

Rahma-tul-lil-`Aalamiin

Vol - 1

By

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giving the book a handsome shape. Through their own initiative and hard work they proved instrumental in reformatting the three volumes and standardising all proper names.

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January, 2002

Qazi Abdul Baqi B.A., LL.B. (Alig.)

*In the name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful;
and Choicest blessings on the Prophet.*

AUTHOR'S PREFACE

All praise is due to Allah and all greetings are for His Prophets and all graces for His servant and messenger, Muhammad (SAW¹) the chosen and final Prophet. Blessings be upon his community especially all members of his family and his companions.

It has been my ambition to write three books on the life, missionary activities and teachings of the holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW):

1. A brief account;
2. A sizeable biography;
3. An exhaustive account.

A brief account of the Prophet's life was published in 1899, under the name *Muhr-e-Nabu-vat* (the Seal of the Prophethood).

The second book has been named *Rahma-tul-lil-`Aalamiin* (Mercy unto the Worlds). It will be spread over three volumes and this publication is the first part.

¹ (SAW) is the abbreviated form for the Arabic 'sal-lal-la-hu `alai-hay-wa-sallam' meaning 'May all favours and blessings of Allah be upon the holy Prophet'. (SAW) has been used each time the name 'Muhammad' has been written.

Muhr-e-Nabu-vat, the brief account of the life and teachings of the holy Prophet is running into its eightieth edition and is being simultaneously published from Multan¹ and Lahore.

*In the name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful;
and Choicest blessings on the Prophet.*

FOREWORD BY THE EDITOR

Rahma-tul-lil-`Aalamiin (Mercy unto the Worlds) is a biography (Sira) of the Prophet Muhammad (SAW).

The original version, published from Lahore in Urdu in 1912, heralded an era of enlightenment on the subject. The intelligentsia and the press hailed the book as an outstanding contribution to *Sira* literature. An exuberant reviewer, Maulana Insha Allah Khan Insha, editor of the *Watan*, Lahore, paid a striking tribute to the author acclaiming his intense labour of love as a reflection of complete dedication to the Prophet. He also adjudged the book as 'the most outstanding Sira ever written'.

The book was immediately adopted as a textbook in *Islamic institutions throughout India*. These high-sounding encomiums laid the foundation for the sunrise of its fame. We now find that five Urdu editions of the book are being concurrently published from Delhi, Deoband, Karachi and four editions by different publishers of Urdu Bazaar, Lahore (probably an all-time record). An Arabic translation, elegantly dressed, was brought out by Dar-us-Salfia, Bombay around 1980. Yet another Arabic translation, by Dr. Khalid Ibrahim, was published from Cairo, Egypt, in 1989. This is probably the only Urdu book on the subject selected by the Arab world to be so lavishly honoured. The Pakistan Times,

¹ Faruqi Kutub Khana, Bohar Gate, Multan. Ed.

Lahore, serialised its English translation from 1959 to 1963, incidentally the only Urdu book to be so highlighted. Three abridged translations in English appeared from Lahore¹ and Karachi.² In short, the popularity of the book, after ninety years of its first publication, still seems to be flourishing as if in its glorious youth.

The biographers of the Prophet draw their material essentially from the Qur'aan and the Sunna, that amply cover diverse aspects and characteristics of the Prophet. Besides this unimpeachable evidence, the records of all other minor and major events in the life of the Prophet seem to have been miraculously preserved as quoted by the early historians. Material for no other book in *Sira* literature has been collected and projected with such reverence, methodology and enthusiasm. The author meticulously bore in mind the sacred maxim of intellectual honesty.

Another striking feature of this *Sira* is that all significant events that occurred in the life of the Prophet and foretold in the Scriptures, have been diligently traced and copiously quoted. No other biography has offered such extraordinary research, entailing, as it did, enormous labour, skill, scholarship and unflagging concentration. This research also shows that all the revealed books are inter-linked as are the Prophets - one inviolable chain, one common direction and projection of one common concept, the Oneness of God - *Tawhiid*, the *sine qua non* of all religions, and particularly of Islam, as lucidly and loudly proclaimed by the Patriarch Ibrahiim and followed up by the Prophet of Islam with greater zeal and clarity.

The earliest biographers³ (151-450 A.H.), illustrious and incomparable as they were, differed on dates of major events. The author has corrected all such discrepancies with arithmetical precision. Furthermore, the author has also pointed out lamentable

¹ Sheikh Mubarak Ali Publishers inside Lohari Gate, Lahore.

² Dar-ul-Ishaat, Urdu Bazar, Karachi.

³ Ibn Ishaq, Tabari, Ibn Sa'd, Abul Fida and Ibn Qiyim.

omissions in the genealogy of the Prophet Jesus Christ made by the apostles, St. Matthew and St. Luke. He has commented on their indeliberate omissions with scholarly grace in volume II of this book.

The author believed in perfection, as far as an erring human being could. This distinguishing feature is visible in all his writings, as also highlighted by all reviewers of the author's works.

Besides the many brilliant features of the book, the discovery of dozens of names of martyrs, after a lapse of thirteen centuries, seems a feat unprecedented in the annals of historical research. Tracing out the name of the venerable Sayyida Hind is equally astonishing¹.

The author was a profound scholar of religious literature and an eminent luminary in legal parlours. His juristic connotations of law as a District and Session judge earned floral tributes from his contemporaries. Mr. Tomkin, Inspector General of Police, Punjab (1905-1915), was the Chairman of a Joint Tribunal. The author was its nominated member and the two worked together for about three years. The Chairman was so impressed by his interpretation of law and juristic reflexes that in his report submitted to the Punjab Government, he commented, "Qazi Muhammad Sulaiman would be an ornament to British judiciary."

