is the **Adhān** (*the call to prayer*). The introduction of Adhān with its beautiful and magnetic appeal, made possible the pronouncement of the Greatness of Allah five times a day in Madīnah. This system of Adhān is still in use in all the Muslim countries. The rhyme and rhythm of the words chanted are really marvellous.

MORE ISLAMIC DUTIES LAID DOWN

Madīnah, the first Islamic state, began to thrive under the dynamic leadership of Muḥammad (pbuh). The Islamic society of Madīnah needed more guidance and training for its development, welfare and prosperity.

This society which was passing through its infant stage at this time, later went on to make a tremendous impact on the history of mankind.

The programme of training introduced during the second and third years of Hijrah included Ṣawm (fasting in the month of Ramaḍān), Zakāh (welfare contribution), prohibition of wine drinking and transaction involving interest (Ribā). Also during this period, laws regarding orphans, inheritance, marriage and the rights of married women were revealed.

In the second year of Hijrah (the month of Sha'abān) the direction of prayer (Qiblah) was changed by revelation from Bait al-maqdis in Jerusalem to Al-Ka'bah in Makkah.

HARD TASK

The society was growing and the task of making it strong, solid and dynamic also continued. Muḥammad (pbuh) during this time was virtually fighting on four fronts:

- i To maintain cohesion and discipline among the rank and file of the Islamic society;
- ii To guard against the intrigues and conspiracies of the Hypocrites (*Munafiqūn*);
- iii To remain alert to the dangers from the Quraysh of Makkah, and
- iv To remain vigilant about the sinister motives of the Jews in Madīnah.

History shows how wonderfully Allah's messenger faced all these dangers and led the Islamic state towards more and more success and victory.

BATTLE OF BADR

Muḥammad (pbuh) was a wise and practical man. He took steps to counter the dangers from both inside and outside the city of Madīnah. He left no stone unturned to make the small community of Muslims a solidly united force, to combat any threat to its existence.

He did not have many resources. The economy of Madīnah was under strain from absorbing the migrants from Makkah, but the messenger of Allah was full of hope and confidence. He knew Allah's help would be coming at the right moment. What counted was the strength of faith and not the material resources.

The unbelievers of Makkah were raging in anger at the comparative safety of the Muslims in Madīnah. All their previous attempts to finish off Muḥammad (pbuh) had failed. Their trade route to Syria was now within easy reach of the Muslims. They became restless and were burning within themselves, unable to find a way to tackle Muḥammad (pbuh). They were looking for some excuse to attack the new Islamic society and get rid of it once and for all.

Such was the situation when news came of an unusual caravan with about a thousand camels laden with goods and arms, travelling to Makkah from Syria. The leader of the caravan was Abū Ṣufyān – a chief of the Quraysh of Makkah. Abū Ṣufyān feared there might be an attack from the Muslims and lost no time in sending an envoy to Makkah for help. The unbelievers in Makkah were really waiting for just such a message and soon an army of a thousand was ready to march to Madīnah to attack the Muslims on any excuse.

News of the Makkan army reached the prophet and he had decided to face them outside Madīnah with the help of Allah. The aggression of the unbelievers must not go unchallenged. A small army of three hundred and thirteen people, including young boys, ill-equipped with arms and ammunition, started from Madīnah under the prophet's command and camped at a place called *Al-Badr*, eighty miles from Madīnah. The Muslim army had only a few horses and a small quantity of armour, but they were full of faith, courage, valour and determination. They knew they were on the right side.

Meanwhile, Abū Ṣufyān's caravan changed its route and was out of any danger. But the Makkan army would not leave until they had finished off the Muslims. An encounter between the two armies took place on the *17th of Ramaḍān* of the second Hijrah.

The Muslims responded to the Makkan attack with unmatched bravery and determination. They repelled the Makkan army and the unbelievers were decisively defeated. They left seventy dead and a further seventy were taken prisoner by the Muslims.

The battle of Badr proved beyond doubt that real strength lies in faith in Allah and not in arms and ammunition. The battle decided the course of future history of the Muslims.

On that day, in spite of their meagre resources, the soldiers of the truth turned out triumphant and the military might of falsehood was humiliated, defeated and tarnished. "Truth prevails, falsehood vanishes" (17:81) declares the Qur'ān.

In the battle of Badr, each Muslim soldier had to face three infidels, because the size of the Makkan army was three times that of the Muslim army. Still the Muslims won.

The defeat of the Muslims in this battle would have been fatal.

But the Makkans in this battle left with a grudge of defeat and humiliation. Another encounter was not far off.

THE BATTLE AT UḤUD

The Makkans could not forget the shattering blow inflicted on them by the Muslims at Badr. They were planning for revenge. The year that followed was their year of preparation.

The Muslims were consolidating the gains they had made at Badr and strengthened their community ties. The prophet sent messengers and delegations to various parts of Arabia during this time.

Al-'Abbās, one of the uncles of the prophet, still lived in Makkah though he accepted Islam. His feelings for his nephew and the Muslims were very strong. He was watching all the preparations the unbelievers were making and sent an envoy to Muḥammad (pbuh) in Madīnah with the details of the moves by the Makkans.

The prophet received news that an army three thousand strong, including two hundred horsemen, was marching towards Madīnah. Muḥammad (pbuh) called for the elders and consulted them on the matter. The elders of Madīnah, among them Ansār and Muhajirūn, favoured defence from inside Madīnah. But the younger men, alive with faith and vigour, wanted a manly combat outside Madīnah. They saw it as an opportunity to be *Shaheed* (martyrs).

After Jum'ah prayer on a Friday, the prophet started out for Mount Uḥud with an army of seven hundred Muslims. The Quraysh of Makkah had already camped there. The prophet reached Uḥud and after dawn prayer put the Muslim army into position. He took particular care to place fifty archers under the command of 'Abdullāh Bin Zubayr, to protect a strategic mountain pass, and ordered them not to leave their position under any circumstances.

The two armies faced each other in the morning. Fierce fighting broke out and soon the Muslim army got the upper hand and the Makkan army was forced to retreat. The Muslims captured the supplies and baggage of the Makkans.

Before the battle was really over, most of the archers stationed in the mountain pass joined in the collection of booty, despite the repeated pleas of 'Abdullāh Bin Zubayr. This indiscipline provided Khālid Bin Walīd, one of the Makkan commanders, with a rare opportunity to make a counter attack from the rear. 'Abdullāh Bin Zubayr and six other archers who had not left their position, put up a desperate fight, until finally all of them were martyred.

Khālid's men took the Muslim army by surprise and soon the Muslim's celebration ended in grief. They found themselves surrounded and in the fighting that followed, *Ḥamzah*, the prophet's uncle and a great warrior was martyred by Waḥshī. Many other Muslims became Shaheed and the prophet himself suffered injury.

A rumour that Muḥammad (pbuh) was dead caused the Muslims to flee, and drained them of morale. The prophet was taken by some of his followers to a position on the hill, and he called to the Muslims at the top of his voice. He

ordered them to reunite and before long the scattered and battered Muslims again regrouped, once they saw the prophet was alive.

In the battle, the enemy violated all norms of civilised behaviour. They mutilated the dead bodies of Muslims and *Hind*, the wife of Abū Sufyān, was so terrible that she took out the liver of Ḥamzah and chewed it raw.

By the end of the day the regrouped Muslim army was ready for a counter attack, but the Makkani army had already left, satisfied that they had taken revenge for Badr. The Muslim army pursued them.

On his return to Madinah, the prophet sent out a contingent of Muslims after the Makkans, to ensure that they did not come back. When Abū Sufyān heard of it, he quickened his pace to Makkah.

The overall result was almost a draw – neither side could claim victory. But the battle had some very costly lessons for the Muslims. The disobedience and indiscipline of the archers at the mountain pass caused the Muslims to suffer badly in a battle which they almost had won.

Discipline and obedience to the commander are very important in a battlefield.

BATTLE OF AḤZĀB

Muḥammad (pbuh) had a very busy life. Hardly a day passed without some incident taking place somewhere in the new state. Skirmishes, plots, conspiracies and violation of treaties were rife. So was molesting and mockery of the Muslims and the prophet. All this happened by the collusion of the Jews and Makkani infidels. They joined together in their aim against Muslims.

The Jewish tribe of Banū Nadir violated treaty conditions and plotted to kill the prophet. So action had to be taken against them. They were given options either to fight or get deported. At first they refused to leave Madinah but later they were expelled for their treachery. They moved to Khaybar and turned the place into an enemy den against the Muslims. They incited the Makkans to make a new offensive against the Muslims and try decisively to finish them.

Badr had been a fatal blow to the dreams of the Makkans; at Uḥud, their mission remained unfulfilled. But it gave them new impetus to launch another attack, because their impression of the invincibility of the Muslims had been shaken. The incitement by Banū Nadir added fuel to their evil objectives.

Emissaries were sent on secret trips between the Makkans and the Nadirites. Finally agreement was reached about the new assault on Madinah. Forces were gathered to make the assault, drawing on people from Makkah, Ghatfān, Ṭāyef, Fazara and other towns.

News of these sinister moves reached the prophet, and he consulted his companions about preparations to counter the latest enemy offensive. The

decision was made to face the enemy from within the city and *Salmān al-Fārsī*, an Iranian Muslim, advised digging trenches round the city to hold the enemy hordes outside. This novel idea was put into effect.

Deep, wide trenches were dug round the whole of Madīnah and it took twenty days to complete the digging. Muḥammad (pbuh) himself took part in the digging. After the trenches had been completed, the prophet placed the Muslims in position to defend the city from inside.

An allied force ten thousand strong marched against Madīnah in the fifth year of the Hijrah. The number was so large, it appeared as if the enemy forces were advancing from all directions – the north, the south, above and below. They alighted on the outskirts of the city beating drums and chanting their war songs. But they found themselves separated from the Muslims by the very deep and wide trench, and this took them by surprise.

The enemy could not understand this new war technique. They were greatly astounded. They had no other alternative but to wait and see. But for how long?

A long and boring wait for thirty days and nights made them very weary, tired and restless. Nothing happened during this long siege except a few exchanges of arrows. Some desperate efforts to cross the trench were made, but the vigilant Muslims silenced their bravery for ever.

The stocks of food and other supplies of the enemy were dwindling and they felt worried and anxious.

A treacherous plot was now hatched by the enemy to instigate a surprise attack on the Muslims at night, by the Jews of the *Banū Qurayzah* who were still in Madīnah at the time. The prophet heard of the plot and took measures to foil it. On his advice, Muslims in the city roared aloud, "Allahu Akbar (Allah is the Greatest)", all through the night and this frightened the Jews. The prophet also sent a message to the Jews in Madīnah, asking them to think over the consequences of their treachery should the allied enemy forces be defeated! After the battle of Aḥzāb, the Jews of Banū Qurayzah were besieged for about two to three weeks and later on, all adults were killed on a judgment by Sa'ad chief of the Aws tribe – an ally of the Qurayzah.

Allah, the Almighty, is always with the lovers of Truth. His help is crucial for the success. It was time the Muslims, besieged in Madīnah, badly needed such help. Indeed, they did get that help.

The weather changed suddenly. Strong winds, thunder and heavy rain storms made the enemy flee in disarray. Soldiers were trampled under foot by horses and camels in the rush. The hordes eventually fled in a wild frenzy. What a scene it must have been! And what a timely intervention by Allah!

The enemies were greatly dispirited, while the Muslims were equally relieved and elated. The Muslims expressed their gratitude to Allah, the Merciful for His timely help.

ḤUDAYBIYAH AGREEMENT

In the sixth year of the Hijrah, the Prophet announced his intention to pay a visit to Al-Ka'bah in Makkah for short pilgrimage ('Umrah). He set out with 1400 of his followers who were under strict orders not to carry any weapons, except their traveller's sword.

The Quraysh of Makkah knew full well that the only purpose of the prophet's visit was pilgrimage, but how could they let the Muslims enter Makkah when they had not been able to enter Madīnah? The Muslims, they decided, must be stopped.

Plans were put in hand. The top generals – Khālid and 'Ikramah – were alerted to be ready with their armies to stop the prophet and his followers from entering Makkah.

The Muslims continued their journey to Makkah until they had reached a place called *Ḥudaybiyah*. Steps were taken then to find out what sort of mood the Quraysh were in, and it was clear they were in the mood for battle.

The Quraysh on their part gathered information about the strength and armoury of the Muslims, and realised they had come for no other purpose than the pilgrimage to Al-Ka'bah. Envoys were sent from each side. The prophet made his intentions crystal clear to the Quraysh through his envoy. But the Quraysh maltreated the Muslim envoy and threatened the Muslims. The patience of the Muslims was put to severe test. They could teach the Quraysh a good lesson even with their traveller's sword, but Allah's prophet ordered them to show extreme restraint.

The Quraysh were in no mood to allow the Muslims in for the pilgrimage that year. They made it an issue of prestige and pride. It was humiliating for the Muslims, but what could they do? Allah's messenger was their leader and all his steps were guided by Allah, so they had to be followed.

Eventually, after intense negotiations, an agreement between the Quraysh and the prophet was signed. This agreement is the *Ḥudaybiyah agreement*.

The conditions were:

A The Muslims would not visit Makkah that year, but would come a year later and remain there for three days only.

B There would be one-sided extradition – the Makkans taking refuge with the prophet would be handed over on demand to the Quraysh, but a Muslim taking refuge in Makkah would not be handed over to the prophet.

C There would be peace for ten years and during this period, Muslims could go to Makkah and Ṭāyef and the Quraysh could go to Syria through the Muslim areas.

D Each party would remain neutral in the event of a war between the other and a third party.

E Any tribe wishing to sign an agreement with either the Muslims or the Quraysh would be able to do so.

The terms of the agreement were apparently very unfavourable for the Muslims, but it turned out to be a favourable one for them in the end.

The Muslims were disheartened but they were soon given the news of victory by Allah. It was revealed: "Surely we have granted you a clear victory." (48:1).

In what way was this one-sided treaty a victory? The treaty eased the years long tension and made possible the intermingling of the two parties. The Makkans could now come to Madīnah, stay with the Muslims and this provided an opportunity for the Muslims to influence the stone-heartedness of the Makkans. In fact, during the years that followed the Ḥudaybiyah treaty, the number of new Muslims increased dramatically. Khālid Bin Waḥid, who later became the most famous general in Islamic history, and 'Amr Bin Al-'Aas, the conqueror of Egypt, became Muslims during this time.

The treaty proved beyond doubt that the prophet and the Muslims stood for peace. It also later paved the way for the escape of the detained Muslims in Makkah, as the extradition clause was later dropped on the initiative of the Makkans.

The Ḥudaybiyah agreement also opened the way to the conquest of Makkah in 630 CE – the eighth year of Hijrah.

THE CONQUEST OF MAKKAH

During the years that followed the Ḥudaybiyah treaty, the prophet sent emissaries to the Roman Emperor, the Persian Emperor, the ruler of Egypt, the King of Abyssinia, the chiefs of Syria and other leaders, inviting them to accept Islam.

In the seventh year of Hijrah, an expedition was made against the Jews of Banū Nadir who were expelled to Khaybar. Khaybar became the centre of anti-Islam activities and the prophet decided to take action against trouble-makers there. After a long siege and protracted battles in a number of different places, the fortress of the Jews was conquered and a centre of anti-Islamic activities cleared up.

The strength of the Muslims was on the increase, and new followers were joining.

The Ḥudaybiyah treaty gave freedom to the tribes to make agreements with either the Quraysh or the Muslims. The tribe of Banū Khuzā'ah sided with the Muslims, while Banū Bakr went on the side of the Quraysh.

Two years after the agreement, *Banū Bakr* attacked Banū Khuzā'ah while they were asleep. *Banu Khuzā'ah* took refuge in Al-Ka'bah, but were butchered in the sacred precincts. The news of this violation of the treaty reached the

prophet, and he sent an ultimatum to the Quraysh asking them to accept any of the following options:

- 1 To pay compensation for the victims of the Banū Khuzā'ah;
- 2 To withdraw their support for Banū Bakr;
- 3 To declare that the Ḥudaybiyah agreement no longer holds valid.

The Quraysh did not agree to the first two options, and declared the Ḥudaybiyah treaty to be null and void.

The prophet then had no alternative but to take action against the Quraysh. He set forth for Makkah with an army of ten thousand and took care to see that the news of his advance remained a secret. It was the tenth of the month of Ramaḍān, in the eighth year of Hijrah.

The Quraysh had no power to resist the mighty Muslim advance. All the famous warriors were now on the Muslim side. How could the Quraysh fight? They were totally demoralised by the might of the Muslim army.

Abū Ṣufyān, the arch-enemy of the prophet saw that there was no route to escape. He asked Al-'Abbās, the prophet's uncle, to take him to the prophet. Muḥammad (pbuh) granted an unconditional pardon to Abū Ṣufyān.

The Muslim army entered Makkah without incident. Inside, Makkans locked themselves within their homes and only a few who were unable to accept the new situation put up vain resistance.

The prophet declared a *general amnesty* for the entire community of Makkah. He forgave them for their past crimes. It was a unique scene! The Quraysh could not believe it! But even if they were unable to understand, it was the beauty and splendour of Islam which Muḥammad (pbuh), Allah's messenger, was trying to make them comprehend. Now they saw it with their own eyes. It was Muḥammad (pbuh) whom they compelled to migrate, called a sorcerer, crazy and an apostate. Now, it was the same Muḥammad (pbuh) who granted pardon to them.

Now Makkah was safe, peaceful and free of vengeance and enmity. Everyone enjoyed peace.

The conquest of Makkah without any bloodshed is a memorable event in Islamic history. The amnesty granted by the prophet was unique and unmatched. The greatness of Islam and its prophet was depicted splendidly in the conquest of Makkah. Where can you find an example of such forgiveness and mercy? It is only Islam, therefore, that is the only way to real peace and happiness.

The prophet stayed at Makkah until the 9th Shawwāl of eighth Hijrah.

THE FAREWELL ADDRESS

The prophet completed his mission. He sustained every sort of trial and

tribulation for the sake of his Lord and Creator. For twenty long years he worked hard to make the rule of Allah supreme on earth. He carried out this onerous duty on the soil of Arabia, a country which was most reluctant to accept the rule of the One Allah.

The system to guide mankind for all eternity was now completed. The prophet could feel that his days were coming to an end.

After the performance of the last Hajj, he delivered his farewell speech at 'Arafah before 120,000 of his followers. This speech was one of the most memorable in the whole history of Islam.

The prophet delivered his speech sitting on his camel and devoted followers listened intently to every word of it.