Free of greed, pride and prejudices and endowed with a sublime sense of resisting all worldly distractions, the author bore a saintly personality, a hospitable and benevolent nature and a penitent heart, that further ennobled his countenance, his sweet demeanour and helpful disposition.

He never laughed, but a ripple of a smile added grace to his captivating personality. He often observed silence, but when he chose to speak, he poured forth pearls of wisdom on any subject

¹ See Battle of Uhud.

related to human relations. Each day of the year he held a session, attended by the elite among the educated class, wherein he made a running commentary of the Qur'aan. A glimpse of the commentary can be seen in the second chapter of Vol-III of this book. When Lord Hedley, alleged to be the sixth in succession to the British throne, and a new convert to Islam, came to Delhi in 1929 to preside over a *Tablighi* (Missionary) conference, sponsored by Sayyid Ghulam Bhik Nairang, the author was the principal speaker. His warmth for all and rancour for none endeared him to all the communities alike. Hence his death was mourned jointly by all the communities.

The author went to Makka for his second pilgrimage in 1930, ignoring the instruction of his physician, K. B. Dr. Yaar Muhammad, and he breathed his last during his return voyage, on board the ship within the limits of the Harem, on the afternoon of Friday, 5th May 1930, and the first of Muharram, 1330 A.H. He was sixty-three years old by the lunar calendar. The editor of daily *Inqilab*, Maulana Ghulam Rasuul Mehr, was on board the same ship and paid the author a glowing tribute, covering the entire front page, giving space to no other news. Maulana Ismail Ghaznavi led the burial prayer. Few deaths within the Islamic academia have been mourned in such a sober manner.

I, being the eldest of his grandchildren, always felt that he was more affectionate towards me. I was able to receive a greater share of his affection than any of the siblings or, at least, this was how I felt. His demise caused the family a heart-breaking blow. For me it was the shock of my life, which no other death would ever cause. It crushed all my budding ambitions; plenty and prestige were benighted by humiliations, disappointments and poverty.

Like all men, he answered the call of the Companion on High, but left behind immortal words of wisdom and guidance, in the shape of his celebrated books. This invaluable heritage deserved to be preserved in principal foreign

languages for the benefit of all seekers of truth. All the works of the author, no less than twenty-five, bear the stamp of his individualistic approach to the subject, attained, as I observed, as a result of his piety, fervent and flowing love for the holy Prophet and his command over legal connotations. The noble texture of his enlightened mind is abundantly reflected in all his works that almost certainly overshadow all others on the same subject, as the reviewers testify.

During the partition of India in 1947, the loss of the author's library, and manuscripts of my father, was an irreparable blow. However, by the grace of God, our lives and the lives of hundreds of our death-driven neighbours and friends, who sought shelter in our house were saved, as our house, even in that province-wide chaos was declared 'Protected'. The meritorious services of the author to the State could not be ignored, even in the blood bath resulting from the communal unrest.

My father, Sirdar Qazi Abdul Aziz, translated *Rahma-tul-lil-`Aalamiin* into English for the second time in 1952-1955. Before it could be revised, he died in 1956. His death, therefore, left us in absolute quandary. The translator was the only son of the author and was a brilliant graduate of the Aligarh Muslim University when its reputation stood at its zenith (1901-1907). He was equally proficient in English, Persian, Arabic, Urdu and Punjabi languages and wielded a facile pen. He worked as an occasional sub-editor of the illustrious '*Comrade*' and '*Hamdard*' for about two years from 1909-1911.

As a poet, he wrote freely in Urdu and Persian, and while still an intermediate class student of Government College, Lahore, he translated Alfred Tennyson's 'Harun-al-Rashid' into Urdu verse published by the college magazine. Later it was published in tri-lingual *Seh Aatisha* (Three fires - English, Persian and Urdu) and compiled by a professor of the Agricultural University, Faisalabad in the 1960s. He also translated into English William Cowper's '*Elegy*', written in a country churchyard, that caused quite a stir in literary circles.

Besides being involved in post-partition rehabilitation problems, we also believed that the task of updating and editing *Rahma-tul-lil-`Aalamiin* was beyond our competence, and looked for some Messiah to do it for us. Thirty-one years rolled by in this vein of daydreaming. I moved to the U.K. in 1973 to live in the affectionate care of my sons. In 1986, I received a letter from my younger brother, Qazi Abdul Bari, stating, "It seems the English translation of *Rahma-tul-lil-`Aalamiin* will not be published in our lifetime." The excruciating guilt of doing nothing to project the family's invaluable heritage overpowered my feelings of incompetence. Not withstanding my lack of knowledge, experience and advanced age, I decided to jump into the waters whose depth was unknown.

The result of this drawn-out labour of love (1986-2002) is presented to the reader. I have tried to reproduce the existing material in a manner the reader may find absorbing. Additions relevant to the subject have been made as footnotes. I apologise in advance for any lapses found in the three volumes of the book, as vagaries of the computer and its technicians were unending, and occasionally my age would fail me in my endeavours. I solicit Allah's grace and blessings for my illustrious grandfather, his brother Qazi Abdul Rahmaan, another symbol of self-abnegation and piety, and my staunch-hearted father, who re-translated the book in a very uncongenial environment. Here, only the first volume translated by my father is being presented to the reader. The other two volumes were completed later as mentioned above. In the first volume, I have mostly followed Prof. A. Guillaume in spelling all proper nouns and abbreviations. In the second and third volumes, I have followed roman transliteration of the Holy Qur'aan, published by Sheikh Muhammad Ashraf, Aibak Road, Lahore. As such, the words Ummah, Surah and Makkah have been spelled by dropping the last alphabet 'h' of the words, as 'h' is desired to be treated as silent by the Arab grammarians.