Praising and thanking Allah, the prophet said: "O people, listen to my words carefully, for I know not whether I would meet you again on such an occasion.

"O people, just as you regard this month, this day, this city as sacred, so regard the life and property of every Muslim as a sacred trust. Remember that you will indeed appear before Allah and answer for your actions.

"Return the things kept with you as a trust (*Amanah*) to their rightful owners. All dues of interest shall stand cancelled and you will have only your capital back; Allah has forbidden interest, and I cancel the dues of interest payable to my uncle 'Abbās bin 'Abdul Muṭṭalib.

"O People, your wives have a certain right over you and you have certain rights over them. Treat them well and be kind to them, for they are your partners and committed helpers.

"Beware of Satan, he is desperate to divert you from the worship of Allah, so beware of him in matters of your religion.

"O people, listen carefully! All the believers are brothers. You are not allowed to take the things belonging to another Muslim unless he gives it to you willingly.

"O people, none is higher than the other unless he is higher in obedience to Allah. No Arab is any superior to a non-Arab except in piety.

"O people, reflect on my words. I leave behind me two things, the Qur'ān and my example, and if you follow these, you will not fail.

"Listen to me carefully! Worship Allah and offer Ṣalāh, observe Ṣawm in the month of Ramaḍān and pay Zakāh.

"O people, be mindful of those who work under your. Feed and clothe them as you feed and clothe yourselves.

"O people, no prophet or messenger will come after me and no new faith will emerge.

“All those who listen to me shall pass on my words to others, and those to others again.

“Have I conveyed the message of Allah to you, o people?” asked the prophet facing towards the heavens. The audience answered in one voice, “Yes, you have; Allah is the witness.”

As the prophet finished the following revelation came to him:

“Today I have perfected your religion for you, completed my favour upon you and have chosen for you Islam as the way of your life.” (5:3)

THE SAD NEWS

Back in Madiñah, the prophet was taken ill. His health deteriorated and the illness became serious. During this time, when he was unable to lead prayers and he asked Abū Bakr his closest friend, to lead the prayers.

During the last days of illness, he had terrible headaches and a very bad fever. The disease finally ended the life of the prophet, the most illustrious personality in the history of mankind.

It was heart-breaking news for the Muslims. At first, they could not believe it; ‘Umar, one of the well-known companions of the prophet became so furious about the news that he threatened to kill anyone who said Muḥammad (pbuh) was dead. It was the depth of his love and attachment to the prophet that made him behave this way.

The prophet was a man. He was mortal. He died. However painful and upsetting the news was for the Muslims, they had to believe it. Abū Bakr, pale and saddened with grief, was ushered in and went to kiss the prophet’s forehead. He came out weeping to the waiting crowd outside the mosque. He heard what ‘Umar had said. He addressed the crowd with tears in his eyes but with a firm voice:

“Surely he who worshipped Muḥammad (pbuh) should know that Muḥammad (pbuh) is dead, but he who worshipped Allah should know that Allah is alive and never dies.”

He then recited the verse of the Qur’ān, *“Muhammad is but a messenger, and messengers have passed away before him. Will it be that when he dies or is slain you will turn back on your heels? He who turns back does no harm to Allah and Allah will reward the thankful.”* (3:144).

These words of Abū Bakr brought the Muslims back to face hard reality, and instilled in them confidence and hope, for Allah was there to help them and the Qur’ān and the Sunnah of the prophet were there to guide them.

Muḥammad (pbuh), Allah’s last messenger on earth and supreme example for mankind, breathed his last on 12 Rabī ‘Al-Awwāl, 11 AH (8th June, 632 CE), at the age of sixty three.

MISSION ACCOMPLISHED

The victory at Makkah was followed by an expedition of Khālid to demolish the Temple of Al-'Uzzā, the battle of Hunayn, the siege of Tāyef and the battle of Tabūk. During the last two years of the prophet's life, laws regarding Zakāh, Jizyah (non-Muslim tax), Ḥajj and interest dealings were revealed.

Muḥammad (pbuh) had a mission, a goal to achieve. It was to make the Law of Allah hold supreme in all human affairs. His duty was to call people to worship Allah alone and without any partner. His task was to form a society based on the worship and obedience of Tawḥid, belief in the Risālah and a firm conviction in life after death (Ākhirah).

Muḥammad (pbuh), the prophet of Allah, accomplished his assigned mission very successfully. He started preaching in the centre of idolatry, suffered torture, faced strong opposition, tolerated harrassment and finally had to leave his own home and birth place for the sake of the Truth and the pleasure of Allah, the Creator.

He fought evil and untruth and never compromised on matters of basic principles. He was offered all kinds of worldly allurements and temptations, but he was not drawn into such traps.

He practiced meticulously what he preached. His character and demeanour had a touch of magnetism about them. His conduct and behaviour attracted even his bitterest enemy. He had a superb personality. His life was the perfect example of the total obedience to Allah's commands.

He was loved by his companions more than anybody else. His was the life of an unrivalled leader, teacher, general, statesman, husband, friend and brother and above all a true, real servant of Allah.

When he had to fight, he fought for the Truth, and never violated the principles of war. He showed the highest degree of patience in the face of strongest provocation and incitement. He loved his companions so deeply that they did not hesitate to give their lives at his call.

Muḥammad's (pbuh) life is the shining example for us all to follow. He left for us teachings for all areas and affairs of our life. His life is the complete embodiment of Islam, based on the Qur'ān, the complete book of guidance from Allah.

Muḥammad (pbuh) was raised for mankind, to show them the best way to worship Allah and during his twenty-three years as Allah's messenger, he demonstrated infallibly this assigned task.

PROPHET MUḤAMMAD'S (pbuh) LIFE at a glance

Life at MAKKAH

BIRTH	Monday, 22nd April, 571 CE* 12 Rabi Al-Awwāl Father 'ABDULLĀH died before prophet's birth
At Six years of age	Lost mother ĀMINAH
Eight	Grandfather 'ABDUL MUṬṬALIB died
Twelve	First business trip to Syria
Fifteen	Battle of Al-Fujjār
Sixteen	Member of Ḥilf al-Fudūl
Twenty four	Second business trip to Syria
25	MARRIAGE with KHADĪJAH
35	Settlement of Ḥajr Al-Aswad dispute
40	PROPHETHOOD 610 CE

1st YEAR OF PROPHETHOOD

	Fajr and 'Aṣr prayers 2 Raka'h each
1st-3rd year	Secret preaching of Islam Centre: Arqam Makhzoomi's house
At the end of 3rd year	Open Call to Islam from Mount Ṣafā
3rd-5th year	Hostility of Makkan infidels
5th year	Migration of Muslims to Abyssinia (Ethiopia)

*The prophet's biographers differ about the exact year of his birth. Some have taken it to be 570 CE while others 569 CE. I have preferred Allāma Shiblī Nu'mānī's view from his famous 'Seeratun Nabī': 571 CE.

6th year	ḤAMZAH and 'UMAR accept Islam
7th-9th year	Boycott and Confinement by Makkan Infidels at Shi'bi Abī Ṭālib
10th year	YEAR OF SORROW – Uncle Abū Ṭālib and wife Khadījah died
10th year	Visit to Ṭāyef
10th year	MI'RĀJ, 27 Rajab
10th year	Five times daily prayers made obligatory during Mi'rāj.
11th year	First Covenant of <i>Al-'Aqabah</i> , 621 CE
12th year	Second Covenant of <i>Al-'Aqabah</i> , 622 CE
13th year	HIJRAH TO MADĪNAH 27 Safar (622 CE)

End of life in Makkah

Life at MADINAH

**1st YEAR OF
HIJRAH**

Arrival at QUBĀ', 8 Rabī Al-'Awwāl

Arrival at Madīnah, Friday, 622 CE

Construction of MASJIDUN NABĪ

ESTABLISHMENT OF FIRST ISLAMIC STATE

Treaty with the Jews

2ND Hijrah

JIHĀD ordained, 12 Safar

ADHĀN and ZAKĀH introduced

Revelation about the change of QIBLAH, Monday, 15th Sha'bān

RAMAḌĀN prescribed

'Īdul Fiṭr, 1st Shawwāl

Battle of BADR, 17 Ramaḍān

Marriage of 'ALĪ and FĀṬĪMAH, after Badr
Siege of Banū Qaynuqa'

3RD Hijrah

1st order about drinking wine revealed

Battle of UḤUD, 5 Shawwāl

First order about Ribā (Interest) revealed
Revelation of Laws about orphans, after Uḥud
Laws of Inheritance revealed
Revelation of the Laws about marriage and the rights of wives

4TH Hijrah

Order of Hijāb (Veil) for women revealed
Revelation about the Prohibition of drinking wine

5TH Hijrah

Battle of Dumatul Jandal and Battle of Banū Al-Muṣṭalīq
Laws about Adultery and Slander revealed

Battle of AḤZĀB

Punishment of Banū Qurayzah

6TH Hijrah

ḤUDAYBIYAH AGREEMENT

KHĀLID and 'AMR IBNUL 'AAṢ accept Islam

7TH Hijrah

Letters to rulers of different countries including Iranian and Roman emperors

Battle of KHAYBAR

Performance of postponed 'Umrah
Laws about Marriage and Divorce revealed

8TH Hijrah

Battle of MU'TAH

CONQUEST OF MAKKAH, 20 Ramaḍān

Battle of Ḥunayn, month of Shawwāl
Siege of Ṭāyef
Final order prohibiting Ribā (Interest) revealed

9TH Hijrah

Battle of Tabūk

Order of Jizyah (non-Muslim or minority Tax) revealed

Ḥajj prescribed

10TH Hijrah

Farewell Address, 9 Dhu' Al-Hijjah

DEATH

12 Rabī' 'Al-Awwāl, 11 Hijrah (632 CE)

KHULAFĀ' UR RASHIDŪN

(Rightly guided Caliphs)

ABŪ BAKR (RA)*

Now that the prophet is no more, who will lead the Islamic community? That was the question in the minds of all those present at the Masjidun Nabī. It was a crucial matter. A community cannot continue without a leader. Something must be decided before Allah's messenger was finally put to rest in the grave.

It proved the importance of leadership, without which a community becomes disarranged and indisciplined, and then loses its potential and prospects.

There was much discussion on the question of leadership. After discussion and argument, *Abū Bakr* was elected unanimously as the leader of the Muslim community. He was the first to succeed the prophet, and became the **first Khalīfah** (*Caliph or successor to the prophet*) of the Muslims. Who else could lead the Muslim community at this crucial moment except *Abū Bakr*? He was the closest friend of the prophet and he acted as the prophet's deputy, leading the prayers when the prophet was ill.

After the election of the Khalīfah, the prophet was buried, on the night of 13 Rabi' Al-Awwāl of the 10th Hijrah.

Abū Bakr's real name was 'Abdullāh, and he was given the titles of *Al-Siddīq* (*testifier to the truth*) and *Al-'Atīq* (*the generous*). His father, 'Uthmān was known as *Abū Quhāfa* and his mother *Salmā*, was known as *Ummul Khayr*. He was two and a half years younger than Muḥammad (pbuh).

After his election as the Khalīfah, *Abū Bakr* addressed the Muslims with these words:

“O people, I have been chosen by you as your leader, although I am no better than any one of you. If I do any good, give me your support. If I do any wrong, set me right.

“Listen, truth is honesty and untruth is dishonesty.

“The weak among you are the powerful in my eyes, as long as I do not get them their due. The powerful among you are weak in my eyes, as long as I do not take away from them what is due to others.

“Listen carefully, if people give up striving for the cause of Allah, He will send down disgrace upon them. If a people become evil-doers, Allah will send down calamities upon them.

*RA stands for *Raḍiallāhu Ta'ālā 'anhu* (may Allah be pleased with him)

“Obey me as long as I obey Allah and His messenger. If I disobey Allah and His messenger, you are free to disobey me.”

Abū Bakr was asking people to obey him only if he obeyed Allah and His messenger. Such was the first Khalīfah of the Muslims! Indeed, the world would be a better place to live in if we had leaders like Abū Bakr.

He was the first among the prophet’s friends to accept Islam, at the beginning. He accompanied the prophet during the Hijrah to Madīnah.

Abū Bakr was a merchant. He freed many slaves, including Bilāl and Umayya Bin Qahāf. He participated in all the battles which the prophet had to fight against unbelievers.

Abū Bakr loved his faith more than anything else. At Badr, his son, *‘Abdur Raḥmān* was fighting on the side of the unbelievers. After accepting Islam, *‘Abdur Raḥmān* once said to his father, “O father, at Badr, you were twice under my sword, but my love for you held my hand back.” To this, Abū Bakr replied. “Son, if I had you only once under my sword, you would have been no more.” He was so uncompromising in his faith.

At the time of the battle of Tabūk, he donated all his belongings to the War Fund, and when the prophet asked, “What have you left for your family?”, he replied, “Allah and His messenger.”

Before his death, the prophet nominated Usāmah Bin Zayed to lead an expedition to Syria against the Roman (then called Byzantine) army on the northern border of Arabia. The Romans killed the envoy of the prophet and refused to accept any negotiated settlement. Usāmah could not go on because of the death of the prophet. Abū Bakr sent Usāmah on the expedition even though he had to attend to all the internal problems of the Islamic state.

The news of the prophet’s death made some new Muslims think that the Islamic state would crumble and they refused to pay the Zakāh. These new Muslims could not get used to their new faith and its requirements until then. Abū Bakr declared, “By Allah! Even if a single kid is due from a man, he must give it. If he refuses I will declare war against him.”

Some others became renegades and imposters. *Ṭolayḥa*, *Musaylamah*, *Mālik Bin Nawirah*, *Aswad ‘Ansi* and a woman named *Sajāh* claimed they were prophets and created a great deal of confusion. Abū Bakr was quick to take strong action against these imposters. Khālīd Bin Walīd was sent to deal with *Ṭolayḥa* who fled to Syria and later became a Muslim. Mālik Bin Nawirah was killed.

Ikramah and Shuraḥbil were sent to take action against Musaylamah, but they were defeated and Abū Bakr dispatched Khālīd to tackle the notorious Musaylamah who married Sajah. In the fight that followed, *Wahshī*, the killer of Ḥamzah at Uhud, killed Musaylamah. Wahshī, who became a Muslim after the conquest of Makkah had regretted killing the prophet’s uncle Ḥamzah at Uhud, and killing Musaylamah, he felt, compensated for his earlier mistake.

Musaylamah and Aswad claimed to be prophets while Muḥammad (pbuh) was alive. Aswad was taken care of by the Muslims of Yemen during the prophet's life.

Abū Bakr's swift and bold steps saved the Islamic state from serious danger of chaos and confusion. He could now attend to other urgent problems.

During his **Khīlafah** (*Caliphate*), Abū Bakr had to take action against the Iranian empire. The emperor of Iran **Khusru Parvez** (*Chosroe*) tore up the letter the prophet sent to him through 'Abdullāh bin Hudhafa and demanded that the prophet be arrested. In the mean time, Khusru was murdered by his son and the whole empire fell into chaos and disorder. *Hurmuz*, the Persian governor in 'Irāq was very hostile to Arabs and he was cruel to the Muslims living in his area.

Abū Bakr sent *Muthannā'* to take action against the Iranians in 'Irāq. His forces were insufficient and Khalid was then sent with reinforcements. The Muslim army captured vast areas of the Iranian empire in several battles.

Khalīfah Abū Bakr then turned his attention to the Romans who were causing trouble on the North-West frontier. The prophet himself led an expedition against the Romans and this is known as *Battle Mu'tah*.

Abū Bakr dispatched four separate armies under *Abū 'Ubaidah bin Jarrāh*, *'Amr Ibnul 'Aaṣ*, *Yazīd bin Abū Ṣufyān* and *Shuraḥbil bin Ḥasnah* to deal with Roman power.

The four generals merged themselves into a unit to face the Romans most effectively. The Romans had amassed 150,000 soldiers but the total Muslim army was only 24,000. Reinforcements were requested and Abū Bakr asked Khālīd to handover the charge of Iraqi front to Muthannā' and rush to the Syrian front to help fight the colossal Roman army. The armies met in Yārmūk after Abū Bakr's death during Khalīfah 'Umar and the Romans were defeated.

Abū Bakr fell ill during this time and he died on 21 Jumadi al-Ākhir 13 AH (22 August 634 CE). His rule lasted two years and three months.

One of the many contributions of Abū Bakr was the collection and compilation of Al-Qur'ān.

Abū Bakr lived a simple, pious and upright life. He was a true servant of Allah and a meticulous follower of the prophet.

ABŪ BAKR'S ADVICE TO THE MUSLIM ARMY

- 1 Always fear Allah; He knows what is in men's hearts.
- 2 Be kind to those who are under you and treat them well.
- 3 Give brief directions; directions that are too long are likely to be forgotten.
- 4 Improve your own conduct before asking others to improve theirs.

- 5 Honour the enemy's envoy.
- 6 Maintain the secrecy of your plans.
- 7 Always speak the truth, so that you get the right advice.
- 8 Consult your men when you are free to do so; this will develop participation.
- 9 Take suitable measures to keep a watch on the army.
- 10 Be sincere to all with whom you deal.
- 11 Give up cowardice and dishonesty.
- 12 Give up bad company.

‘UMAR (RA)

Before his death, Abū Bakr consulted the elder companions of the prophet and selected ‘Umar as the second Khalīfah of the Muslims.

‘Umar was the son of Khaṭṭāb and he is famous in Islamic history as Al-Fārūq (one who distinguishes between right and wrong). His acceptance of Islam is notable and we mentioned it earlier in the prophet's biography.

‘Umar was a very brave and straight-forward person. He was tough in his attitude and uncompromising in basic principles. He was a great and talented ruler. During his Caliphate, the frontiers of the Islamic state expanded enormously.

‘Umar was a strong disciplinarian. He noticed the tremendous popularity of Khālid, the commander-in-chief of the Muslim forces, and feared that people might think too highly of him. So he removed Khālid and appointed Abū ‘Ubaidah as the Commander-in-Chief. The other reason for this bold decision was to make it clear that no-one was indispensable and victory in war was actually due to Allah's help. According to Allāma Shiblī Nu‘mānī the deposition of Khālid took place in 17 AH after the conquest of Syria. Some historians, however, maintain that this was the first mandate of Khalīfah ‘Umar.

Khālid, who had been given the title of the ‘Sword of Allah’ (Ṣaifullāh) by the prophet, gracefully accepted Khalīfah's order and worked as an ordinary soldier under Abū ‘Ubaidah. This is an example of the Islamic teaching of obedience to leadership.

Khālid had left Muthannā in command of the Muslim forces on the Iraqi front when he rushed to Yārmūk. Muthannā was finding it difficult to counter the enemy and went personally to Madīnah to ask Abū Bakr for reinforcements. Abū Bakr was by then on his death-bed.

Muthannā's absence from ‘Irāq made things worse. The Iranians regrouped and under the command of Rustam, recaptured the Muslim-occupied areas. Rustam sent two columns of his army, one to Ḥirah and the other to Kaskar.

'Umar sent Abū 'Ubaidah, the Commander, to deal with the situation and he defeated both the Persian columns. Rustam despatched a still larger force, including elephants, under the command of General Bahman. The two armies fought and the Muslims were defeated.

Khalīfah 'Umar raised another large army and Muthannā' regrouped the defeated troops. They put up a valiant fight and the Persians were defeated this time.

But the Persian court raised a larger army still, and forced Muthannā' to withdraw. The report of the new situation was sent to 'Umar and reinforcements were sent under Sa'ad Bin Abī Waqqās.

The Persian army and the Muslim army met at Qadisiyah. After a prolonged battle on several fronts, the outnumbered Muslim army defeated 120,000 Persian troops and recaptured the Ḥirah and other areas in 14 AH (636 CE).

Muslims laid seige of Damascus at the time of Khalīfah Abū Bakr's term of office. It continued, after Abū Bakr's death and lasted 70 days during the rule of 'Umar. After the long seige, Khālid took the Romans by surprise and entered the city. The Governor surrendered and a peace treaty was signed.

Meanwhile, 'Amr Ibnul 'Aaṣ was laying seige at Jerusalem. Later, Khālid, Abū 'Ubaidah and others joined him there. The Christians had little hope, and decided to give in. They put forward a proposal to the Muslims that they would hand over the city if Khalīfah 'Umar himself came to Jerusalem.

The proposal was relayed to Madīnah and the Khalīfah agreed to go to Jerusalem. He started out for the city with one attendant, riding a camel. They would ride the camel in turn. Sometimes the Khalīfah would walk and the attendant would ride and another time the Khalīfah would ride and the attendant would walk by the camel. This is Islamic Justice. The ruler and the ruled have equal rights. The rulers of the Islamic state must acknowledge the rights of the citizens over their own rights.

The Khalīfah of the Muslims entered Jerusalem dressed in ordinary clothes and flanked by the Muslims generals. The Christians could hardly believe the Muslim ruler had arrived; such was the simplicity of 'Umar. He used to live like a very humble ordinary man. But he was tough, and the most able ruler of his time. He had no pride, no pomp and no grandeur. This is the teaching of Islam. This is what present day Muslim rulers have forgotten, and is that we must restore and get back.

An agreement was signed that guaranteed the safety and security of the Christians in Jerusalem.

During the Khīlafah of 'Umar, vast areas of the Roman, and Persian empires and the whole of Egypt were brought under Islamic rule. 'Umar was a gifted orator. He was very concerned for the welfare of the citizens under his rule. He left a memorable legacy for Muslims after him.

The second Khalīfah 'Umar died after being stabbed by a Persian non-Muslim *Fīroz* nick-named *Abū Lului*. Fīroz complained to 'Umar about his master *Mughīrah* bin Shu'bah who imposed a tax on him. 'Umar heard the details of the complaint and told Fīroz that the tax was reasonable. This made Fīroz angry and the next day during dawn prayer he struck the Khalīfah with a dagger six times wounding him fatally. 'Umar Al-Fārūq died three days later in 23 AH (644 CE).

Before his death, 'Umar had appointed a six-man Committee to elect his successor from among themselves. The six members of the Committee were: 'Uthmān bin 'Affān, 'Abdur Raḥmān bin 'Auf, 'Alī bin Abū Ṭālib, Zubayr bin 'Awwām, Sa'ad bin Abī Waqqās, and Ṭalḥa bin 'Ubaydullāh.

'Umar Al-Fārūq ruled the Islamic state for ten years six months and four days.

'UMAR'S ADVICE

- 1 Do not be misled by someone's reputation.
- 2 Do not judge a person only by his performance of Ṣalāh and Ṣawm; rather, look into his truthfulness and wisdom.
- 3 One who keeps his secrets controls his affairs.
- 4 Fear the person whom you hate.
- 5 Prudent is he who can assess his actions.
- 6 Do not defer your work for tomorrow.
- 7 He who has no idea of evil can easily fall into its trap.
- 8 Judge a man's intelligence by the questions he asks.
- 9 Less concern for material well-being enables one to lead a free life.
- 10 It is easier not to indulge in sins than to repent.
- 11 Contentment and gratitude are two great virtues; you should not care which one you are gaining.
- 12 Be grateful to him who points out your defects.

'UTHMĀN (R A)

The six member committee appointed by 'Umar Al-Fārūq, after long deliberations and consultation, elected 'Uthmān the son of 'Affān as the third Khalīfah of Islam.

'Uthmān was born six years after the prophet and he belonged to the Umayyah tribe of the Quraysh. He was a cloth merchant and was very rich. He was known as Al-Ghanī (the rich).

He had accepted Islam on Abū Bakr's invitation and migrated to Abyssinia with his wife Ruqayyah (prophet's daughter). He acted as the prophet's envoy during Ḥudaybiyah agreement.

His state policy can be understood from his letter to the officers of the Islamic army. He wrote:

“You are the protectors of Islam from the onslaughts of the enemies. ‘Umar had issued some regulations which are known to me. In fact, they were drafted in consultation with me.

“Beware! I do not want to have reports from anyone of any transgression by you. If you do so, you will be replaced by someone better. You should always be mindful of your conduct. I will watch over whatever Allah has entrusted to my care.”

He once spoke to the Tax Collectors with these words:

“Allah has created everything with fairness and justice. He accepts only what is right and just. Give what is right and take what is right. Trust produces trust. Follow it strictly and do not be of those who fail to discharge it. Faithfulness begets faithfulness. Do not oppress the orphans and those with whom you have covenanted. Allah will punish those who will do so.”

Sa‘ad bin Abī Waqqās was the Governor of Kufā in ‘Irāq. ‘Uthmān dismissed him for non-payment of a state loan. He was succeeded by Mughīrah.

During the Caliphate of ‘Uthmān, the rebellion in Azerbaijān and Ārmenia was quelled. *Mu‘āwiyah*, Governor of Syria, with the help of *Abī Sarah*, the Governor of Egypt, made a naval attack on Cyprus and brought it under Islamic rule. Vast areas of North Africa including Tripoli, Tunisia and Morocco were brought under Islamic rule during the Khilāfah of ‘Uthmān

The Romans, although defeated several times by the Muslim army in the past, made another attempt during the Khilāfah of ‘Uthmān to recapture the territories they had lost.

Constantine, then Emperor of Rome made great preparations and attacked Alexandria with a naval fleet five to six thousand strong. But, the Romans were decisively defeated by the new Muslim naval force under the commands of Abī Sarah and *Mu‘āwiyah*.

During the last six years of his Khilāfah, ‘Uthmān faced internal dissension and trouble. This trouble took the shape of civil war which eventually led to the killing of the third Khalīfah ‘Uthmān by an unruly and angry mob.

‘Uthman’s Khilāfah lasted twelve years. He was murdered by rioters on Friday, 17 Dhū ‘Al-Ḥijjah in 35 AH (656 CE).

‘Uthmān was a simple and a very kind-hearted man. His simplicity and kindness did not allow him to take strong action against the trouble-makers and

rioters. Above all, because of his simple mindedness, his administration was not as disciplined as it had been during 'Umar.

'Uthmān was a generous man. He used to spend a lot of money for Islam and to free the slaves. He was a great pious man who feared and loved Allah above everything else.

'ALĪ (R A)

"I am the youngest of you. I may be a boy, my feet may not be strong enough, but O messenger of Allah, I shall be your helper. Whoever opposes you, I shall fight him as a mortal enemy."

These were the words of 'Alī, the cousin of the prophet and then a boy of only ten. He spoke these words before the elders of Quraysh during the dinner hosted by the prophet to invite them to Islam.

'Alī was the person who risked his life for the prophet and slept in the prophet's bed when the unbelievers laid a siege around the prophet's house to kill him on the night of the prophet's migration.

The same 'Alī was elected the fourth Khalīfah of Islam after 'Uthmān. He was the son of Abū Ṭālib, the prophet's uncle.

'Alī was married to the prophet's daughter Fāṭimah and they had two sons, Ḥasan and Ḥusain, whom the prophet loved very dearly as his grandsons.

He took part in the battles of Badr, Uḥud, Aḥzāb and Khaybar. At Khaybar, it was 'Alī who subdued the Jews by his furious assault.

'Alī held many important positions during the life of the prophet and the three Caliphs (Khulafā') before him.

He was elected Khalīfah at a very delicate time when the Muslim Ummah (community) was torn by internal strife and the sad incident of the murder of 'Uthmān, the third Khalīfah had taken place.

'Alī first concentrated on consolidating his administration and pledged then to take action against 'Uthmān's murderers. But the supporters of 'Uthmān would not listen to the Khalīfah, until he took action against 'Uthman's murderers.

The murder of 'Uthmān by a group of riotous Muslims had a tremendous effect on the later history of the Muslims. It divided the once cohesive, united and determined Muslims *Ummah* (Community), and factions fought bloody battles among themselves.

The once powerful Islamic army which fought the wrong-doers and rescued those suffering from the exploitation and tyranny of the mighty Persian and Roman empires had now become seriously involved in internal clashes.

The talented and able ruler, 'Alī, had to spend much of his time pacifying the

warring factions of the Muslims. He tried his best to reconcile the opposing groups and restore peace, without much success. The Ummah was dangerously divided and catastrophic consequences followed. Groupings developed and mutual trust and confidence was undermined.

During this turmoil, 'Alī, the fourth Khalīfah of Islam was fatally wounded during Ṣalāh Al-Fajr by one Ibn Muljim. 'Alī died on Friday, 20 Ramaḍān AH 40 (659 CE).

'Alī's rule lasted for four years nine months and the whole of that time was a period of unrest.

'Alī lived a very simple and austere life. He was a very generous and courageous person and had a sharp sense of justice.

He had a love of learning and he was a great and learned person himself. He had been given the title of "Gate of learning" by the prophet. He was also called Asadullāh (Lion of Allah).

SOME IMPORTANT SAYINGS OF 'ALĪ

- 1 One who knows himself, knows his creator.
- 2 If you love Allah, tear out your heart's love of the world.
- 3 The fear of Allah makes one secure.
- 4 How can you rejoice about life that grows shorter each hour?
- 5 World-wide reputation can be undone by an hour's degradation.
- 6 Three defects make life miserable:
1 Vindictiveness 2 Jealousy 3 A bad character.
- 7 One who is proud of worldly possessions of this fleeting existence, is ignorant.
- 8 Joy is followed by tears.
- 9 Each breath of a man is a step nearer to death.
- 10 The best man is he who is most helpful to his fellow-men.
- 11 One who thinks himself the best is the worst.
- 12 The hated person is one who returns evil for good.
- 13 Virtue is the key to success.
- 14 Learned men live even after death, ignorant men are dead although alive.
- 15 There is no treasure like knowledge.
- 16 Knowledge is wisdom and the educated man is the wise man.
- 17 Experience is knowledge gained.

- 18 Who never corrects himself will never correct another.
- 19 Listen, and you will teach yourself: remain silent, and you risk nothing.
- 20 One who reflects on Allah's gifts, succeeds.
- 21 Ignorance harms a man more than a cancer in the body.
- 22 One of the signs of a stupid man is the frequent change of opinion.
- 23 Never speak when it is not the time for speech.
- 24 Beware of back-biting: it sows the seeds of bitterness, and separates you from Allah and man.
- 25 The best truth is the keeping of promises.
- 26 Better be dumb than lie.
- 27 Do not flatter, it is no sign of faith.
- 28 A hypocrite's tongue is clean, but there is sickness in his heart.
- 29 Better to be alone than with bad company.
- 30 Whoever sows good reaps his reward.

CONCLUSION

Abū Bakr Al-Ṣiddīq, 'Umar Al-Fārūq, 'Uthmān Al-Ghanī, 'Alī Al-Murtaḍa were the consecutive successors of the prophet. These four Khulafā' are called Khulafā'-ur-Rashidūn or the rightly guided Khulafā'.

Together, these four Khulafā' ruled the Islamic State for about thirty years. They are called, 'rightly guided' because they ruled the people of their time exactly in accordance with the teachings of the Qur'ān and the Sunnah of the prophet.

Despite the unpleasant happenings, this period of Islamic rule is the golden period of justice unrivalled in human history. Islamic principles were put into practice in full during this time.

A detailed and serious study of the lives of the Khulafā'-ur-Rashidūn would open before us a treasury of knowledge and experience about the Islamic system of life which is the only solution to the present and future problems of mankind. We need to follow the Islamic teachings most faithfully in order to get the promised good out of it. Mere lip service to the greatness and beauty of Islam would deliver nothing. It is the practice of the system which counts.

Let us resolve to understand, practice and preach Islam. Only then we would ourselves get peace and happiness and the whole humanity could also be freed from unhappiness and oppression.

STORIES OF PROPHETS

“There is a lesson for the men of understanding in their stories” (12:111)

ĀDAM and HAWWĀ' (Eve)

Long long ago, none lived on the earth. Allah then decided to create man to worship Him and live on the earth. Of course, Angels and Jinn were created before Ādam.

Allah said to the angels about His decision to create Man: “I am going to send my Khalīfah (deputy or agent) to earth.” (2:30).

The angels said, “Will you send there some-one who will make mischief and shed blood, while we praise you and glorify you.” (2:30). Allah said, “Surely I know what you do not know.” (2:30). The angels were silent.

Allah also said to the angels, “I am going to create a mortal (Bashar) from clay. When I have fashioned him and given him life, you must prostrate before him” (38:71-72).

Allah created Ādam from clay and gave him the nicest shape. He then commanded the angels and the Jinn to prostrate before Ādam.

The angels obeyed the command. 'Iblīs refused to prostrate and disobeyed Allah. 'Iblīs was from among the Jinn. Allah asked, “What prevented you from prostrating before that which I have created?” 'Iblīs replied, “I am better than him. You have created me from fire but him you created from clay.” (7:12, 15:32-33).

Allah then said, “Get out of here. You are out cast. My curse is on you till the Day of Judgment.” (15:34-35).

'Iblīs vowed to misguide Ādam and his children. (7:14-18) But, as you know, Allah has given man knowledge and guidance to distinguish between right and wrong to avoid being misguided.

Allah then taught Ādam some names and asked the angels to say those names. (2:31) The angels said, “Glory to you, we do not know more than you have taught us. Surely you are All-knowing and the Most Wise”. (2:31) Allah then asked Ādam to say those names, and he did so. (2:33).

Turning to the angels Allah said, “Did I not tell you that I know everything that is in the earth and the heavens and I also know whatever you disclose and whatever hide.” (2:33)

Allah then asked Ādam to live in *Al-Jannah* (the Paradise). He had everything

to enjoy. But he was alone. So Allah created *Hawwā'* (Eve) as his wife. Now, Ādam was happy and living in Al-Jannah.

Allah said to Ādam, "Live with your wife in Al-Jannah. Eat freely whatever you like in here. But do not go near that tree." (2:35) This was intended to test them and teach them self-control. Also Allah wanted to see whether they used the knowledge given to them to save themselves from the evil tricks of 'Iblīs.

'Iblīs was trying hard to misguide Ādam and Hawwā'. At last, he succeeded and tempted Ādam and Eve to go to that tree. As soon as they approached the forbidden tree, Ādam and Eve became naked. For so long, they did not know what nakedness was. They had no cause to be ashamed of it. But now they felt ashamed. They tried to cover themselves with leaves and tried to hide. But there was nowhere they could hide from Allah, the All-knowing.

Ādam and Hawwā' asked Allah's forgiveness and it was granted. They prayed:

"Our Lord, we have wronged ourselves; and if you forgive us not and have not mercy on us, surely we are of the lost." (7:23)

He then commanded Ādam and Hawwā' to go down to earth and live there. But He was very kind and taught them the way to seek forgiveness. (2:38-39).

He also told them that he would send guidance for them, so that they would not deviate from the right course.

Allah revealed guidance to Ādam and he was made the first prophet on earth.

PROPHET NŪḤ (Noah)

Many hundreds of years passed after Ādam, and the earth was filled with his children. As time passed, the children of Ādam, forgot Allah and started to worship statues made of stones. They became bad and would lie, steal and some became mean and greedy.

Allah, the most Merciful, sent NūḤ to these people to bring them back to His worship. NūḤ invited the people to come back to Tawḥīd. He asked them to give up idol worship and all other vices which they had developed. He warned them about the Day of Judgment. (7:59-64)

NūḤ tried his best for many years to make people come back to the worship of Allah. But the people would not listen. They laughed at him, mocked him, despised him and called him crazy and a liar. (26:105-118, 54;9).

NūḤ lived 950 years (29:14) and within this long period, only a few people responded to his call. Even his sons and wife did not believe in him.

NūḤ was tired and shocked to see the stone heartedness of his people. He became so fed up with the stubbornness of their opposition to the truth that he ultimately prayed to Allah, "Leave not upon the land any one from the

unbelievers.” (71:26) “So, he cried unto his Lord saying: “I am vanquished, so give help.” (54:10). He also prayed to Allah to save him and his followers (26:118)

Almighty Allah accepted Nūḥ’s prayers and asked him to build an ark. Nūḥ started to construct the ark. It was not an easy task. But prophet Nūḥ persevered. (11:37)

When the people saw Nūḥ building the ark, they laughed at him and thought that Nūḥ must have gone mad. They could not see the reason for building so huge an ark, hundreds of miles from the sea. (11:38)

What was the ark for? they exclaimed! Soon they were to realise. It was Allah’s plan to destroy the whole land of unbelievers except the ones who believed and helped Nūḥ.

Nūḥ told the mockers that a flood would soon overcome them and they would have no place to take shelter. The people laughed even more. But Allah’s plans soon materialised and the disbelievers saw it happen before their own eyes.