January, 2002

Qazi Abdul Baqi B.A., LL.B. (Alig.)

Dubai, UAE

SCHOLARS' REVIEW

1. Maulana Sayyid Abul Hasan Ali Nadvi

I was looking into a list of books on Sira literature. *Rahma-tul-lil-`Aalamiin*, the very name of the book caused a sensation in my body and without losing time I placed an order for the book. The value payable parcel arrived and I had no money to pay for it. My mother had to borrow money from a relative, who had dropped in at that time (around 1924).

I started reading the book with great enthusiasm. The story of the earliest converts was as gripping as it was penetrating from the bitter beginning of the mission to its sweetest ending. It is impossible not to be inspired by the unbreakable strength of character of the converts and the composure and steadfastness of the holy Prophet under highly provocative and depressing circumstances.

The sincerity and profound scholarship of the author, the simplicity and sublimity of the narrative were more than enough to keep me fully absorbed and inspired. I felt a current running through my body all the time. This book is my benefactor and guide. I earnestly solicit exaltation and blessings for the author. (An excerpt from his autobiography, *Karvan Hayat - The Caravan of Life*). Ed.

Rector, Nadva-tul-Ulama, Lucknow, India
Chairman, Islamic Studies, Oxford University

2. Maulana Abul Alaa Maududi

There are numerous Sira books on the mission of the holy Prophet. Out of these very few are authentic and well documented and among them Rahma-tul-lil-`Aalamiin is uppermost.

Founder, Jammaat-e-Islami,
Lahore, Pakistan

3. Maulana Sayyid Shabbir Bukhari

“It has been correctly observed that history at its best is the Biography of great men. And of all great men, Prophets rank the highest. Prophets are architects of human soul, builders of global Civilisation and moulders of International and Cosmic Culture.” In his deep scholarly approach Carlyle (1795-1881), could not go beyond Muhammad (SAW) when he selected him hero among the Prophets. He found all qualities of head and heart beautifully blended and comprehensively balanced in one singular individual.

There is a crying need to publicise the unparalleled achievements of the holy Prophet of Islam, particularly in this era of crisis of values of life. Modern man has failed. Democracy has failed. Here we are reminded of Bernard Shaw who said, “Only the message of Muhammad (SAW) and its implementation could save humanity from disaster.” Goethe (1749-1832) said to Ekerman, “You see this teaching (of Islam) never fails.”

How unfortunate it is that with all our high sounding slogans in Sirat conferences at National and International levels, we could

not produce a single book on Sirat for English readers during the past five decades to answer the intellectual needs of the most advanced cultural group of global society. Therefore, I am delighted to know that one of the biggest work of translation of the most well-known book, *Rahma-tul-lil-`Aalamiin* in Sirat literature, zealously started and patiently carried on, has been successfully accomplished by Qazi Abdul Baqi, the author's grandson.

Its authenticity in Sirat literature is unquestionable as has also been pronounced by Maulana Abul-Alaa Maududi. Qazi Muhammad Sulaiman Salman Mansurpuri, the most outstanding scholar of his time (1870-1930) and author of *Rahma-tul-lil-`Aalamiin*, as a historian, is the pioneer in producing such classical historical literature. This biography of the great Prophet is spread over three volumes, covering more than a thousand pages. The author, to produce such a masterpiece of historical literature would require the penetrating eye of a profound scholar of Islamic history, an academic deep taste of literature and a balanced inclination of mind towards the research approach.

He enjoyed full command over inter-blending history and literature of English, Arabic and Persian languages which he has so skilfully exhibited that we are reminded of Edmund Burke (1719-1797) when he says, "These gentle historians dip their pen on nothing but the milk of human kindness."

The author as a researcher stands alone and aloft, being the only one in fourteen hundred years to trace out Sayyida Hind's name, a lady of unusually sterling characteristics. Till now, all historians just wrote 'a lady of Banu Dinaar'. Further, he discovered several names of martyrs of Badr, Uhud, Alraji and Khaibar - a dedicated form of research in the entire annals of history; and resolved for the first time, discrepancies in the dates of the holy Prophet's birth, demise and arrival at Quba and Madina with arithmetical precision.

The author has made comparative and comprehensive study of Judaism, Christianity and Islam and the sublime characteristics of the most towering personality in human history - Muhammad (SAW) whose message gave birth to a new thought-process to the superstition-ridden world. The author's contemporaries with due respect to them, do not reach his vigour, vision and insight.

I congratulate Qazi Abdul Baqi for this effort to pass on these treasures of our glorious past to the new generation. I hope that this English translation will be as warmly received by the intelligentsia as its Urdu editions have been, of which surprisingly four editions are being concurrently published by four different publishers¹ from Lahore alone. Its Arabic translation appeared from Bombay in 1989. Deoband and Delhi publish its Urdu editions concurrently. This signal popularity of the book after ninety years of its publication seems God-given. As such, I feel no hesitation in saying that this book claims a unique position among the biographies of the holy Prophet.

May God bless the author for his extraordinary labour of love, solely prompted by his deep devotion to the holy Prophet.