After many days of hard work, the ark was complete and Allah asked Nūḥ to take a pair (one male one female) of all the animals, into the ark. He and his followers boarded afterwards. (11:40-41)

Suddenly the skies became dark and thunder and rain followed. It rained and rained and the whole land became flooded. There was water everywhere. Everything drowned except the ark which was floating. (54:11-15)

The flood water lasted five months and it destroyed all the disbelievers. Even Nūḥ’s own son – an unbeliever was not saved. Nuḥ had asked permission of Allah to take his son in the ark but was refused. He was told an unbelieving son was no part of his family. Nuḥ felt sorry and Allah forgave him. Nūḥ and his followers were safe in the ark. (11:45-47)

At last, the skies began to clear and the ark halted at Mount Judi (in Turkey). Nūḥ and his followers disembarked. (11:44) Thus Allah saved Nuḥ and his followers. (29:15)

Allah bestowed prosperity and abundance on Nūḥ’s children. They spread over the earth and filled it. (11:48)

Such is the dreadful punishment meted out to the disbelievers. Allah says in the Qur’ān, “We drowned who denied our signs. Lo! they were blind folk.” (7:64)

PROPHET IBRĀHĪM (Abraham)

Ibrāhīm known as the Khaḫīlullāh (friend of Allah) (4:125) lived in the country south of present day ‘Irāq. His father Āzar used to make idols and sell them.

The people of the area used to worship these idols made by themselves. They had a temple for these idols which they worshipped.

Ibrāhīm was an intelligent boy. It was strange for him to see people bowing down before the stone-made idols which could neither move nor talk. They could not even drive away the flies which sat on their eyes and nose. Ibrāhīm wondered why people worshipped such powerless statues.

He once asked his father, "O my father, why do you worship idols which can neither speak or hear?" Āzar became angry and warned Ibrāhīm not to ask such questions.

Ibrāhīm had an idea. He thought he would give the people a practical lesson. Once when people were busy celebrating a festival, Ibrāhīm went to the temple where the idols were kept.

He asked the idols, "How do you do? Here is the food and drink. Why don't you help yourselves?" The stone idols were silent, of course.

Ibrāhīm now took an axe and began to break all the idols except the biggest which he spared with a purpose. When he had finished, he left the axe hanging round the neck of the biggest idol. (21:58)

On their return from the festival, people came to the temple to worship the idols but were astonished to see the pitiful condition of their gods. They were shocked, grieved and furious. "Who has done this mischief?" they asked themselves.

They thought of Ibrāhīm – the only one who talked disrespectfully about the idols.

Soon Ibrāhīm was found out. They asked him, "Who broke the idols?" Ibrāhīm calmly replied, "Ask the biggest idol." The people knew that the idols could not talk. They said, "O Ibrāhīm, don't you know that the idols can't talk?" Ibrāhīm retorted, "Why do you worship them, then? They can't talk, move or understand anything. Why do you ask them for favour?" The people had no answer. They were sure that it was Ibrāhīm who broke the idols. They could not let the matter go easily. They called a meeting and decided to burn Ibrāhīm alive. They had to defend their gods. (21:59-68)

But Allah was in his favour, and nothing could harm Ibrāhīm as he did the right thing.

A big fire was set up and Ibrāhīm was thrown into it. But a miracle happened! The fire did no harm to him. Allah protected him. People were amazed to see it and they could not believe their eyes. But it was so. Ibrāhīm was happy and his persecutors felt sad and helpless. (21:69-70)

Ibrāhīm's enquiring mind was in search of Allah. He thought and thought. It occurred to him that the shining Moon might be his Lord. But when the moon vanished he said to himself, "No, a vanishing thing cannot be my Lord." He

looked at the sun and said, "It is the biggest and it is my Lord." But when the sun also went down, Ibrāhīm said to himself, "No, this cannot be my Lord." He came to the conclusion that only the ever-lasting, ever-present and All-knowing, Almighty can be his Lord. The stars, the moon, the sun cannot be the Lord. (6:76-79)

In this way, Ibrāhīm was given the light of truth by Allah. Ibrāhīm was a messenger and servant of Allah. (16:120-122, 19:41) He loved Allah more than anything else. He was ready to sacrifice his son Ismā'īl on Allah's command. Allah accepted Ibrāhīm's readiness and sent a lamb to be sacrificed instead. (37:101-107)

We observe the festival of 'Īdul Aḏhā to commemorate this.

It was prophet Ibrāhīm who rebuilt the Ka'bah in Makkah with his son Ismā'īl. (22:26-27, 2:125-129, 14:35-37)

PROPHET MŪSĀ (Moses)

Mūsā, the son of 'Imrān was born in Egypt 450 years after Yūsuf (Joseph). In Egypt, at that time the kings were known as Fir'awn (Pharaoh).

The followers of the prophet Ya'qūb (Jacob), father of prophet Yūsuf are called Banī Isrā'īl (Israelites). Banī Isrā'īl had lived in Egypt since the days of the prophet Yūsuf. Prophet Ya'qūb was known as Isrā'īl.

Fir'awn or the rulers of Egypt looked upon the Banī Isrā'īl as 'foreigners' and treated them harshly. The rulers feared that one day the Banī Isrā'īl would grow in number and be powerful. So, Fir'awn issued orders to all midwives to kill every male child born in the family of Isrā'īl. When Israelites came to know about this, they stopped calling midwives and so foiled Fir'awn's plan (28:4-6).

Mūsā was born during this critical time. Having failed in his first attempt, Fir'awn ordered that every new born male child must be thrown into the River Nile. Mūsā's mother managed to conceal him for three months and when she could not manage any more, she was inspired by Allah to put Mūsā into a specially made box and threw it into the river (20:38-39). Maryam, Mūsā's sister was asked to watch the floating box from a distance to avoid suspicion (28:11).

The box reached the other shore and one of the members of Fir'awn's family picked it up and got excited to find a lovely baby boy inside. Musa was then taken to Fir'awn's wife and she was very glad to have the baby and adopted him (28:8-9). Musa's sister went to Fir'awn's palace and suggested a nanny look after the baby, a woman who would be suitable to suckle him. This woman was none other than Mūsā's mother (28:12).

So Mūsā came back to his mother's lap. In this way, it has been proved that none could destroy a person whom Allah would protect.

Mūsā was growing up in Fir'awn's house and during this time he came across an Egyptian who was beating an Israelite. Mūsā gave the Egyptian a blow and killed him accidentally (28:15).

He left Fir'awn's house and went to Midian (28:22-28). He stayed there for ten years before moving on to Tuwā, a valley at the foot of the mountain Al-Ṭūr in Sinai. Here, Mūsā was given the divine guidance by Allah, and was selected as a messenger of Allah (28:30).

Allah bestowed on Mūsā two signs: a 'stick' which when thrown down would turn into a living serpent and the ability to make his hand shine, after it was drawn out from under his arm (20:17-22).

Allah commanded Mūsā to go to Fir'awn and invite him to Tawhīd (20:42-44). He begged Allah to make his brother Hārūn his helper and Allah granted his prayer (20:24-36).

Mūsā and Hārūn went to Fir'awn and they argued with him, telling him that Almighty Allah had chosen Mūsā to save the Israelites from the oppression of the Egyptians. Fir'awn refused to let the Israelites go (20: 47-54, 26: 16-17).

Fir'awn made fun of Mūsā. Mūsā showed his signs to impress upon Fir'awn that his message was true. He threw his stick on the ground and it changed into a serpent. Mūsā picked it up and it turned again into a stick. Fir'awn and his followers were amazed to see this. But he thought that Mūsā was a magician and challenged him to face his own magicians who could show even more stunning magic (26:23-37).

But on the appointed day, the magicians of Fir'awn were badly defeated. The false snakes they produced by their sticks were all swallowed up by the serpent of Mūsā's stick. Fir'awn and his magicians could hardly believe their eyes. His magicians bowed to the truth and professed their faith in Allah (26:38-47).

Fir'awn became angry and began to torture the Banī Isrā'īl even more.

It was during this time that Allah commanded Mūsā to leave Egypt with his followers (20:77). Mūsā asked his followers to get ready and they set out at night to avoid Fir'awn's notice and reached the shore of the Nile. They were chased by Fir'awn and his soldiers. They almost reached the Israelites. In front of them was the mighty Nile and behind were Fir'awn's soldiers. At this moment, Allah ordered Mūsā to throw his stick in the water and as he did so, the Nile was divided into two and a road was ready in the middle, allowing the Israelites to cross it (26:52-65).

Fir'awn was following, but when the Israelites reached the other shore and Fir'awn was in the middle of the Nile, water from both sides suddenly poured in and the road was no more.

Fir'awn and his soldiers were drowned there (26:66). This is how Allah punishes transgressors and helps his servants.

PROPHET 'ISĀ (Jesus)

The Banī Isrā'īl were given many favours by Almighty Allah. But they were very ungrateful. They violated Allah's orders, ridiculed the prophets and killed some of them. They started to worship idols and made Allah's message a mockery.

Allah, the Merciful again sent a prophet to bring them to the right path. This prophet was 'Isā son of Maryam (Mary), (2:87). Allah bestowed on him Injīl (Gospel) and 'Isā confirmed what was in Tawrāt (Torah), (5:46, 61:6).

The birth of 'Isā was a miracle. He was born of the virgin Maryam without a father, by Allah's command (19:17-21). Allah can do anything he likes. Everything is possible for Him. When He wants to get something done, He only says, 'Be' and there it is (2:117).

We know that Ādam was created by Him without a father and a mother. So, it was easy for Him to create 'Isā without a father.

Baby 'Isā born of virgin Maryam could talk even as a baby. He was commissioned as a prophet when he was 30, and he acted as a prophet for three years (19:29-34).

Allah endowed him with some miraculous powers. He could make birds out of clay, heal leprosy within minutes, restore the eyes of the blind, and he could also make the dead come alive. All these miracles were given to him by Allah. The Qur'ān mentions the miraculous powers and the birth of 'Isā in Sūrah Āle 'Imrān: "(And remember) when the angels said: O, Mary! Allah gives you the glad tidings of a word from Him, whose name is the Messiah, Jesus, Son of Mary, illustrious in the World and the Hereafter and one of those brought near (unto Allah)."

He will speak to mankind in his cradle and in his manhood, and he is of the righteous." (3:46).

"She (Mary) said: My Lord! How can I have a child when no mortal has touched me? He said, So (it will be). Allah creates what He wishes. If He decrees a thing, He says to it only: Be, and it is. (3:47).

"And He will teach him the Scripture and wisdom, and the Torah and the Gospel (3:48).

"And will make him a messenger to the Children of Isrā'īl, (saying): I come to you with a sign from my Lord. See! I fashion for you out of clay the likeness of a bird, by Allah's leave. I heal him who was born blind and the leper, and I raise the dead, by Allah's leave. And I announce to you what you eat and what you store up in your houses. Here truly is a portent for you, if you are to be believers (3:49).

"And I come to you confirming what was before me of the Torah, and to make

lawful some of what was forbidden to you. I come to you as a sign from your Lord, so keep your duty to Allah and obey me (3:50).

“Allah is my Lord and your Lord, so worship Him. That is a straight path.” (3:51).

He asked people to obey Allah alone. But his followers made fantasies about him and they considered him a part of Allah, even a son of Allah (5:116-117).

We believe in ‘Īsā as a prophet and a servant of Allah (43:59). We don’t believe in him as son of Allah. Allah can have no son or daughter. He is above any such notion. Allah is One and Indivisible. There is no idea of unity in Trinity in Islam (4:171). Trinity is clear partnership (Shirk). It is a big sin to say anyone is the son of Allah (5:17, 19:35).

According to the Qur’ān, Prophet ‘Īsā was not crucified, rather he was lifted by Allah, the Almighty and the Most Wise (4:157-158). Everything is possible for Allah. It was He who saved Ibrāhīm from fire and Mūsā from Fir‘awn.

THREE GREAT MUSLIM WOMEN

KHADĪJAH (RA)*

“When none believed me, Khadijah did. She made me a partner in her wealth.”

Those are the words of the prophet Muḥammad (pbuh) about his first wife – the great Muslim lady, Khadijah Al-Kubrā.

Khadijah, the daughter of Khuwaylid, was born 15 years before the year of the elephant in 555 CE. Her mother was Fāṭimah bint Zayedah.

She was a noble, fine-natured wealthy lady of Makkah. She married the prophet when she was 40 and he was 25. They had six children: two boys, Qāsim and ‘Abdullāh (also known as Tāhir and Ṭayyīb), and four girls, Zainab, Ruqayyah, Umm Kulthūm and Fāṭimah.

Khadijah lived with the prophet for 24 years and was the prophet’s only wife during that time.

When the Revelation came from Allah and Muḥammad (pbuh) was made prophet, it was Khadijah who accepted the faith and became the first Muslim. She was 55 years old at that time. Her acceptance of Islam greatly helped its spread among the Makkans. She stood by the prophet all the time. In moments of trial and difficulty the prophet used to come to her and she consoled and comforted her husband and encouraged him.

Khadijah’s wealth was used for the cause of Islam. The prophet remained busy in preaching Islam and his devoted and loving wife looked after the children and family affairs.

The prophet and Khadijah had many sorrows. They had to bear the death of their sons Qāsim and ‘Abdullāh in their infancy, and in the fifth year of the prophethood, their daughter Ruqaiyyah left them and migrated to Abyssinia with her husband, ‘Uthmān bin ‘Affān.

Ruqaiyyah left her parents at the age of 12 and returned after four years, and that time was a long and painful separation for her mother, Khadijah.

During the prophethood, the Quraysh did all they could to stop the prophet preaching Islam. Nothing worked. The prophet continued his mission, relying on Allah. Khadijah was his source of encouragement and comfort. She also had to bear enormous strain and suffering during the boycott at Shi’bi Abī Ṭālib for three years.

* R.A. here stands for Raḍi Allāhu Ta’ālā ‘Anha.

The great Muslim lady Khadijah, the first Muslim, died on 10 Ramāḍān in the tenth year of the prophethood, in 620 CE, at the age of 65. Her death was a great loss to Muḥammad (pbuh). He said, "I cannot bear the scene. I believe that Allah has kept much good in it". He loved Khadijah so dearly that even after her death he used to remember her.

The angel, Jibra'īl, used to bring salām for her from Allah.

Fāṭimah Al-Zahrā became so sad at her mother's death that she stuck to her father and continued crying, "where is my mummy? where is my mummy?"; the prophet consoled her and told her of the good news of Khadijah's acceptance by Allah in Paradise.

Young Muslim girls should consider how devoted Khadijah was to her husband, and how much she did for him for the cause of Allah. The Muslims of the present day would feel proud to have such a wife. The world could be changed by great Muslim ladies like Khadijah.

FĀṬIMAH

Fāṭimah, the youngest of the four daughters of the prophet, is known as Sayyidah Al-Nisā' (Leader of the women). She was born five years before the prophethood of Muḥammad (pbuh), and migrated to Madīnah after the prophet, with her sisters and step mother Sawdah.

After the death of her mother Khadijah, she served her father with total devotion and love. The prophet loved her very much and kept her with him in deep affection. She was loved by all the wives of the prophet. She looked like her mother Khadijah and this reminded people of her great mother.

Fāṭimah was married to 'Alī after the battle of Badr, in a simple marriage ceremony. The guests were served dates and drinks made from honey. She was about 18 years old, though some say she was only 15 at the time.

Her married life was happy and peaceful. 'Alī, her husband, respected her, and the prophet always used to advise Fāṭimah to obey and serve her husband in every respect. She kept her house neat, clean and tidy and gave it a simple, pure and peaceful look where happiness and good fortune prevailed.

Fāṭimah and her husband had five children: three sons, Hasan, Ḥusain and Muḥassin, and two daughters, Zainab and Umm Kulthūm. Muḥassin died while still a baby.

According to Ahādīth (plural of Hadith), Fāṭimah was regarded as a great and respected lady by the women of her day, because of her personality, kindness, politeness and dignity.

The prophet said, "Among the women of the whole world, four are great: Khadijah, Fāṭimah, Maryam (Mary) and Āsiyah" (wife of Fir'awn).

Fāṭimah resembled her father very closely in habits, traits and in conversation. When she came to any meetings of the prophet, he used to get up for her and make room for her to sit by his side.

Fāṭimah took part in the battle of Uḥud and nursed the wounded Muslim soldiers. She bandaged the wound sustained by the prophet during the battle. She also took part in the battle of the conquest of Makkah.

The prophet was always seen off by Fāṭimah when he was going out from Madīnah and was met by her when he returned home.

Fāṭimah died after a few months of the death of the prophet, on 3 Ramaḍān in 11 AH at the age of 30. Before her death she willed that her body be carried for burial prayers in such a way that no-one could recognise whether it was the body of a male or female.

Since she died so soon after the death of the prophet, she could narrate no more than eighteen or nineteen Aḥādīth.

Fāṭimah was an ideal Muslim daughter, wife and mother. Her life should be an example for Muslim girls of all ages.

‘ĀYESHAH (RA)

This great Muslim lady was married to the prophet after the death of his first wife, Khadijah. She was born in 613 or 614 CE, the fourth year of the prophet’s mission, and was married to the prophet when she was nine, but only went to live with him when she was 12.

Her father was Abū Bakr, the closest friend of the prophet and the first Khalīfah of Islam. Her mother was Umm Rūmān.

‘Āyeshah was a great Muslim lady. She was very talented and had a wonderful memory. She had a great love of learning and became noted for her intelligence, learning and sharp sense of judgment.

She grew up in an Islamic environment. Her father was a great Muslim and the prophet himself was a frequent visitor to their house. She became a Muslim as soon as she reached an age of reason and understanding.

During her childhood, ‘Āyeshah memorised quite a number of sūrahs of the Qur’ān. Her father was a man of learning and she inherited his love of knowledge.

‘Āyeshah and her elder sister, Asmā’, helped in packing for the famous Hijrah of the prophet.

‘Āyeshah had the good fortune to be trained under the care of the greatest teacher of mankind, the prophet Muḥammad (pbuh). This training made her one of the most notable Muslim ladies in Islamic history. She was totally devoted to the prophet, her husband, and he loved her very dearly.

She loved and enjoyed serving her husband. She used to do the household work, including grinding flour and baking bread. She would make the beds and do the family's washing. She always kept water ready for the prophet's ablutions, before prayer.

The prophet did not love her only for her physical beauty but for her intelligence, sound judgment and personality. She liked what the prophet liked and disliked what he disliked.

If 'Āyeshah loved anyone more than her husband Muḥammad (pbuh), it was Almighty Allah. This was the teaching of the prophet.

The prophet used to live a very simple life. There were occasions when the family had nothing to eat, and times when guests were served with whatever they had while they went hungry themselves. They believed the comfort of the life after death was more important to them than the comforts of this world. This also is the teaching of Islam.

'Āyeshah used to accompany the prophet in prayers. They used to remain standing for long periods in prayer, weeping and asking Allah's forgiveness.

The prophet fell ill in 11 AH and 'Āyeshah nursed him with all the love and care of a devoted wife. He died in her lap.

'Āyeshah was present also at her father's death bed. Abū Bakr asked her how many pieces of cloth were used to bury the prophet and she told him three. He asked his daughter to wrap him also in three sheets for burial.

'Āyeshah saved the place beside her father's grave for her own burial, but after a fatal injury, 'Umar the second Khalīfah of Islam, sent his son 'Abdullāh to 'Āyeshah to ask her permission for him to be buried beside Abū Bakr. She agreed to 'Umar's wish and commented "I prefer 'Umar to myself", which shows how great she was.

'Āyeshah always stood for the truth. She taught Islam to many people. She was an authority on many matters of Islamic Law, especially those concerning women. She narrated 1,210 Aḥādīth (plural of Ḥadīth). She died at the age of 67 on 17 Ramaḍān, 58 AH.

Her life shows to what high status a Muslim woman can rise. Before Islam, women had no status in society; Islam gave them a very important position.

Islam wants to see a woman develop her talents and contribute to society as a mother or a wife and to remain obedient and chaste. Muslim women can rise to prominence within Islam. Allah the Creator has fixed their rights and duties according to their nature and biological make-up.

'Āyeshah's life is an example for young Muslim girls, who should try to follow her devotion and love for her husband, and her special liking for knowledge and learning.

SOCIAL LIFE IN ISLAM

FAMILY LIFE IN ISLAM

Family life is the basis of the Islamic society. Its origin goes back to the beginning of the creation of man and woman – Ādam and Eve. So, it is an institution founded by Allah's will. Allah says in the Qur'ān:

“O mankind, be mindful of your duty to your Lord who created you from a single soul and from it created its mate and from the two created many men and women.” (4:1)

Marriage is the basis of the Islamic family. A good and sound society can only grow if a man and a woman are bound in a solid relationship through the sacred contract of marriage.

Marriage develops love and care and co-operation between the husband and wife. It gives peace of mind and provides a secure atmosphere for the growth and progress of the whole human race. Without marriage, the human race would come to a standstill. Marriage was the practice of most of the prophets including Muḥammad (pbuh).

MARRIAGE

Marriage is a sacred social contract between a bride-groom and a bride. A great deal of thought is necessary therefore before the couple decides to marry.

Piety should come before all other considerations. Allah's prophet said, “Do not marry only for the sake of beauty; may be the beauty becomes the cause of moral decline. Do not marry even for the sake of wealth; may be the wealth becomes the reason of disobedience; marry rather on the ground of religious devotion.”

A Muslim is expected to marry a Muslim although in some cases Jewish and Christian chaste women can be married. But a Muslim woman is not allowed to marry a non-Muslim man. In Islam, marriage is a religious and social institution and not simply a sexual relationship.

Muslim marriages are traditionally arranged by parents but the final say lies with the boy and the girl.

Islam does not allow free mixing of grown-up boys and girls, nor does it allow sex outside marriage. The Islamic way of life does not approve of the boy-friend/girl-friend system, or mixed parties of the grown-ups and the like.

Islamic society is based on submission and obedience to the will of Allah. Husband and wife, bound by marriage are Allah's servants and representatives

(Khalīfah). Marriage must not conflict with the purpose of life (seeking Allah's pleasure), but rather should lead towards its achievement.

Divorce is allowed but is regarded as the least desirable of all lawful acts. Islam encourages adjustment and happiness. But when living together is impossible, the Islamic law does not stand in the way of divorce.

STATUS OF WOMEN IN ISLAM

Women have a very important place in Islamic society. Unlike a number of other religions, Islam holds a woman in high esteem. Her importance as a mother and a wife has been clearly stated by Prophet Muḥammad (pbuh).

The prophet said, "Paradise lies at the feet of your mothers." Once a person asked the prophet, "Who deserves the best care from me?" The prophet replied, "Your mother (he repeated this three times), then your father and then your nearest relatives."

In his farewell speech at 'Arafah in the tenth year of Hijrah, the prophet said, "O people, your wives have certain rights over you and you have certain rights over them. Treat them well and be kind to them, for they are your partners and committed helpers."

The prophet also said, "The best among you is the one who is the best towards his wife."

These sayings clearly prove the important position given to women in Islam. But there are still people, especially in the West, who have misgivings about the status of women in Islam. To these people, the Muslim woman is seen almost as a 'prisoner in the four walls of the house', a 'non-person', and as someone who has no rights and is living always under the domination of a man. These notions are totally wrong, and are based on ignorance rather than knowledge of Islam.

One of the rites of Ḥajj is a fast walk between Al-Ṣafā and Al-Marwā, which is observed to remember the event of Hājirah (Hagar), mother of Prophet Ismā'īl, who ran between these two hills to find water. This is another proof of the importance given to women by Islam.

In order to judge these false ideas held by western people, it would be useful to survey the attitudes to women in different societies in the past.

During the Roman civilization, for example, a woman was regarded as a slave. The Greeks considered her a commodity to be bought and sold. Early Christianity regarded women as temptresses, responsible for the fall of Adam.¹

In India, the Hindus until recently considered their women worse than death, pests, serpents or even hell. A wife's life ended with the death of her husband. In the past, she had to jump into the flames of her husband's cremation fire herself.²

1. Encyclopaedia Britannica Vol. 19 (Page 909), 1977 Edition.

2. Islam: belief, legislation and morals – Dr Ahmad Shalaby (Page 308), 1970 (Cairo).

In the pre-Islamic state of Arabia, a woman was regarded as a cause for grief and unhappiness, and baby girls were sometimes buried alive after birth.

In France in 587 CE, a meeting was held to study the status of women and to determine whether a woman could truly be considered a human being or not! Henry VIII in England forbade the reading of the Bible by women, and throughout the middle ages, the Catholic Church treated women as second class citizens. In the Universities of Cambridge and Oxford, male and female students were not given the same rights until 1964. Before 1850, women were not counted as citizens in England, and English women had no personal rights until 1882.³

If we keep this picture in mind and look into the position of the women in Islam, we must conclude that Islam liberated women from the dark age of obscurity, fourteen hundred years ago!

Islam is a religion of common sense and is in line with human nature. It recognises the realities of life. This does not mean it has recognised equality of man and woman in every respect. Rather, it has defined their duties in keeping with their different biological make-up (2:228). Allah has not made man and woman identical, so it would be against nature to try to have total equality between a man and a woman.

It would destroy the social balance. Society would not prosper, but would instead have insoluble problems such as broken marriages, illegitimate children and the break-up of family life. These problems are already rife in western society. Schoolgirl pregnancies, an increase in abortions, divorce and many other problems have cropped up because of a permissive outlook and so-called freedom of women.

RIGHTS OF WOMEN IN ISLAM

Allah has created every living being in pairs – male and female (51:49), including mankind. Allah has honoured the children of Adam – both male and female (17:70). Men and women who believe are protectors of one another (9:71). Allah will reward both men and women in the life after death (3:195).

In Islam, woman has a distinct and separate identity. Islam has given women a right to own property. She is the owner of her earnings. No-one (father, husband or brother) has a right over them. She can dispose of her earnings and property as she wishes, within the bounds of Ḥalāl (lawful) and Ḥarām (unlawful).

Islam has given women a right to inheritance. She has a part in the property of her dead father, husband or a childless brother (4:7, 32, 176).

3. Ibid – Page 312, 314.

She has a right to choose her husband. No-one can impose a decision on her against her will. She has a right to divorce her husband if their marriage becomes impossible to sustain.

If any man falsely accuses a woman's chastity, that man is declared unfit for giving evidence (24:4). This shows how a woman has a greater right here over a man.

The Qur'an asks the Muslims to treat women kindly (4:19). It makes Muslim husbands responsible for their wife's maintenance. The women, in return, are expected to remain obedient and chaste (4:34).

She has a right to develop her talents and to work within the limits of Islam. Islam allows a non-Muslim married woman to retain her religion and her husband cannot interfere in this freedom. This applies to Christian and Jewish women with Muslim husbands.

DUTIES OF A WOMAN IN ISLAM

Islam is a fair and a balanced system of life. While it specifies the rights of women it also lays down duties. A Muslim woman is expected to observe the following duties:

1 Belief in Tawhīd and the practice of Islam come first. A Muslim woman must perform her Ṣalāh, observe Ṣawm, pay Zakāh on her own wealth, go on Ḥajj if she can afford it. She is exempted from Ṣalāh and can defer Ṣawm during her period, but she must make up the days lost afterwards. Friday prayer (Jum'ah) is optional on women.

2 She is required to maintain her chastity all the time. She must not have any extra-marital relationships. The same is the case with men.

3 It is her duty to bring up children according to the needs of Islam. She has to look after the family and has almost absolute control over domestic affairs, although the family is run by mutual consultation and co-operation. She is the queen of the family and the husband is like her guest in the house.

4 She should dress modestly and should put on Hijāb (covering cloak) while going out, meeting adult males beyond her close relatives (33:59, 24:30-31). She should not wear man's clothings.

5 She is her husband's help-mate. A faithful wife is like a garment, a source of peace, happiness and contentment for her husband (30:21, 2:187).

6 If she is asked to go against the commands of Allah, she must defy even her husband, father or brother.

7 She is expected to protect her husband's property and belongings in his absence.

Islam views husband and wife as complementary to each other. Neither dominates the other. Each has his or her individual rights and duties – together

they form a peaceful and happy family which is the basis for a sound and prosperous society.

Man and woman are not exactly equal in Islam. They have different physical and biological features. Islam recognises the leadership of a man over a woman (4:34, 2:228), but it does not mean domination.

An average man is stronger, heavier, harder in muscles and taller than an average woman. Women can become pregnant and bear children, but men cannot. Women tend to be sensitive, emotional and tender while men are comparatively less emotional and more practical.

Throughout history, men and women have never been treated the same. Islam has given women the right position, and has not attempted to violate divine laws. Other religions and philosophies have been unable to visualise the exact and right role of women until today. In the West, women have been reduced almost to a commodity of enjoyment and fancy. And women have tended to degrade themselves unwittingly in modern times, for in the name of equality, they have become the objects of exploitation by men, and the slogans of liberty and equality have virtually reduced them to playful commodities. They have neither gained liberty nor achieved equality, rather they lost their natural place at home.

POLYGAMY AND ISLAM

Islam is a practical religion. It can answer all human problems. Islam allows restricted polygamy – marriage to more than one woman, to the maximum of four. **The normal Muslim practice is monogamy – one man married to one wife – polygamy is the exception.**

The Qur'ān has imposed strict conditions for marrying several wives. "Marry the women who seem good to you, two or three or four; and if you fear that you cannot be fair to so many, then one only" (4:3). This verse says that to marry more than one woman, a man must be able to be fair and just to each of them. If he is not able to be so, he should marry only one wife.

Another verse of the Qur'ān says, "You will not be able to deal fairly between your wives, however much you wish. Yet do not turn completely aside (from one) so that you leave another in suspense, if you maintain proper conduct and do your duty, Allah is ever Forgiving and Merciful" (4:129). This further emphasises fair treatment. But, in special circumstances Islam allows polygamy. These situations are:

- 1 When a wife is barren and cannot bear children, but the husband wants children. It is better to have a second wife than to divorce the barren one. But a barren wife has the option to divorce her husband if she wishes, on the grounds of the second marriage of her husband.

2 If the first wife is chronically ill and she is unable to carry out her marital and household duties, the husband may marry another woman and so help restore family peace.

3 Polygamy may be the solution to a society which has more women than men. This happens especially after war. The verse in the Qur'ān allowing more than one wife was revealed after the battle at Uḥud in which many Muslim men were martyred.

The proportion of women to men increased considerably in the countries taking part in the First and Second World Wars. A solution to such a situation is the marriage of more than one woman by those men who are able to and can be fair to each wife. This is better than leaving a large number of unmarried women.

Islam strictly forbids any sexual relationships outside marriage. There is no such thing as a 'mistress' in Islamic society. Islam has given dignity to women by marriage and has protected them from the exploitation of greedy and selfish men. Having more than one wife is better and more dignified than having a number of mistresses. Islam holds you responsible for your actions. You cannot just enjoy and have no responsibilities of fatherhood. This is sheer injustice and inhuman. There can be no one-parent family or illegitimate child in an Islamic society. It is only possible in an irresponsible permissiveness. Islam has given the right of divorce to the first wife on the grounds of her husband's other marriage. Likewise, a woman who is going to be a second wife could refuse to marry the man on the grounds that he already has a wife.

But if a woman happily consents to her husband marrying again and the second wife agrees, why should anyone else object to it?

The overwhelming majority of Muslims are monogamous – they have only one wife. The fact that a few Muslims have more than one wife has become a matter for propaganda against Islam and such propaganda can give a misleading impression of the Islamic way of life. This is especially so when it is non-practising Muslims who are highlighted on the issue of being married to more than one wife.

As opposed to polygamy, the case of polyandry (having more than one husband by a woman) may be raised. The case of polyandry is impractical and it creates problems rather than solve them. How the paternity will be decided? Which husband would claim the fatherhood of the child? How would inheritance be decided? Such questions have no answer in polyandry.

Furthermore, it is possible for a man to live with more than one wife and make all of them pregnant, but for a woman to please more than one husband seems almost impossible. A woman can be pregnant by only one husband.

Polyandry is forbidden in Islam.

Islam is a practical way of life. It has responded to reality and necessity. It has

also put a check on human tendencies and ensured balance. The system is full of wisdom and is very scientific and logical.

Allah, the All-knowing, has prescribed what is best for us. We should not be apologetic in our approach. Islam provides the best answer to any problems. We cannot blame Islam if we do not know it or fail to understand it. We need to look at Islam as a whole, not only at a part of it. This is because Islam views life as a whole, as a unit, and does not divide it.

All areas of life are inter-related; the status of women, marriage and the family life are only one aspect of the whole Islamic system.

SHARĪ'AH (Islamic Law)

Sharī'ah is the code of law for the way of life which Allah has revealed for His servants and commanded them to follow. The word Sharī'ah means a clear straight path or example.

Sharī'ah or Islamic Law consists of the code of conduct for Muslims and is based on two main sources: The Qur'ān and the Sunnah of the prophet. It aims towards the success and welfare of mankind in this life and after death.

Sharī'ah prescribes a complete set of laws for the guidance of mankind so that Good (Ma'rūf) may triumph and Evil (Mun'kar) disappear from society. It provides a clear and a straight path which leads to progress and fulfilment in life and the attainment of Allah's pleasure.

The Qur'ān is the main basis of the Sharī'ah. It states the principles, while the sunnah of the prophet provides the details of their application. For example, the Qur'ān says: establish ṣalāh, observe ṣawm, pay zakāh, take decisions by consultation, do not earn or spend in wrong ways . . . but it does not describe how to do these things. It is the sunnah of the prophet which gives us the details.

The Qur'ān is the main book of guidance and the prophet taught how to follow it. The prophet not only told us how to follow the guidance, he also practised it himself.

The Sharī'ah has rules for every aspect of life. It is complete and perfect, and guarantees us success, welfare and peace in this life on earth and after death.

Man-made laws differ from the Sharī'ah in a number of significant ways.

MAN-MADE LAW

- 1 Men make laws when they feel the need; these laws start from a few and then grow in number over the years.
- 2 Man-made laws are not permanent; they can be changed according to the time and circumstances. For example, in a particular country at a particular time, drinking alcohol may be banned; but this can change when public pressure grows. The American Government once banned alcoholic drink but removed ban after a time because it could not be applied.

SHARĪ'AH or ALLAH'S LAW

Islamic Law is complete, perfect and includes all aspects of human life.

Sharī'ah is permanent for all people all the time. It does not change with time and conditions. For example, drinking wine and gambling are not allowed under Islamic law. And no-one can change this until the day of the end of the world; it is a law that is valid for all time and for all places.

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| 3 Man does not have knowledge of the future. Hence, man-made laws cannot stand the test of time. | Allah is All-knowing and All-powerful; He is the most wise and His laws are the best and are complete. |
| 4 Man is a created being. His laws are the creation of the created. | Allah is the Creator and his laws are for Man, His creation. |
| 5 Man-made laws may be suitable for a particular nation or country. They cannot be universal. | Allah's laws are for all nations, all countries and for all time. They are universal. |
| 6 Men make laws to suit their own needs. Suppose, members of parliament want to increase their salaries, they would do so, even if the majority of the people suffered and there was high unemployment in the country. | Allah is above all needs. He is not dependent on anything, so His laws are for the good of all people and not for a few, selfish people. |

The Sharī'ah has two other sources: The Ijmā' (consensus) and The Qiyās (analogy or reasoning on the basis of similar circumstances). These sources must still be based on the Qur'ān and the sunnah.

Ijmā' or consensus applies to a situation where no clear conclusion can be made from the Qur'ān and the sunnah. In this situation the representatives of the people who are well-versed in the Qur'ān and the sunnah will sit together and work out an agreed formula to solve the particular problem. Ijmā' developed during the period of the Khulafāur Rashidūn.

Qiyās means reference or analogy or a comparison of one thing with a similar one. It is applied in circumstances where guidance from the Qur'ān, the sunnah is not directly available. A solution to a problem is reached by a process of deduction from a comparison with similar situations.

SUNNAH

The word sunnah means a system or a path or example. In Islam it refers to the practice of the prophet, his life example. It is embodied in the Aḥādīth (plural of Ḥadīth) which are the prophet's sayings, actions and the actions done with his approval. Aḥādīth have been very carefully collected and compiled since the death of the prophet. Six collections of Ḥadīth are regarded as the most authentic. They are:

- 1 Al-Saḥīḥ Al-Bukhārī (Collected and compiled by Muḥammad bin Ismā'īl, known as Imām Bukhārī, born 194 AH, died 256 AH)

- 2 Al-Saḥīḥ Al-Muslim (Muslim bin al-Ḥajjāj, known as Imām Muslim, born 202 AH, died 261 AH)
- 3 Al-Sunan Abu Dāwūd (Sulaymān bin Ash'ath, known as Abū Dāwūd, born 202 AH, died 275 AH)
- 4 Al-Sunan Ibn Mājah (Muḥammad bin Yazid, born 209 AH, died 273 AH)
- 5 Al-Jami' Al-Tirmidhī (Muḥammad bin 'Īsā, born (not known) died 279 AH)
- 6 Al-Sunan Al-Nasāyee (Aḥmad bin Shu'aib, born 215 AH, died 303 AH)

In addition to this, *Muwatta'* of Imām Mālik (born 93 AH, died 179 AH) *Mishkāt Al-Maṣābīh* of Abū Muḥammad al-Ḥusain bin Mas'ūd (died 516 AH), and *Musnad* of Aḥmad bin Ḥanbal (born 164 AH, died 241 AH), are also well known.