Retired Director of Education, Punjab,
Secretary Education, Federal Govt., Islamabad,
Ex-Advisor, Auqaf Department,
Translator of the holy Qur'aan,
Editor and Founder of Al-Taffakkur, Lahore

¹ These publishers are:

- 1) Ghulam Ali & Sons, Urdu Bazar, Lahore.
- 2) Faisal Printers, Urdu Bazar, Lahore.
- 3) Progressive Printers, Urdu Bazar, Lahore.
- 4) Idara-e-Islamiat, Lahore and Karachi.

4. Maulana Insha Allah Khan Insha

The best biography of the holy Prophet ever written.

1912

Editor, Al-Watan, Lahore

5. Zulfiqar Ahmad Tabish

Qazi Muhammad Sulaiman Mansurpuri's magnum opus *Rahma-tul-lil-`Aalamiin* has been widely appreciated throughout the sub-continent. Its popularity is so great that since its publication it is being published without a break and has never been out of print. The noble sentiment with which the author has written this book has made the author and the book immortal. It is a highly authoritative document on the subject involving deep scholarship and research. The author possessed an enlightened mind and an inspired soul. Besides, he was a profound scholar and spiritually highly placed. His pen keeps the readers spellbound. The ever-increasing popularity of *Rahma-tul-lil-`Aalamiin* is manifestly a God-given boon.

13th Feb.1988

Daily Imroz

6. Shah Muhammad Jafar Phulwari

Over the last fourteen centuries, ancient chroniclers and modern historians while recording an incident of great importance, did not identify the name of the venerable lady 'Sayyida Hind'. They just wrote, 'A lady of B. Dinaar' - a tribe of Madina. The author of the present study scanned through all available genealogical tables of the Ansaar and other relevant literature and succeeded in finding out this infallible devotee's name. She was the wife of `Amr b. al-Jamuh, chief of B. Dinaar, sister of `Abdullah Ansaari, who was father of Jaabir, the well-

Rahma-tul-lil-`Aalamiin

known narrator of Hadith. Thus, the author became the first historian in 1400 years to trace out her name. May God be pleased.

1975

Author, '*Paighamber-i-Insaniyat*'
Institute of Islamic Culture, Lahore

*In the name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful;
and Choicest blessings on the Prophet.*

PROLOGUE

Around 2000 B.C. the kingdom of Babylon was at the height of its military and economic power. Its monarch was so filled with conceit and pride on account of his wealth, so overblown with confidence in the security of his domain, that he presumed himself to be an incarnation of God. He even ordered a golden statue of himself to be placed in the temple for public worship.

God appointed the Prophet Ibrahiim (Abraham), tenth descendent of the Prophet Nuh (Noah) to disabuse him of his pretensions and guide him to the right path.

The Prophet's insistence upon the Unity and exclusive Sovereignty of God did not move the ruler's pride. To have admitted its truth, he would have had to renounce his claim to godhood, and be instead a servant of God; to decline (as he understood it) from godhood to servanthood was for him an impossibility. But the Prophet's insistence on the Unity of God not only infuriated the King, it also provoked his father and all the courtiers, some of whom were royal priests and held privileged positions at the court. Persecuted by the King and disillusioned by the unsympathetic response of even his own family, the Prophet Ibrahiim left them. His wife Sarah and his nephew, the Prophet Lut b. Faraan accompanied him in his epoch-making migration.

The Prophet Ibrahiim took some of his sheep with him as a means of livelihood on the journey. With God's protection and blessings, the few grew into flocks. But, as God willed, a time

came when the rains were withheld, and the green fields became barren. The Prophet drove on in search of fresh pastures until he crossed over the border of **Egypt**.

The then King of Egypt was Riqiyun¹, originally a citizen of Babylon. It may be that the Prophet Ibrahiim's journey to the capital of Egypt was motivated by the ties of citizenship.

The King of Egypt saw in Sarah a lady of his homeland and wished to take her as his wife, but after certain portents which led him to believe that she was the wife of God's chosen Prophet, he repented, apologised, and extended to the Prophet Ibrahiim hospitality and great honour. Furthermore, when the Prophet determined to return to his homeland, the King sent Haajira (Hagar), his daughter, with him so that the Princess might grow up in the traditions of the Prophet's family and be married in the country of her father.

The Prophet Ibrahiim accepted the generous hospitality of the King and took Haajira as his wife when she grew of age. God bestowed on him his first son from the princess. The boy was named Ismaa'il.²

Haajira's distinction lies not only in being a princess; she was also exalted by God for showing her constancy and perseverance in the long course of events of great distress. Besides the Qur'aan, the Scriptures also foretold this grim story in the book of Genesis:

1 The name of the king was Totees b. Maalia. His capital was Munsif. Totees is also called as Salates. It appears that Riqiyun was his personal name and Totees his royal title. He ordered the first ever canal to be dug in order to ship grains to Sayyida Haajira (Hagar) in Arabia. The canal was re-opened by Kaiser Orban, Nikhus, and King Darius. Finally, it was dug up all over again during the Caliphate of `Umar Faaruq, the second Caliph. (*Khutabat-e-Ahmadia*, p-109 by Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khaan)

2 The Scriptures spell it as Ishmael.

Rahma-tul-lil-`Aalamiin

- 16:6 And when Sarai (this name was later changed to Sarah, (17:15) dealt hardly with her, she (Hagar) fled from her **face**.¹
- 16:11 And the angel of the Lord said unto her, Behold, thou art with child and shalt bear a son, and shalt call his name Ishmael; because the Lord hath heard thy affliction.
- 16:10 And the angel of the Lord said unto her, I will multiply thy seed exceedingly that it shall not be numbered for multitude.
- 16:13 And she called the name of the Lord; that spake unto her, Thou God seest me: for she said, have I also here looked after him that seeth me?
- 16:16 And Abram (later changed to Abraham, 17:5) was four score and six years old, when Hagar bore Ishmael to Abram.
- 17:7 And I will establish my covenant between me and thee and thy seed after thee in their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee and to thy seed after thee. (Note here that this everlasting assurance was given by God fourteen years before Isaac² was born).
- 17:10 This is my covenant, which ye shall keep, between me and you and thy seed after thee; every man-child among you shall be circumcised.
- 17:20 And as for Ishmael, I have heard thee: Behold, I have blessed him, and will make him fruitful, and will multiply him exceedingly; twelve princes shall he beget, and I will make him a great nation.