FIQH

Fiqh is the science of Islamic law or jurisprudence. It refers to the collection and compilation of Islamic laws based on the Qur'ān and the Sunnah of the prophet. The word Fiqh means knowledge and understanding.

Some great Muslims devoted themselves to the task of developing the science of understanding Islamic law and its practice. The four best-known compilers of Islamic law or Sharī'ah are:

- 1 Abū Ḥanīfah Nu'mān bin Thābit, known as Imām Abū Ḥanīfah (born 80 AH, died 150 AH)
- 2 Mālik bin Ānas, known as Imām Mālik (93-179 AH)
- 3 Muḥammad bin Idrīs Al-Shafi'ī, known as Imām Shafi'ī (150-240 AH)
- 4 Aḥmad bin Ḥanbal, known as Imām Ḥanbal (164-241 AH)

Islamic law divides human activities into: (1) *Fard* or *Wājib* (duty or obligatory) – performance of these actions are rewarded and their omission is punished. (2) *Mandūb* (recommended) – actions the performance of which is rewarded but omission of which is not punished. (3) *Mubāh* (silent) – actions permitted by silence. (4) *Makrūh* (disliked) – actions disapproved but not punished. (5) *Ḥarām* (forbidden) – actions punishable by law.

The scholars and experts on Islamic Law have made the Sharī'ah easier to understand and practise, by the science of Fiqh. Fiqh is the explanation of the Islamic laws, based on the Qur'ān, the Sunnah.

Islamic Law or the Sharī'ah embodies the Islamic ideal life. Islam is the complete way of life and Sharī'ah is the means to arrive at the ideal life recommended by Islam. Sharī'ah enables us to bring our life in line with the will of Allah. It is the process of achieving our goal of life.

ECONOMIC SYSTEM OF ISLAM

Islam views life as a compact whole and does not divide it into many separate and conflicting parts. The economic aspect is one of the most important parts of our life, while not being the whole of it. The Islamic system is balanced and places everything in its right place. Islam has given detailed regulations for the conduct of our economic life which concerns mainly the earning and use of wealth.

Man needs bread to live but he does not live for bread. This means that earning and spending money is essential for our living, but we do not live only for this. We have a greater purpose of life. We are Allah's agents (Khalīfah) on earth. We not only have a body but we have a soul and a conscience as well. Without soul and conscience, we would be considered little more than the animals.

Everything in Islam is for the benefit and welfare of mankind. The economic principles of Islam aim at establishing a just society wherein every one will behave responsibly and honestly, and not as '*cunning foxes*' fighting for getting as big a share of something without regard to honesty, truth, decency, trust and responsibility.

The Islamic Economic System is based on the following fundamental principles.

1 EARNING AND EXPENDITURE BY ḤALĀL MEANS

Islam has prescribed laws to regulate earnings and expenditure. Muslims are not allowed to earn and spend in just any way they like. They must follow the rules of the Qur'ān and the Sunnah.

a Any earning from the production, sale and distribution of alcoholic drinks is unlawful, as are earning from gambling, lotteries and from interest (Ribā) transactions. (5:90-91, 2:275).

b Earning by falsehood, deceit, fraud, theft, robbery, and burglary are unlawful. Deceitful acquisition of orphan's property has been particularly banned. (2:188, 4:2, 6:152, 7:85, 83:1-5).

c Hoarding of food stuff and basic necessities, smuggling and artificial creation of shortages are unlawful. (3:180, 9:34-35)

d Earnings from brothels and from such other practices which are harmful to society are also unlawful. (24:23).

Islam strikes at the root of evil and wants to establish a just and fair society. A Muslim must earn in Ḥalāl ways and he should always bear in mind that

whatever he does, is known to Allah. He will be accountable for his actions on the day of judgment. He cannot hide anything from Almighty Allah.

Unlawful expenditure is also not allowed in Islam. It does not at all befit a Muslim to spend money irresponsibly. His actions should be responsible and meaningful. Extravagance and waste are strongly discouraged. (7:31, 17:26, 19:27-31, 25:68)

2 RIGHT TO PROPERTY AND INDIVIDUAL LIBERTY

Islam allows a person to earn and own his earnings. The Islamic state does not interfere with the freedom of speech, work and earning of an individual provided this freedom is not harmful for the greater good of society. (4:7, 36:71, 611:11).

3 SYSTEM OF ZAKĀH (Welfare contribution)

Compulsory payment of Zakāh is one of the main principles of an Islamic economy. Every Muslim who owns wealth more than his needs, must pay the fixed rate of Zakāh to the Islamic state. Zakāh is a means of narrowing the gap between the rich and the poor. It helps fair distribution of wealth. It is a form of social security. The Islamic state is responsible for providing basic necessities of food, clothing, housing, medicine and education to every citizen. No-one should have any fear of insecurity or poverty. (9:69, 103, 98:5).

4 PROHIBITION OF INTEREST (Ribā)

An Islamic economy is free of interest. Islam prohibits all transactions involving interest. It allows Zero rate of interest.

Interest is neither a *trade* nor a *profit*. It is a means of exploitation and concentration of wealth. The Qur'ān says:

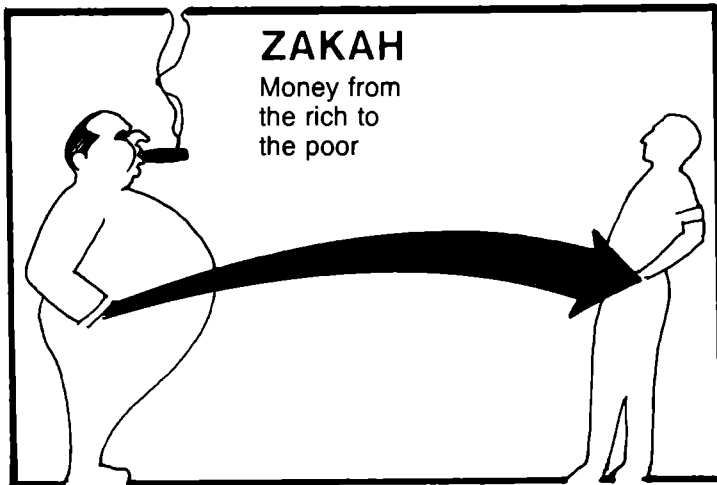
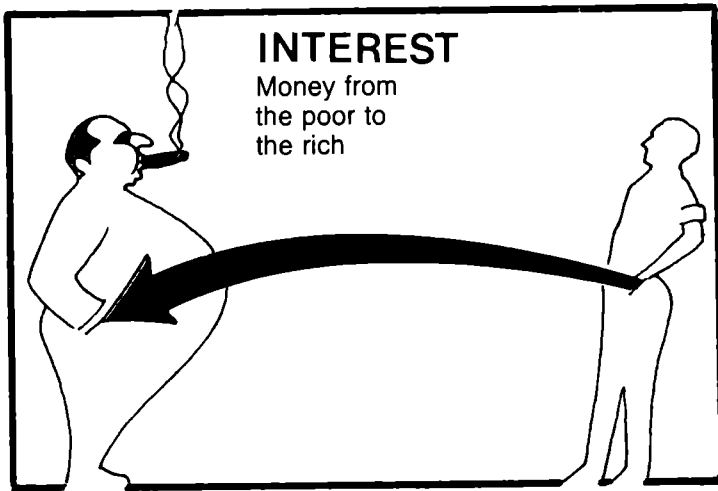
"They say, trade is like interest and Allah has allowed trade and prohibited interest." (2:275)

"Whatever you pay as interest, so that it may increase in the property of (other) men, it does not increase with Allah". (30:39)

"O you who believe, do not take interest, doubling and quadrupling, and keep your duty to Allah, so that you may prosper." (3:130)

"O you who believe, observe your duty to Allah and give up what remains (due) from interest, if you are believers. But if you do not do it, then be warned of war from Allah and His messenger; and if you repent, then you shall have your capital. Do not exploit and be not exploited." (2:278-279)

Interest is the basis of modern capitalism. It is completely opposite to Zakāh. Zakāh channels wealth from the rich to the poor while interest takes away wealth from the poor and hands it over to the rich.



Modern economies are so inter-linked with interest that people may think it impossible to go without it.

The situation is really very complex. But, we must aim at getting rid of interest. An Islamic state must gradually try to change the present system. It needs careful and systematic planning. Allah has not imposed on us, something impossible. An Interest-free economy will be a boon for all peoples of the world.

5 LAW OF INHERITANCE (Mīrāth)

Islamic law of inheritance is a wonderful system of stopping concentration of wealth. It provides very detailed laws regarding the rights of dependents over the property of the deceased person. The Sūrah Al-Nisā' of the Qur'ān deals with the Law of inheritance in great detail. (4:7-12, 4:176)

CONCLUSION

In addition to the above basic principles Islam has laid down many more rules about economic life. An Islamic state must bring all productive resources into use, including unemployment, man-power, unused land, water resources and minerals. An Islamic state must take steps to root out corruption and all harmful pursuits even if they are economically lucrative. Individual freedom may have to be sacrificed for the national interest.

Islam encourages simplicity, modesty, charity, mutual help and co-operation. It discourages miserliness, greed, extravagance and unnecessary wastage.

Here, we have discussed the main points of the Islamic economic system and we have no scope to go into the details and specifics. It would be better for you to study some standard books on Islamic Economics to have a good grasp of this important aspect of our life. You will find a list in the bibliography at the end of this book.

POLITICAL SYSTEM OF ISLAM

Religion and politics are one and the same in Islam. They are intertwined. We already know that Islam is a complete system of life and politics is very much a part of our collective life. Just as Islam teaches us how to say Ṣalāh, observe Ṣawm, pay Zakāh and undertake Ḥajj, it also teaches us how to run a state, form a government, elect councillors and members of parliament, make treaties and conduct business and commerce.

A detailed discussion about Islamic political system would have been much desirable, but we have to content ourselves with its basic principles and main features.

The Islamic Political System is based on the following main principles:

1 SOVEREIGNTY OF ALLAH

Sovereignty means the source of power. In Islam, Allah is the source of all powers and laws (3:154, 12:40, 25:2, 67:1). It is Allah who knows what is good and what is bad for His servants. His say is final. All human beings unitedly cannot change His Law. The Qur'ān says, *“As for the thief — male and female, chop off their hands. It is the reward of their own actions and exemplary punishment from Allah. Allah is mighty, wise.”* (5:37). According to Islam, this order is unchangeable by any parliament or any government which claims itself to be Islamic. (5:44, 2:229). There are many more laws in the Qur'ān concerning our life and those laws must be put into practice by an Islamic state for the greater good of human beings.

2 KHĪLAFAH OF MANKIND (Vicegerency of man)

Man is the vicegerent or the agent or the representative of Allah on earth. (25:55) Allah is the sovereign and man is His representative. Man should do as Allah commands him to do. But he has a choice to either obey or disobey Allah and because of this freedom of choice, he will be tested on the day of judgment. In the political sense, Khīlafah means that human beings would implement the will of Allah on earth as His deputy or agent. As Allah's agent, human beings will carry out the will of Allah on His behalf as a trust (Amanah). Khīlafah is a trust. An agent is always expected to behave as his master wants him to behave. (2:30).

3 LEGISLATION BY SHŪRĀ (Consultation)

Islam teaches us to run a government, to make legislations and decisions by the process of Shūrā. Shūrā means to take decisions by consultation and participation. (3:159, 42:38) This is an important part of the Islamic political system. There is no scope of dictatorship or despotism in Islam. The Qur'ān and the Sunnah will be the basis of legislation in Islam.

4 ACCOUNTABILITY OF GOVERNMENT

The Islamic political system makes the ruler and the government responsible firstly to Allah and then to people. The ruler and the government are elected by the people to exercise powers on their behalf. We must remember here that both the ruler and the ruled are the Khalīfah of Allah and the ruler shall have to work for the welfare of the people according to the Qur'ān and Sunnah. A ruler is a servant of the people of Islam. Both the ruler and the ruled will appear before Allah and account for their actions on the day of judgment. The responsibility of the ruler is heavier than the ruled.

Any ordinary citizen of an Islamic state has the right to ask any question on any matter to the ruler and the government.

5 INDEPENDENCE OF JUDICIARY

In the Islamic political system, the Judiciary is independent of the Executive. The head of the state or any government minister could be called to the court if necessary. They would be treated no differently from other citizens. The Qur'ān has many injunctions about justice. One of the main functions of the Islamic state is to ensure justice to all citizens (4:58, 4:135, 5:8). The ruler and the government has no right to interfere in the system of justice.

6 EQUALITY BEFORE LAW

The Islamic political system ensures equality of all citizens before law. It does not recognise any discrimination on the basis of language, colour, territory, sex or descent. Islam recognises the preference of one over the other only on the basis of Taqwā (piety or fear of God). One who fears Allah most is the noblest in Islam. (49:13)

CONCLUSION

The duty of an Islamic state is to establish Ṣalāh, Zakāh and promote the right and forbid the wrong. (22:41) The state is responsible for the welfare of all its citizens – muslims and non-muslims. It must guarantee the basic necessities to all citizens. All citizens of the Islamic state shall enjoy freedom of belief, thought, conscience and speech. Every citizen shall be free to develop his potential, improve his capacity, earn and possess. A citizen shall enjoy the right to support or oppose any government policy which he thinks right or wrong.

The Islamic state is duty bound to implement the laws of the Qur'ān and the Sunnah. The Qur'ān strongly denounces those who do not decide their matters by Allah's revelations. (5:42-50).

The Islamic state shall ensure a fair distribution of wealth. Islam does not believe in equal distribution as it is against the law of creation.

There is not a single Islamic state in the world today. There are many Muslim countries. An Islamic state is based on the model of the prophet Muḥammad's

(pbuh) state in Madīnah while a Muslim state is the one which has a majority muslim population and some Islamic features.

However, organised efforts have been going on in many Muslim countries to establish truly Islamic states. The Ikhwānūl Muslimūn in the Middle East, the Jamā'at-e-Islāmī in Pakistan, Bangladesh and Kashmir, the Nūr Al-Talaba of Turkey, the Millī Salāmat Party in Turkey and the Masjūmī Party in Indonesia are some of the Islamic movements and parties which have been working for the establishment of Allah's law on Allah's land.

In Iran, an Islamic revolution has come into being and the Iranian Muslims under the leadership of Ayatullāh Khomeinī has been trying to set up an Islamic state. The Islamic revolution of Iran has rekindled a great hope among the Muslims all over the world.

SOME OTHER ASPECTS OF LIFE

FOOD AND DRINK

Food and drink have direct effects on our health. This is why Islam has given regulations about our food and drink. Islam aims at establishing a healthy society. It lays great emphasis on our physical as well as our moral health. It allows all good and pure things to be taken as food and drink. The Qur'ān says:

“O Mankind, eat the lawful and good things from what is in earth and do not follow the foot steps of the devil. Surely, he is your open enemy.” (2:168).

Lawful things are called Halāl and prohibited things are known as Harām in Islamic Law.

Islam forbids the following:

- a Dead animals and birds
- b animals slain without invoking Allah's name
- c animals strangled to death
- d pig meat (Pork)
- e carnivorous animals
- f animals devoured by wild beasts
- g the blood of an animal.

(2:173, 5:3, 6:145, 16:115).

Islamic law requires an animal to be slain by a sharp knife penetrating the inner part of the animal's neck to allow maximum drainage of blood. Allah's name must be invoked at the time of slaying. Meat of the animals not slain in this way is regarded as Harām. Even fat and marrow of these animals are Harām. The 'Kosher' meat of the Jews is regarded as Halāl for Muslims.

Fish and vegetables are, however, quite lawful. All kinds of alcoholic drinks, such as beer, wine and spirits are prohibited. Alcoholic drinks are not at all helpful for the health of the society. The Qur'ān says:

“O you who believe, wine and gambling, idols and divining arrows are filthy tricks of satan; avoid them so that you may prosper. Satan wants to incite enmity and hatred among you by means of wine and gambling and prevent you from remembering Allah and from Ṣalāh. So will you not give them up?” (5:90-91).

Alcoholism is a serious social problem. It leads to many vices. Islam aims at rooting out all evils and to ensure that society remains healthy and peaceful.

Muslims begin their meals by saying – Bismillāhir Raḥmānir Raḥīm (In the name of Allah, the most Merciful and the most Kind) and should finish by reciting the following Hadīth:

Al ḥamdu lil lāhil ladhī Aṭ'amnā wa saqānā Wa Ja'alnā minal Muslimīn.

(All praise are for Him who gave us to eat and to drink and made us Muslims).

Prophet Muḥammad (pbuh) asked us to eat with the right hand and to wash our hands before and after meals. It is better not to eat so much as to fill the stomach. The prophet also asked us not to drink water and other soft drinks at one go, rather we should pause in between and it is better to have three pauses while having any lawful drink.

The Islamic system of life has some fine and very useful regulations for all affairs of life. We should try to follow these rules as best we can for our own benefit.

DRESS

Islamic society is one of decency. Allah has created man in the nicest form and He wants His servants to dress nicely and decently. We should bear in mind that we are the best of all creatures and our dress should reflect this. Dress is to cover shame and nakedness and it adds beauty to our personality.

The Qur'ān says: "O children of Ādam, we have revealed to you clothing to conceal your shame and as a thing of beauty but the garment of Taqwā (piety) is the best of all." (7:26)

Islam does not recommend any particular dress for us. But there are guide lines which include:

- 1 Men must cover their body from navel to knees.
- 2 Women must cover their whole body except face, hands and feet while inside. But they are required to cover their whole body while going out or meeting adult males, outside close relatives.
- 3 Women must not wear a dress which reveals her figure and arouses man's base feelings. This includes see-through, skin-tight or revealing dresses.
- 4 Pure silk and clothes decorated with gold are not allowed for men.
- 5 Men are not allowed to wear women's clothing.
- 6 Muslims are not allowed to wear dress which is symbolic of other religions.

Islam encourages simplicity and modesty. Forms of dress expressing arrogance are disliked. We must remember that only Allah can be arrogant and we can't and must not. The style of dress depends on local custom and climatic conditions. But the above guidelines apply.

FESTIVALS

Like all other religion, Islam has a number of special occasions of celebration. These occasions are observed with devotion to seek the pleasure of Allah. There is no concept of festival only for pleasure. The festivals are the occasions of thanksgiving, joy and happiness. The two major occasions in Islam in each year are: 'Īdul Fitr and 'Īdul Aḍḥā.