1 Last line of the book of Genesis. (16:6)

2 Status of Ishmael and Isaac in Old Testament. See Vol-II of this book.

- 17:23 And Abraham took Ishmael his son, and all that were born in his house, and all that were bought with his money, every male among the men of Abraham's house; and circumcised the flesh of their foreskin in the selfsame day, as God had said unto him.
- 21:19 And God opened her (Hagar's) eyes and she saw a well of water; and she went and filled the bottle with water, and gave the lad a drink.
- 21:20 And God was with the lad; and he grew and dwelt in the wilderness and became an archer.
- 21:21 And he (Ishmael) dwelt in the wilderness of Paran¹ (Arabs spell it as Faraan).

The second son of Ibrahiim was born of Sarah and named Ishaaq (Isaac). God had blessed both the sons and predestined them to be the fathers of two great nations of great numbers. As God willed, the two branches of family needed a distinct geography and history to expand and flourish. Under divine command, Syria was allotted to the Prophet Ishaaq. Babylon was

1 From the above Biblical verses it is clear that Hagar's (Haajira's) excellence of conduct and resignation to the Will of God won for her and her son an exalted station, besides God's help and blessings.

By any standard, Hagar's life-story seems a miracle. In the whole of scriptural literature, no woman of any status is reported to have suffered such hardships as she had to face and indeed endure for almost the whole tenure of her life. No child of any historical importance was brought up on the isolation and resourcelessness of an uninhabited, unending desert. Genesis 16:13 explicitly states, "And she called the name of the Lord that spake unto her." The distinction that God and His angels spoke to her time and again and guided her at every step does not appear to have been conferred on any other woman in such measure. In Genesis 16:13 Hagar (Haajira) is directly addressed and consoled, "I will multiply thy seed exceedingly." Genesis 17:7 guarantees an everlasting covenant to the seed of Ibrahiim. It is significant to note that the everlasting covenant "to be a God unto thee and thy seed after thee" was made and announced fourteen years before the birth of Prophet Isaac (Ishaaq). Genesis 17:20 mentions by name "As for Ishmael I have blessed him." Ed.

to Syria's East and thus he was nearer to his motherland. Arabia was allocated to the Prophet Ismaa'il so that Egypt being to his West, he was closer to his motherland. Both the families were thus settled in bordering territories so that they could help each other in time of need. When the Prophet Ibrahiim died, the burial ceremony was conducted by both brothers jointly. (Genesis 25:9) The Prophet Ishaaq was married in his mother's family.

The Prophet Ismaa'il was married to the daughter of Mudaad, the sole Chieftain of B. Jurhum, and from an ancient line of Arab rulers.¹

The Arab world played a singular role in the history of Prophets. The Prophet Musa (Moses) sought refuge in Arabia when he fled from Egypt from the terrors of Fir'aun (Pharaoh). He spent forty years of his wanderings in the deserts of Arabia. The Prophet Dawuud (David) also took refuge in Arabia when he was forced out of the country for fear of King Saul, and when Nebuchadnezzar ransacked B. Isra'il, it was Ma'ad b. `Adnaan (a descendent of the Prophet Ismaa'il) who extended Arab hospitality to them in honour and grace.

The Prophets born in the line of the Prophet Ishaaq (Isaac) made frequent references to the children of Ismaa'il.

The Prophet Ibrahiim had settled Ismaa'il and his mother in Makka. He built there, with his son's help, a house of prayer. Then rhomboid in form, this house of God is known as the Ka'ba. On its completion, he and his son prayed to God to provide the settlers with enough fruits² and food of the earth and to raise a mighty Prophet³ from among them.

1 A Short History of the Arabs by Prof. L. A. Sedillot. (Paris-1850)

2 Ibrahiim prayed, "Make this a region of security and bestow upon its people fruits." (Qur'aan 2:126)

3 "And raise up in their midst a messenger from among them." (Qur'aan 2:129)

Makka at that time was not fertile enough to produce crops and there were no traces of human life. However, visitors to Makka over the centuries have always noted with astonishment that its shops remain filled with fresh fruits and vegetables.

The second part of the supplication was that a mighty Prophet be sent to that land. The fact that the promised Prophet was to be in the line of Ismaa`il, although self-evident to Muslims, had also been foretold by Genesis (18:17-19). Deuteronomy (33:2) reveals that the promised Prophet would proclaim himself from the top of Paran Hill (about 12 miles from Makka). Thus, the prayer of the Prophet Ibrahiim was granted in full, historically and spiritually.

The Prophet Ismaa`il and the Prophet Ishaaq had twelve sons each.¹ The sons of the Prophet Ismaa`il settled themselves in different parts of Arabia. Soon they grew in number, until their people touched the boundaries of Egypt to the West, their motherland of origin, and Yaman to the South. To the North, their settlements touched Syria where the children of the Prophet Ishaaq had settled.

In this way, the descendants of Ibrahiim inherited the old civilisation, sciences and arts of Egypt and Babylon. Besides, they included in their domain harbours of the Red Sea and the Indian Ocean. From these ports they were at the centre of the sea routes of the civilised and populated world.

The interior of the Arabian peninsula was a fortress for them; indeed it has always proved intractable to foreign invasion.

In the line of the Prophet Ismaa`il, Qaidhar (Qidar or Kedar in Scriptures) his second son, occupied a position of great eminence. His children maintained their settlement in Makka proper. They, like their venerable father, were ardent guardians of the sanctity and privileges of the sacred mosque, which was

1 Genesis 25:13-16. (See Appendix p-1 for their names)

historically the first and the foremost sanctuary for the teachings of the Oneness of God (Tawhiid).

From the 37th descendant of Qaidhar was born `Adnaan, a man of high ideals. His younger brother `Akk laid the foundations of a kingdom in Yaman.

After the death of `Adnaan, B. Jurhum¹ overpowered the children of Ismaa'il although B. Jurhum were their maternal uncles. Subsequently, B. Ismaa'il were expelled from Makka in 207 A.D. because they would not join B. Jurhum in idol-worship.

Qusayy, the 15th descendant of `Adnaan II, regained possession of Makka. He laid the foundations of a democratic government in 440 A.D. and distributed the administration into six portfolios:

1. Rifadah - Public Works and Medical Services
2. Siqayah - Water Supply Services
3. Hijabah - Department of Interior and Protocol Services
4. Qiyadah - Military Services
5. Liv`a - Institute of the National Flag
6. Dar-al-Nadwah - The House of Parliament

After Qusayy, his son `Abdu Manaaf, then his son Haashim, then his son `Abdul Muttalib (born 497 A.D.) were one after the other, respected Chieftains of Makka. The holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW) whose biography is being presented to the readers, was the grandson of `Abdul Muttalib.²

1 Qahtan was the father of Jurhum. Jurhum's daughter was married to the Prophet Ismaa'il. Hence it was said that all Arabs have descended from Ismaa'il & Qahtan. II - G - p-691.

2 "The grandfather of Muhammad ﷺ was `Abdul Muttalib the son of Haashim, a wealthy and generous citizen, who relieved the distress of famine with the supplies of commerce. Mecca which had been fed by the liberality of the father (Haashim) was saved (refers to Abraha's abortive

PRE-ISLAMIC ARABIA

Arabia is a peninsula bounded on the west by the Red Sea and on the south by the Indian Ocean. To the east lies the Persian Gulf. To the north, separated by a chain of hills, lies Syria; to the far west Egypt stands aloof, bounded by the modern Suez Canal, once a narrow strip of land connecting two large land masses. The Arabian Sea separates the peninsula from the subcontinent of India and Pakistan.

In land mass, Arabia is twice the size of France. The different parts of the country are distinguished by their peculiar features. The valley of Yaman and the mountains of Ta'if are equal to the best hills of the subcontinent. The rocky land of al-Hijar and the vast span of the Arabian desert does not have a blade of grass or a drop of water. Its desolation challenges the acute barrenness of the great deserts of Africa.

Let us now look at the social and moral conditions prevailing in the country at the time of the birth of Muhammad (SAW).

The South of the country was held by the Abyssinians. The Persians held sway over Eastern territories. The Northern frontiers were governed by the Eastern Roman Empire.¹ Central Arabia presumed herself to be independent, but each of the three surrounding powers were constantly manoeuvring to subdue it.

The unviolated isolation of Central Arabia had in certain respects seriously weakened the moral fibre of the majority of its people. They had drifted into lawless barbarism. Their own flesh and blood were often targets and victims of their savagery. They had little work to keep themselves occupied and sank into debauchery. Drinking and gambling claimed so much of their time

attack on Makka) by the courage of the son." Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire - Gibbon - p-662, Chap-50.

1 A Short History of the Arabs by Prof. L. A. Sedillot - p-40, (Paris-1850).

that these vices had gradually become ingrained and institutionalised.

Cut off from the civilised world they succeeded, however, in keeping their blood and language pure and unalloyed. But this purity and grace of language were mostly exploited in self-praise or in contempt of others. They would gloat over impure deeds in their pure language and lauded their sweethearts and themselves in obscene verse. They regarded the state of being a father-in-law as a lifelong humiliation, and under that obsession some of them remorselessly buried their infant daughters alive.

Illiteracy and idolatry had dragged them down into fetishism. Every manifestation of nature - the sun, the moon, a mountain, a river or any unusual person, thing or event was a deity to them. Gradually they had unlearned glory and grandeur of the Unity of Creation and the Oneness of God, and forgotten the dignity and value of human life. They had no consistent grasp of human rights and duties, or of social order or legality.¹

The influence of neighbouring countries and the impact of other civilisations and religions was insufficient to reform their way of thinking or their way of life. There were indeed Jews², Christians and Sabeans among them, but it is mere delusion, however tempting, to fancy that their presence in any way contributed to improving the Arab character. The truth was rather the contrary as the Arab character distorted the teachings of those

1 Abridged account. Ed.

2 When the Jews were turned out of their ancestral homes by the Greeks, they migrated to Arabia where they were welcomed by (their cousins) B. Ismaa'il. The Jewish religion gained popularity in the province of Hejaz, and especially in the outskirts of the cities of Yathrib (Madina) and Khaibar. Christianity was accepted as a faith by B. Ghassaan in 330 A.D. It spread to areas of Iraq, Bahrain, the Desert of Faran (near Makka) and the communities that settled around Euphrates and Tigris rivers; both the Kings of Abyssinia and the Caesars aided in its propagation, particularly between 395 A.D. and 513 A.D. A Short History of the Arabs by Prof. L. A. Sedillot - p-39, (Paris-1850).