'Īdul Fitr is observed at the end of the month of Ramaḍān. On this day, after a month of fasting, Muslims express their joy and happiness by offering a congregational prayer, if possible in an open field, otherwise in Halls and Mosques. They express their gratitude to Almighty Allah for enabling them to observe fasting which is a very useful rigorous training programme. The day is generally observed as a holiday in Muslim countries. Special dishes are prepared and it is customary to visit friends and relatives and to give presents to children. Muslims generally wear their best clothes on this day.

'Īdul Aḍḥā begins on the 10th of Dhul Ḥijjah and continues until the 12th day of the month. It's celebrated to commemorate prophet Ibrāhīm's (Abraham) readiness to sacrifice his son Ismā'īl (Ishmael) on the command of Allah. Allah accepted Ibrāhīm's devotion and obedience and asked him to sacrifice a lamb instead.

This occasion of great importance comes every year during the days of Ḥajj (Pilgrimage to Makkah) and is observed by offering congregational prayer, as in 'Īdul Fitr.

After the prayer, the Muslims, who can afford it, sacrifice animals like goats, sheep, cows or camels to seek Allah's pleasure. The meat of the sacrificed animal is eaten and shared among the relatives, neighbours and the poor. This sacrifice expresses the inner feeling of a Muslim that, if need be, he will sacrifice his most loved possession for Allah. This is the lesson of the occasion.

We must remember here that what Allah wants is not the animal nor its meat or blood, rather He wants our devotion and submission to His command.

Some other occasions to remember include the **beginning of Hijrah** (migration of the prophet Muhammad (pbuh)), **Laylatul Mi'rāj** (Night of Ascent) and **the dates of Islamic battles** fought by Prophet Muḥammad (pbuh).

Islamic festivals are observed according to the Islamic calendar which is based on Lunar months. The Lunar year is shorter than the Solar year by about ten days. Festival dates are determined by the sighting of the moon.

A Muslim's happiest occasion in life is to see the Rule of Allah established on the earth.

SELECTED VERSES FROM THE QUR'ĀN

“Surely, this Qur’ān guides to that which is the straightest, and gives good news to believers who practise good and they will get a great reward.” (17:9)

“And He (commands you, saying): This is my straight path, so follow it. Do not follow other paths, which will separate you from His path. Thus He has ordered you so that you may be truly obedient.” (6:153)

TAWḤĪD

“Allah! There is none worthy of worship except Him, the Living, the Ever Lasting!

Slumber does not overtake Him nor does sleep,
Whatever is in the Heavens and in the Earth belongs to Him.
Who is there to plead to Him except with His permission?
He knows what lies before them and what is behind them, while they grasp nothing of His knowledge except what He may wish.
His Authority extends over Heaven and Earth;
Preserving them both does not overburden Him.
He is the sublime, the Exalted.” (2:255).

RISĀLAH

a “We have sent a messenger to every nation. Serve Allah (Alone) and turn aside from false gods.” (16:36).

b “Allah has favoured the believers by sending them a messenger from among themselves, to recite His verses to them, to purify them, and teach them the book and wisdom whereas previously they were in clear error.” (3:164).

c “He it is who has sent His messenger with the guidance and the religion of truth, that He may make it triumphant over every other religion, how much the idolaters may dislike.” (61:9).

ĀKHĪRAH

a “Do you think then that we have created you for nothing and that you would not be returned to us.” (23:115).

b “Those who disbelieve say: when we have become dust like our fathers, shall we truly be raised up again?” (27:67).

c "O mankind! If you are in doubt about the Ressurrection then consider that We have created you from dust, then from a drop of seed, then from a clot, then from a lump of flesh shapely and shapeless, so that We may make it (our power) clear to you. And We cause what We wish to remain in the wombs for an appointed time, and afterwards We bring you forth as babies, then give you growth that you attain your full strength. And among you there is he who dies (young), and among you there is he who is brought to the most pitiable time of life (the old age), so that after knowledge, he knows not (because of infirmity). And you (Muḥammad) see the earth barren, but when We send down rain thereon, it thrills and swell and put forth every lovely kind of growth. This is all because of Allah. He is the Truth. Surely, He makes the dead alive and surely He has the power to do everything; there is no doubt that the Hour will come and truly Allah will raise those who are in graves." (22:5-7).

d "Allah has created the Heavens and Earth with truth and that everyone may be repaid what it has earned. And they will not be wronged." (45:22).

QUALITIES OF MU'MIN

a "Successful indeed are the believers.
Who are humble in their prayers (ṣalāh).
Who avoid vain talk
And who practise the system of Zakāh.
And who guard their modesty except from their wives . . .
But whoever want beyond that such are the transgressors.
And who faithfully observe their trusts and undertakings.
And who are mindful of their prayers (ṣalāh)
These are the heirs
Who will inherit Paradise wherein
they will live forever." (23:1-11).

b "O believers, Fear Allah as He should be feared and do not die except being one of those who have truly surrendered." (3:102).

LUQMĀN'S ADVICE TO HIS SON

(Luqmān was famous for his sound intelligence and wisdom in Arabia. He was most probably an Arab speaking black African).

"O my dear son! Do not make any partner to Allah. Truly, making anyone partner to Allah is a big sin." (31:13).

"O my dear son! Establish ṣalāh and command for the right and forbid the evil and persevere in whatever difficulty you are in. Surely, this is one of those things which have been strongly recommended (31:17).

"Do not turn your face in disgust from people, nor walk arrogantly on the land. Allah does not love the selfish boasters." (31:18).

“Be modest in your behaviour and lower your voice. Truly the harshest of all voice is the voice of the ass. (31:19).

DUTIES AND OBLIGATIONS

DUTY TOWARDS PARENTS

1 “Be kind to your parents and the relatives and the orphans, and those in need and speak nicely to people.” (2:83).

2 “And we have made it a duty for man to be good to his parents. His mother bears him with one fainting spell after another fainting spell, while his weaning takes two years. Thank Me as well as your parents; towards Me lies the Goal.” (31:14).

3 “Your Lord has ordered that you worship none but Him and (show) kindness to your parents, whether either of them or both of them attain old age in your life, never say to them, “Ough” nor be harsh to them, but speak to them kindly.

“And serve them with tenderness and humility and say: My Lord, have mercy on them, just as they cared for me as a little child.” (17:23-24).

4 “We have made it a duty on man to be kind to parents, but if they try to make you associate anything with Me which you have no knowledge of, do not obey them. To me is your return and I shall tell you what you used to do.” (29:8).

RELATIVES, NEIGHBOURS AND THE NEEDY

1 “Give your relatives their due and also the needy and the traveller in need and do not squander (your wealth) irresponsibly.” (17:26)

2 “Allah commands justice, kindness and giving (their due) to near relatives.” (16:90).

3 “And when near relatives, orphans and the needy are present at the division (of inheritance), provide for them out of it and speak politely to them.” (4:8).

4 ... And (show) kindness to (your) parents and to near relatives, orphans, the needy and to the neighbour who is your relative and the neighbour who is not your relative . . .” (4:36).

5 “Have you seen him who rejects religion? That is the person who pushes the orphan aside and does not encourage feeding the needy.” (107:1-3).

ORPHAN

1 “The orphan must not be oppressed” (93:9).

2 "Those who live on orphan's property without having any right to do so only suck up fire into their bellies, and they will (eventually) roast in a blaze" (4:10).

3 "Give orphans their property and do not replace something bad for something good" (4:2).

4 "Do not approach an orphan's estate before he comes of age except to improve it" (6:152 and 17:34).

SOCIAL MANNERS

BROTHERHOOD

"Believers are but brothers, so set things right between your brothers and observe your duty to Allah so that you may obtain mercy" (49:10).

GREETINGS

1 "When those who believe in our signs come to you, say: peace be upon you" (6:54).

2 "When you are welcomed with a greeting, then answer back with something finer than it or (at least) return it. Truly Allah takes count of all things" (4:86).

3 "When you enter houses salute one another with a greeting from Allah, blessed and sweet" (24:61).

CO-OPERATION

1 "Co-operate with one another for virtue and piety and do not co-operate with one another for sin and transgression" (5:2).

2 "Cling firmly together by Allah's rope (Islam) and do not be divided" (3:103).

3 "And the believers – men and women are friends of one another, they command for the right and forbid the wrong, establish Ṣalāh and pay Zakāh and obey Allah and His messenger" (9:71).

MEETINGS

1 "O you who believe, when you are asked to make room in meetings, then make room. Allah will make room for you (in Ākhirah). And when it is said, "Move up" then move on. Allah will raise in rank those of you who believe as well as those who are given knowledge. Allah knows whatever you do" (58:11).

2 "Truly they are the believers who believe in Allah and His messenger and when they are with him on some common errand, they should not leave until

they have asked him for permission to do so. Those who ask for such permission are the ones who believe in Allah and His messenger” (24:62).

TALKING

“Be modest in your behaviour and lower your voice. Truly the harshest of all voices is the voice of the ass” (31:19).

SEEK PERMISSION BEFORE ENTERING SOMEONE'S HOUSE

“O you who believe! Do not enter houses other than your own without first seeking permission and saluting the people inside. That is better for you so that you may be heedful.

And if you find no one therein, still do not enter until permission has been given” (24:27-28).

KEEP UP PROMISE

“O you who believe, fulfil your undertakings” (5:1).

“. . . Fulfil your promise, every promise will be enquired into” (17:34).

“Of the believers are men who are true that which they covenanted with Allah . . .” (33:23).

“. . . And (the pious are those) who fulfil their engagement when they make one . . .” (2:177).

BASIC VIRTUES

HONESTY

“And give full measure when measure out, and weigh with proper scales . . .” (17:35).

“And measure in fairness and don't weigh unfairly” (55:9).

“Whenever you speak, speak justly even if a near relative is concerned” (6:152).

TRUTHFULNESS

“O you who believe! Fear Allah and stand by those who are truthful” (9:119).

“That Allah may reward the truthful for their truth and punish the hypocrites if He will” (33:24).

“Truly Muslim men and Muslim women, believing men and believing women and obedient men and obedient women and the truthful men and the truthful women . . . Allah has promised them forgiveness and a great reward” (33:35).

“Allah said: This is the day (Day of Judgment) which the truthful will benefit from their truthfulness, for them are the gardens underneath which the rivers flow where they will live forever. Allah is pleased with them and they are pleased with Him. That is the greatest success” (5:119).

PERSEVERENCE

“Seek help from Allah and be patient, the earth belongs to Allah. Anyone He wishes from among His servants shall inherit it” (7:128).

“Our Lord, fill us full of patience and make our feet firm. Help us against the disbelievers” (2:250).

“And anyone who acts patiently and forgives, truly he is persevering in affairs” (42:43).

TOLERANCE

“Tolerate patiently what (unbelievers) say and part from them in polite manner” (73:10).

FIRMNESS AGAINST ODDS AND EVIL

“. . . and be patient in adversity and troubles and during the time of stress. Such are they who are on the right track and such are the Allah-fearing” (2:177).

“O you who believe! Seek help in firmness and prayer. Surely Allah is with those who are firm” (2:153).

“O you who believe, endure and outdo all others in endurance, be ready, and observe your duty to Allah, so that you may succeed” (3:200).

“Be patient (O Muḥammad) with the finest patience” (70:5).

“Then have patience (O Muḥammad) as the most determined of the messengers (before you) had patience” (46:35).

PUNCTUALITY

“Surely Ṣalāh at fixed hours has been ordained on to the believers” (4:103).

COURAGE

“Those to whom people said: Truly the people have gathered against you, so fear them. (The threat of danger) but increased their faith and they cried: Allah is enough for us! Most Excellent is He in whom we trust” (3:173).

“And when the true believers saw the troops they said: That is that which Allah and His messenger promised us. Allah and His messengers told the truth. It strengthened their faith and obedience” (33:22).

KINDNESS

“It is because of mercy from Allah that you (Muhammad) have been so kind to them, for if you had been harsh and cruel-hearted they would have dispersed from around you. Pardon them, seek forgiveness for them and consult them on the matter” (3:159).

“Be kind as Allah has been kind to you” (28:77).

TRUSTWORTHINESS

“Surely, I am a trustworthy messenger to you, so observe your duty to Allah and obey me” (26:107-108).

“Allah orders you to restore things entrusted (to you) to their owners” (4:58).

JUSTICE

“We surely sent our messengers with clear proofs and revealed with them books and the standard, so that people may deal with justice” (57:25).

“Allah commands justice and fairness” (16:19).

“Let not the hatred of others make you to the wrong and depart from justice. Be just, that is next to piety” (5:9).

CHASTITY AND CLOAK FOR WOMEN

“Tell the believing men to lower their gaze and guard their private parts. That is purer for them. Surely Allah knows what you do” (24:30).

“And tell the believing women to lower their gaze and guard their private parts and not to display their beauty except which is apparent, to draw cloaks over their bosoms and not to reveal their feminine beauty except to their husbands or fathers or husband's father or their sons or their husband's sons or their brothers or their brothers' sons or sisters' sons or their women or their maids or impotent male attendants or children who do not know of women's nakedness. And let them not walk noisily as to reveal what they preserve of their beauty. And turn to Allah together, O believers! In order that you may prosper” (24:31).

“O prophet! Tell your wives and your daughters and the women of the believers to draw their cloaks close round them (when they go out). That will be better, so that they may be recognised and not annoyed. Allah is ever forgiving and merciful” (33:59).

HARD WORK

“... Surely Allah does not change the condition of a people if they do not change themselves ...” (13:11).

GENEROSITY

“You will not attain piety until you spend what you hold is dear to you” (3:92).

“Those who spend their wealth (for the sake of Allah) night and day, both privately and publicly, will get their reward from their Lord, they shall have no cause to fear nor shall they grieve” (2:274).

FORGIVENESS

“Practise forgiveness, command decency and avoid ignorant people” (7:199).

RELIANCE ON ALLAH

“If Allah is your helper none can overcome you and if He does not help you, who is there to help you? The reliant rely only on Allah” (3:160).

“He who relies on Allah, Allah is enough for him” (65:3).

BAD CONDUCT & PROHIBITIONS

LYING

“... Give up the filth of idols and stop lying” (22:30).

“... Allah’s curse will be on him if he is a liar” (24:7).

BACK-BITING, SPYING AND SUSPICION

“O you who believe! Shun much suspicion for truly some suspicion is a sin. Any spy not, neither back-bite one another. Would one of you love to eat the flesh of his dead brother? You hate that (so hate the other)! And keep your duty to Allah. Surely, Allah is forgiving and the most kind” (49:12).

FRAUD

“The cheaters will suffer terribly. They insist on full measure when they have people measure something for them; but if they measure or weigh things for them, they give less than their due” (83:1-3).

EXTRAVAGANCE

“Do not squander (your money) extravagantly. Truly the extravagant are devil’s brethren and Satan has always been ungrateful towards his Lord” (17:26-27).

ARROGANCE

“Do not walk in the earth haughtily. Surely, you can never tear the earth nor can rival the mountains in height” (17:37).

“... Allah does not love prideful boasters” (57:23).

HOARDING

“And let the hoarders do not think that what Allah has bestowed upon them from His bounty is better for them. But it is worse for them. That which they hoard will be a burden for them on the Day of Judgement . . .” (3:180).

“... Announce a painful punishment to those who hoard gold and silver and do not spend them for Allah’s sake . . .” (9:34).

MISCHIEF AND CORRUPTION

“... Eat and drink that which Allah has given you and do not act corruptly making mischief in the earth” (2:60).

MOCKERY AND RIDICULE

“O you who believe! No people should mock or ridicule other people, for the ridiculed ones may be better than those who ridicule them . . .” (49:11).

HYPOCRACY

“And there are people who say: we believe in Allah and the Last Day but actually do not believe” (2:8).

“When the hypocrites come to you (O Muḥammad) they say: We testify that you are indeed Allah’s messenger and Allah knows that you are his messenger and Allah declares that the Hypocrites are liars” (63:1).

ABORTION AND BIRTH CONTROL

“Do not kill your children in fear of poverty, we shall provide for both them and you. Killing them is a big sin” (17:31).

USURY AND INTEREST

“Allah has permitted trading and forbidden interest and usury” (2:275).

WINE AND GAMBLING

“O you who believe! Liquor and gambling, idols and divining arrows are only a filthy work of satan; give them up so that you may prosper” (5:90).

ADULTERY

“And keep away from adultery. Surely, it is a hateful filthy work and a very bad thing” (17:31).

“The adulterer and the adulteress, punish each one of them with a hundred lashes” (24:2).

THEFT

“As for the thief, both male and female, chop off their hands. It is the reward of their own deeds and exemplary punishment from Allah. Allah is the Mighty and the most wise” (5:38).

SELECTIONS FROM ḤADĪTH

Ḥadīth means news or information. It has a special meaning in Islam. It refers to the sayings and doings of the prophet Muḥammad (pbuh) and actions done with his approval.

DUTIES AND OBLIGATIONS

JIHĀD

“The most excellent man is the one who works hard in the way of Allah with his life and property” (Bukhārī).

“The best Jihād is to speak the truth before a tyrant ruler” (Bukhārī).

ĪMĀN AND ISLĀM AND IḤSĀN

“Faith is that you believe in Allah (Tawḥīd) and His angels and His messengers (Risālah) and in the life after death (Ākhirah).

“Islam is that you worship Allah and not associate anyone with Him, keep up Ṣalah, pay Zakāh, and observe Ṣawm in Ramaḍān.

“Iḥsān is that you worship Allah as if you see Him and if you do not see Him, surely He sees you” (Bukhārī).

LOVE OF THE PROPHET (pbuh)

“None of you has faith unless I am dearer to him than his father, and his son and all mankind” (Bukhārī).

ṢALĀH AND ṬAHĀRAH

“The key to Paradise is Ṣalāh and the key to Ṣalāh is Ṭahārah (purification)” (Mishkāt).

PARENTS

A man asked the prophet, “O messenger of Allah! Who deserves the best care from me? The prophet said, “Your mother.” The man asked, “Who then?” The prophet said, “Your mother.” The man asked once again, “Who then?” The prophet said, “Your mother” (Bukhari).

“Paradise lies at the feet of your mother” (Nasāyee).

“A father’s pleasure is Allah’s pleasure, a father’s displeasure is Allah’s displeasure” (Tirmidhī).

WIFE

“The most perfect of the believers is the best of you in character, and the best of you are those among you who are best to their wives” (Tirmidhī).

CHILDREN

“He is not of us who has no compassion for our little ones and does not honour our old ones” (Tirmidhī).