religions. Christians in general understand the Prophet Christ to be the son of God, but the Christians of Arabia went further and raised the Prophet's mother, Maryam, to the rank of God's wife (God forbid), and believed angels to be the daughters of God. If all of that, God forbid, were not abomination enough, the idolaters went further and proclaimed al-Lat, al-`Uzza and Manat as consorts of God.¹

With few exceptions, the Arabs were an illiterate people. They lived and died as strangers to any science or fine arts, unfamiliar with any rules of society. Amongst them also lived naturalists and agnostics. Life and death to them were mere accidents of nature. The belief that there is a God, that good deeds are rewarded with good, evil deeds with evil, only amused them. Thus, pagan Arabia was a melting-pot for the most vicious and ingrained sacrileges, deviations, blasphemies and profanities of that age.

Situated at 21½°, Makka is in fact the mid-point between the Northern and Southern latitudes, where human habitation is found. The word Makka actually means the naval of the earth. A reading of the map will also show that Arabia is situated at roughly the mid-point between Asia, Europe and Africa. Both by sea and land, it is the connecting link between the world population on its right and left. It is surely a natural centre, the best² geographical location, from which to radiate guidance all over the world. The Qur'aan attests: thus we have appointed a nation which shall do justice in all situations that you (the Prophet) may testify against mankind. (2:143)

The Merciful Lord of Creation raised Muhammad (SAW) from Arabia and gradually assigned to him the awesome task of

1 Abridged account. Ed.

2 a) The Makers of Humanity by Robert Briffault.
b) The Gospel of Islam by Duncan Greenlees - p-27.
c) Contribution Des Arabs by Dr. A. Bertherand - p-6. Ed.

reclaiming, at first, the fallen children of his community and then widening the scope of guidance to the entire world.

Readers of this biography will realise just how heavy and burdensome a task the Prophet ﷺ had to undertake, and with what rare patience and fortitude he carried it out. He laid the foundations of a world civilisation, a social order grounded in prophetic wisdom and knowledge, and reinforced by a noble and profound moral seriousness. This order drew nations and countries into one brotherhood,¹ established the status of the human being as the highest in creation, dispersed the gloom of heathenism with the light of God's Unity (*Tawhiid*) and so imprinted the Greatness and Glory of God on human souls and minds. Also, he made man believe and appreciate that he was the sovereign of all he surveyed, all objects and causes being created to serve him so that he might serve God more comprehensively.

In advancing the Islamic order, the Prophet ﷺ reserved no special authority for the Arabs or for Arabia. Such a narrow concept of nationalism had no place in his heart and it was also repugnant to the universal character of Islam. In his philosophy of life, no race or people had any inevitable right to privilege. No race or people inherently lacked virtue. Accidents of geography or language or race were no more than that. Similarly, wealth and lineage and the social disparities they entailed, were mere accidents - passing phases.

He gave to mankind a new vision, a new purpose, and a new perspective. He imprinted on their minds that all mankind had sprung from one single source and were all creatures of one indivisible God. He taught them to live as brothers and sisters and sing in unison the hymn of 'unity'. Only then could the diverse

1 "The League of Nations founded by the Prophet of Islam put the principle of international unity and human brotherhood on such universal foundations as to show candle to other nations..." "The fact is that no nation of the world can show a parallel to what Islam has done towards the realisation of the idea of League of Nations." (Prof. Hurgronje), C. Snouck, Islam, New Delhi, 1989.

peoples of the world, thinking alike and praying in the same direction, believing in the One Divinity and one final goal and sharing a common platform, be settled beside each other in peace.

To carry forward his mission of one world and the One God, the Prophetﷺ left behind thousands of enthusiastic and selfless devotees, trained and tested, who served as glittering examples of sacrifice, sobriety and sincerity. They acquitted themselves capably and honourably as God-fearing administrators, preachers, politicians and inspired *mujahidiin* (fighters in the cause of Allah). As warriors, they adhered strictly to the distinction between combatants and non-combatants, which the Prophet(SAW) had taught them. They protected crops and trees, children, women and the old, from every form of molestation - an extraordinary attitude of gentleness and humanity in times of war never known before, and very rarely since. They treated prisoners of war as human beings fourteen centuries in advance of the Geneva Convention.

The Prophet(SAW) even freed prisoners of war so that they could teach those Muslims who were illiterate. Such noble precedents were strictly and literally, followed by his companions as an integral part of their faith.

To get a feel of the impact of his mission, felt at almost all the frontiers of the known world in the first half century after the Prophet's (SAW) death, a unique accomplishment, we shall pick out a few examples from Makka, its outskirts and territories adjoining Arabia, where the vital seeds of Islam were first planted:

1. Negus, the King of Abyssinia, Jaiffar, the ruler of Oman and Ukaidir, the prince of Dumatul-Jandal, offered their allegiance to the Prophet (SAW).
2. The barbarians of Najd, the turbulent bedouins of Tehama and the mild-natured Yamanites were seen in happy and enchanted harmony, standing shoulder to shoulder in a single line of men in Prayer.