“No father can give his child anything better than good manners” (Tirmidhī).

“Be careful of your duty to Allah and be fair and just to your children” (Bukhārī).

“Whoever properly brings up two daughters until they reach maturity, that man and myself (the prophet) will be so close in paradise as two adjacent fingers” (Muslim).

GUESTS

“He who believes in Allah and the Last Day should honour his guest” (Bukhārī).

NEIGHBOURS

“By Allah, he has no faith (the prophet repeated it three times) whose neighbours are not safe from his wickedness” (Bukhārī).

“He is not a believer who eats his fill while his neighbour remains hungry by his side” (Bayhaqī).

“Jibra’īl has been recommending good treatment towards the neighbours, so much that I thought he would give him the right to inherit” (Bukhārī).

ORPHAN

“The best house among the Muslims is the house in which an orphan is well treated and the worst house among the Muslims is the house in which an orphan is badly treated” (Ibn Mājah).

THE NEEDY

“One who tries to help the widow and the poor is like a warrior in the way of Allah” (Bukhārī).

BASIC QUALITIES

INTENTION

“Actions shall be judged only by intention, a man shall get what he intends” (Bukhārī).

TRUTHFULNESS

“Guarantee me six things and I shall assure you of Paradise: When you speak, speak the truth, keep your promise, discharge your trust, guard your chastity and lower your gaze” (Bayhaqī).

“Surely truth leads to virtue, and virtue leads to paradise” (Bukhārī).

KEEP UP PROMISE

“Do not quarrel with your brother Muslim, nor jest with him nor make him a promise which you cannot keep up” (Tirmidhī).

TOLERANCE

“There are two trails in me which Allah likes, toleration and deliberation in undertakings” (Aḥmad, Tirmidhī)

POLITENESS

“Allah is polite and likes politeness” (condensed from Muslim).

MODESTY

“Modesty is part of faith” (Bukhārī & Muslim).

BROTHERHOOD

“Each of you is a mirror of his brother, if you see something wrong in your brother, you must tell him to get rid of it” (Tirmidhī).

“Believers are like the parts of a building to one another – each part supporting the others” (Bukhārī).

“None of you can be a believer unless he loves for his brother what he loves for himself” (Bukhārī).

“A Muslim is he from whose tongue and hands, other Muslims are safe” (Bukhārī).

CHARITY

“Every good action is a charity and it is good action to meet a friend with a smiling face” (Bukhārī).

“There is a man who gives charity and he conceals it so much that his left hand does not know what his right hand spends” (Bukhārī).

“Removal from a road that which is harmful is charity” (Bukhārī).

CONTENTMENT

“Wealth does not come from abundance of goods but from a contented heart.” (Bukhārī & Muslim).

LEARNING

“The best of you is he who has learnt the Qur’ān and then taught it.” (Bukhārī).

“The seeking of knowledge is a must for every Muslim man and woman.” (Mishkāt).

“The learned men are the successors of the prophets. They leave behind knowledge as inheritance. One who inherits it obtains a great fortune.” (Bukhārī).

KINDNESS

“Allah is not kind to him who is not kind to people.” (Bukhārī & Muslim).

“Those who are kind and considerate to Allah’s creatures, Allah bestows His kindness and affection on them. Show kindness to the creatures on the earth so that Allah may be kind to you.” (Abū Dāwūd, Tirmidhī).

THANKFULNESS

“He who does not thank people does not thank Allah.” (Tirmidhī).

STEADFASTNESS

“Ṣufyān bin ‘Abdullāh said, ‘I asked: O Allah’s messenger, tell me something which I should stick to’. He said: ‘Say, my Lord is Allah, then remain steadfast!’” (Al-Nawawī’s forty Ḥadīth).

REPENTANCE (TAWBAH)

“By Allah, I (Muḥammad) ask Allah’s forgiveness and turn to Him in repentance more than seventy times a day.” (Bukhārī).

GIFTS

“Give gifts to one another, for gifts take away malice.” (Mishkāt).

“The messenger of Allah used to accept gifts and give gifts in return.” (Bukhārī).

VISITING THE SICK

“Visit the sick, feed the hungry and free the captives.” (Bukhārī).

MANNERS

MEETING

“When one of you arrives at a meeting where people are seated, he should say Salām to them. And when he wishes to leave, he should say Salām to them.” (Abū Dāwūd).

“Do not sit between two men without permission of both of them.” (Abū Dāwūd).

“Meetings are like trusts, except three kinds of meeting: for shedding prohibited blood, or for committing adultery or for taking property unlawfully.” (Abū Dāwūd).

TALKING

“He who truly believes in Allah and the last day should speak good or keep silent.” (Bukhārī & Muslim).

“He who keeps silent, remains safe.” (Tirmidhī).

EATING AND DRINKING

“The blessing of food is to wash hands at the beginning and washing after taking it.” (Mishkāt).

“Say Allah's name (Bismillāh) and eat with your right hand and eat from near you.” (Bukhārī).

“When one drinks, he should not breathe into the vessel (glass).” (Bukhārī).

CLOTHING

“Eat and drink, give ṣadqah and wear good clothes as long as these do not involve excess or arrogance.” (Nasāyee, Ibn Mājah).

“Indeed, he who wears silk in this world (will) have no share in it in the life after death.” (Bukhārī & Muslim).

“Gold and silk are lawful to the women of my Ummah and forbidden to the men.” (Tirmidhī, Nasāyee).

“Allah's messenger cursed the man who puts on women's clothes and the women who put on men's clothes.” (Abū Dāwūd).

The prophet said to Asmā, the daughter of Abū Bakr, “When a woman reaches puberty, it is not right that any part of her body (should) be seen but this and this and he pointed to his face and two hands.” (Abū Dāwūd).

GREETING

“When one of you meets his brother, he should say Salām to him.” (Abū Dāwūd).

“The young should say Salām to the old, the passer-by to the one sitting, and the small group to the large one.” (Bukhārī).

“The best (way) of saying Salām is shaking hands.” (Tirmidhī).

LEAVE THE UNCONCERNED MATTERS

“An excellent Islamic practice is to give up what is not one's business.” (Mālik, Aḥmad).

BAD CONDUCT

LYING

“Woe to him who tells lies to make people laugh! Woe to him! Woe to him!” (Aḥmad, Tirmidhī).

“It is great treachery that you tell your brother something he accepts as truth from you, but you are lying.” (Abū Dāwūd).

BACK-BITING

“If anybody pledges to me that he will keep his tongue under control, guard his chastity, will not speak ill of others not indulge in *slander or back-biting* and refrain from adultery and similar sins, I shall assure him of Paradise.” (Bukhārī).

SUSPICION

“Beware of suspicion, for suspicion may be based on false information, do not spy on another, do not disclose others' hidden defects.” (Bukhārī).

JEALOUSY

“Keep away from jealousy for as fire burns wood, so jealousy consumes good actions.” (Abū Dāwūd).

“Nothing is more atrocious than injuring unjustly a Muslim's reputation.” (Tirmidhī).

ANGER

“He is not strong who throws down another, but he is, who controls his anger.” (Bukhārī & Muslim).

“If anger rouses anyone, he should sit down and if that does not help, he should lie down.” (Tirmidhī).

PRIDE

“If anyone has got an atom of pride in his heart, he will not enter paradise.” (Bukhārī).

ABUSE

“Abusing a Muslim is sinful and killing him is disbelief (kufr)” (Bukhārī and Muslim).

HYPOCRACY

“The signs of the hypocrite are three: When he speaks, he lies; when he promises, he breaks it; when any trust is kept with him, he misuses it” (Bukhārī).

TAUNTING

“A believer neither taunts, nor curses nor speaks foul nor chats nor babbles” (Tirmidhī).

“DO NOT REJOICE OVER THE DISTRESS OF A BROTHER MUSLIM FOR ALLAH MAY RELIEVE HIS DISTRESS AND PLACE YOU IN HIS POSITION” (Tirmidhī).

“BEWARE IN EVERYBODY THERE IS A PIECE OF FLESH, IF IT IS HEALTHY, THE WHOLE BODY IS HEALTHY, AND IF IT IS SICK, THE WHOLE BODY IS SICK. BEWARE, IT IS THE HEART” (Bukhārī and Muslim).

MUSLIM COUNTRIES OF THE WORLD

POPULATION AND RESOURCES

Muslims wherever they are, form one nation (Millāṭun Waḥidaḥ). It is faith which decides nationality in Islam, and not the geographical territory, colour, race or language. Citizenship of an Islamic State may be based on geographical boundary.

There are 46 countries in the world on the basis of majority of population. The total Muslim population in the world is about 1,000 million, which is a formidable human power.

The Muslim countries together produce two-third of the world's oil, about 70 per cent rubber, about 75 per cent jute, 67 per cent spices, two-third of palm-oil, 50 per cent phosphate, 40 per cent tin. They also produce a large quantity of the world's cotton, tea, coffee, wool, uranium, manganese, cobalt and many other commodities and minerals. There is also a huge amount of natural gas in the Muslim countries.

If we look at a world-map, we find the Muslim countries occupying a very strategic position. 60 per cent of the Mediterranean ocean is bounded by Muslim countries. The Red sea and the Gulf are fully within the Muslim region.

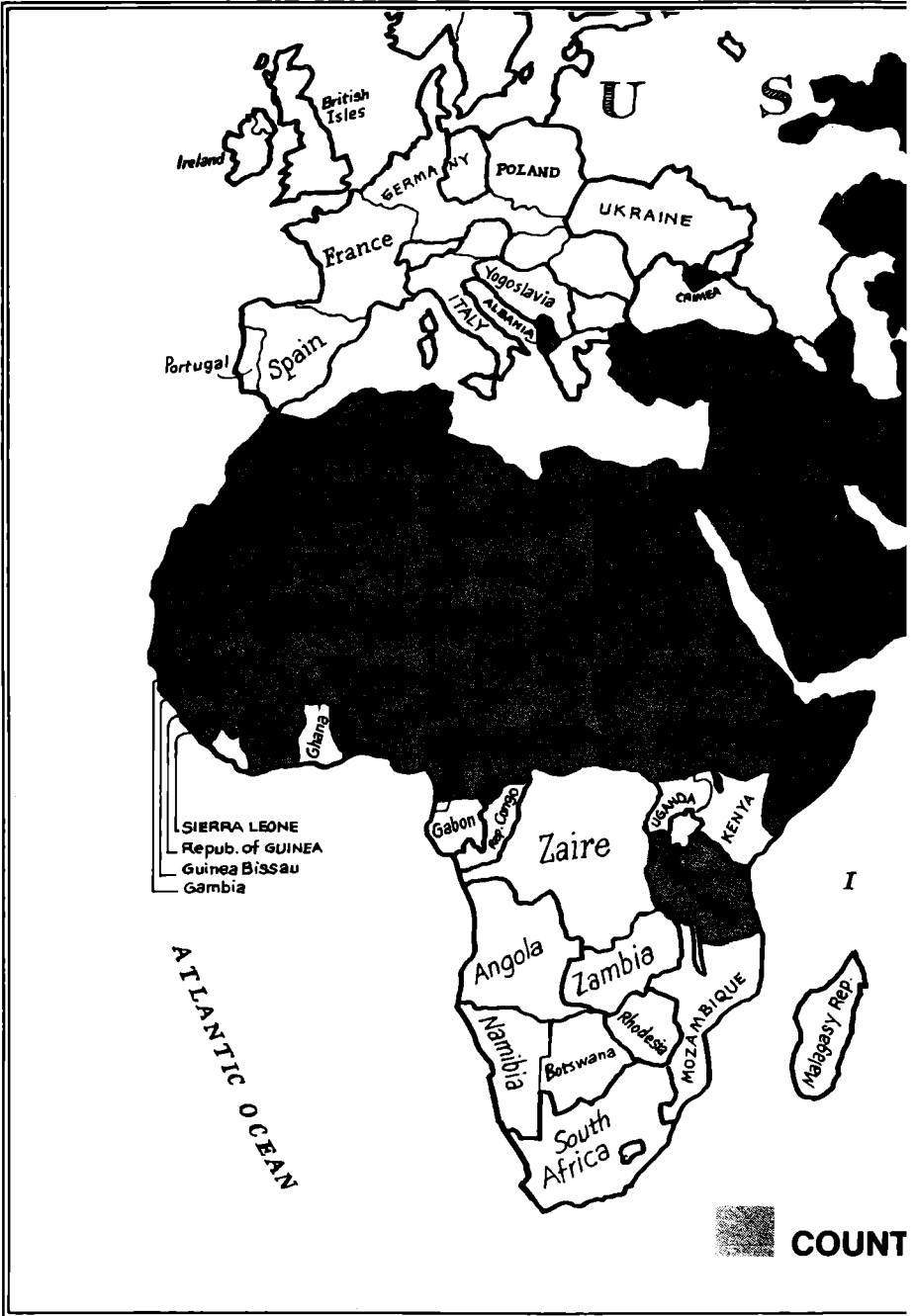
In the course of history, Muslims lost their essential unity, but it should be restored once again for the greater good of all mankind.

Muslims who once contributed tremendously to the science and civilisation of the world could once again do so if they truly get united on the basis of Islam. Real human progress can only be achieved by the faithful observance of the teachings of Islam.

MUSLIM COUNTRIES OF THE WORLD

	<i>Name</i>	<i>Area (Sq. Km.)</i>	<i>Population (million)</i>	<i>Percentage of Muslims</i>
1	Afghanistan	652,015	18 m.	99%
2	Albania	28,860	2.3 m.	75%
3	Algeria	1,500,212	18 m.	98%
4	Bahrain	1,118	.22 m.	99%
5	Bangladesh	143,328	85 m.	85%
6	Cameroon	477,277	6.2 m.	55%
7	Central African Republic	618,420	2 m.	55%
8	Chad	1,289,080	4 m.	85%
9	Dahomey	115,154	3 m.	60%
10	Egypt	1,005,321	36 m.	93%
11	Ethiopia	1,221,900	27 m.	65%
12	Gambia	10,246	.4 m.	85%
13	Guinea	245,857	4.3 m.	95%
14	Guinea-Bissau	36,125	.81 m.	70%
15	Indonesia	1,491,564	132 m.	95%
16	Iran	1,648,000	35 m.	98%
17	Iraq	438,446	12 m.	95%
18	Ivory Coast	322,500	5 m.	55%
19	Jordan	94,500	2.6 m.	95%
20	Kuwait	17,800	1 m.	100%
21	Lebanon	8,806	3 m.	57%
22	Libya	1,759,500	2.2 m.	100%
23	Malaysia	286,000	13 m.	52%
24	Maldiv Islands	235	12 m.	100%
25	Mali	1,239,998	6 m.	90%
26	Mauritania	1,030,000	1.3 m.	100%
27	Morocco	446,550	18 m.	99%

	<i>Name</i>	<i>Area (Sq. Km.)</i>	<i>Population (million)</i>	<i>Percentage of Muslims</i>
28	Niger	1,271,896	4.5 m.	91%
29	Nigeria	927,339	80 m.	75%
30	Oman	213,000	.75 m.	100%
31	Pakistan	1,041,375	75 m.	97%
32	Qatar	10,000	.18 m.	100%
33	Saudi Arabia	2,158,000	8 m.	100%
34	Senegal	196,192	4 m.	95%
35	Sierra Leone	72,605	3 m.	65%
36	Somalia	702,000	4 m.	100%
37	South Yemen	291,200	1.5 m.	95%
38	Sudan	2,515,500	17 m.	85%
39	Syria	186,808	7 m.	87%
40	Tanzania	943,332	15 m.	65%
41	Togo	56,600	2.1 m.	55%
42	Tunisia	165,150	6 m.	95%
43	Turkey	780,580	40 m.	99%
44	U.A.E.	85,800	.32 m.	100%
45	Upper Volta	275,259	6 m.	56%
46	North Yemen	195,000	6 m.	99%





LIM MAJORITY

Muslims are spread in almost all parts of the world. The countries having Muslim minorities are:

<i>Name</i>	<i>Muslims</i>	<i>Percentage of total population</i>
Angola	1.5 m	25%
Argentina	.5 m.	2%
Australia	.13 m.	1%
Bhutan	.05 m.	5%
Botswana	.03 m.	5%
Brazil	.21 m.	0.2%
Bulgaria	1.3 m.	14%
Burma	3 m.	10%
Burundi	.7 m.	20%
Cambodia	.07 m.	1%
Canada	.1 m.	0.5%
China	90 m.	11%
Congo	.15 m.	15%
Cyprus*	.21 m.	33%
Equatorial Guinea	.07 m.	25%
Fiji	.06 m.	11%
France	2 m.	3.8%
Germany (West)	1.5 m.	2.4%
Ghana	3 m.	30%
Gibraltar	.003 m.	10%
Greece	.27 m.	3%
Hong Kong	.004 m.	1%
Guyana	.01 m.	15%
India	80 m.	12%
Italy	.55 m.	1%
Japan	.01 m.	1%
Kenya	4 m.	29.5%
Liberia	.5 m.	30%
Lesotho	.12 m.	10%
Malagsy Republic	1.4 m.	20%
Malawi	1.7 m.	35%
Malta	.045 m.	14%
Mauritius	.14 m.	19.5%
Mozambique	2.2 m.	29%
Namibia	.034 m.	5%
Nepal	.5 m.	4%
Netherlands	.2 m.	1.5%
Panama	.05 m.	3.6%
Phillipines	5 m.	12%

* Cyprus is now divided into two separate states: Muslim majority part called Kibris and the other part Cyprus.

Portuguese Timor	.012 m.	20%
Reunion	.09 m.	20%
Rumania	.2 m.	20%
Zimbabwe	1 m.	15%
South Africa	.5 m.	2%
Sri Lanka	1.2 m.	9%
Surinam	.1 m.	25%
Swaziland	.046 m.	10%
Thailand	6 m.	14%
Trinidad & Tobago	.127 m.	12%
Uganda	4 m.	36%
U.S.S.R.	60 m.	20%
U.S.A.	3.2 m.	1.5%
Yugoslavia	5 m.	20%
Zaire	2.4 m.	10%
Zambia	.7 m.	15%

Total Population: Independent Muslim countries 600 m. (approx.)
 Muslim minority countries 300 m. (approx.)

900 m.*

*The latest population of Muslims all over the world might be over 1,000 million. Most population estimates are based on the 1971 census.

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- Source: 1 World Muslim Gazetteer, Umma Publication, 1975, Karachi.
 2 Embassies of different countries in London.
 3 Muslim News International, Vol IV:10, April 1966, Karachi.

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