3. `Abdullah b. Salaam, the revered head of a synagogue, in the direct lineage of Prophet Yusuf (Joseph), Warqa b. Naufal, the Christian scholar of Scriptures, and `Uthmaan b. Talha, keeper of the key of the Ka`ba Sanctuary and high priest to the Sabeans, joyfully abandoned their seats of high privilege in their old faiths and joined the ranks in the **service of Islam**.
4. Salmaan the Persian, a slave of the Jews, who converted to Islam received this honourable mention: Salmaan, he is one of our family, from the Prophet, his spiritual master.
5. Bilaal, an Abyssinian negro-slave of the non-Muslims, when converted to Islam, was exalted and addressed as Sayyidina (our master) by Caliph `Umar, the great.
6. `Amr b. al-`Aas, while an idolater, had been deputed by the Quraish to persuade the Emperor Negus to have the first caravan of Muslim refugees extradited on the concocted plea of sedition. He failed in his mission utterly. A few years later, he came into the fold of Islam and was deputed as an envoy of the Prophet to offer Islam to the King of Oman. The diplomat turned missionary now applied skills of persuasion and his rhetoric to better purpose. Thousands accepted Islam to the delight of the Prophet and his companions.
7. Khaalid b. Waliid, the commander of the cavalry of the Quraish, was outstanding for his skills and strategies as a military officer. He, too, surrendered to the charms of Islam and made amends for his past career by demolishing the temples of Laatt and `Uzza. The bewildering conquests of Islam that followed in the golden era of the Prophet and the Caliphate, established him as a legendary general. He never lost any battle in his star-studded career, not even when he was arrayed against the forces of Islam in the battle of Uhud. Besides being a born leader and an adroit general, he had a

refined taste for literature and poetry¹ and exhibited a sophisticated lifestyle in the best traditions of Arabian culture. The Prophet had foreseen his talents and awarded him the title of *Saif-Allah* (Sword of God) after the miraculous victory in the battle of Mu`ta.

8. `Urwa b. Mas`ud, an envoy of the Quraish successfully negotiated a truce with the Muslims at Hudaibiya and thereby resisted the entry of the Muslims to Makka as pilgrims (a right of the pilgrims never forfeited before). Later, of his own accord, he raced to Madina and embraced Islam. His enthusiasm drove him back to Makka to preach Islam among his stiff-necked people and he gave his life in the cause.
9. Suhail b. `Amr concluded the truce of Hudaibiya on behalf of the Quraish. It was he who had refused to accept the wording Muhammad 'the Prophet' and had it revised to 'Muhammad b. `Abdullah'. He embraced Islam and accepted the Prophet Muhammad (SAW) as his most beloved Master. He was an orator and after the death of the Prophet delivered stirring speeches on the eternal truth of Islam and thus revived faith and hope amongst the downcast audience.
10. `Umar the great, who had set out from his house twelve years earlier with a naked sword to strike off the head of the Prophet, was again seen at the death of the Prophet with a naked sword warning, "Anyone who says the Prophet is dead, shall have his head cut off his shoulders."
11. Wahshi, who bore the stigma of having killed Hamza (the Prophet's uncle) in the battle of Uhud and then minced his liver and dishonoured his dead body, repented for that

1 Impressed by the verses of a poet, Khaalid gave him 50,000 dirhams. `Umar the Caliph wrote to Khaalid, "If it was your money, you have over spent it. If it was God's money, you are answerable for it." Accountability remained the first consideration with the Caliphs. Ed.

ignoble deed which had so aggrieved the Prophet. When he accepted Islam, he kept his face veiled out of shame till he had made amends and killed Musailima, the pretender and arch-liar.

12. Abu Sufyaan b. al-Haarith b. `Abdul Muttalib, used to compose satire ridiculing the Prophet. He, too, was drawn by the magnetic force of Islam and was the one who held the stirrups of the steed of his cousin, the Prophet, in the battle of Hunain when an over-confident band of young Muslim converts behaved as undisciplined fire-brands.
13. Another Abu Sufyaan, the son of Harb, had marshalled the Makkan armies to fight the Prophet for seven continuous years. He was the man who kept alive the fury and hatred among the infidel Arabs for the holy Prophet and the Muslims. Yet, even he was attracted by the charm and grace of Islam. Later, he was appointed Governor of the Christian province of Najraan on account of his undeniable leadership quality.
14. Tufail b. `Amr, poet and prince of al-Daus came to Makka for pilgrimage and on the advice of the Quraish, walked cautiously around the Ka`ba with his ears plugged with cotton, to keep out the voice of the Prophet Muhammad (SAW). For all that, the Prophet's voice did reach him and he sang in harmony with him thereafter, going from house to house carrying the message of Islam to every resident and passer-by.
15. `Abdu Yalail of Thaqif, who had the Prophet stoned at Ta`if, at last pursued his way to Madina and instead of stones, brought pearls of faith and hope for his people.
16. Buraida b. al-Husaib Aslami, who had pursued the Prophet in his Hijra (exodus), in the hope of obtaining a prize of a hundred red camels for capturing the Prophet, nevertheless, when he had tracked down the Prophet, yielded to him and indeed acted as his herald and standard-bearer to Madina.

Such instances are so numerous that they would make a volume in themselves.

These conversions were wrought by that holy teaching which, slowly and steadily, was winning over human heads and hearts. Most of the prophets had demonstrated miracles that suspended natural laws. But the great and recurrent miracle of the Prophet Muhammad (SAW) lay in the metamorphosis of the profane multitudes, transformed into devotees, governed by a moral code, disciplined in all walks of life and subservient to none but the One and the Only God. This miracle, living and functioning up to this day, is seen in the purification of souls and the chastening of hearts of practising Muslims.

Those who have said and done much against Islam are unable to explain the unfailing recurrence of this miracle despite the relative political weakness, economic dependence and general backwardness of most of the Muslim countries of the world. Furthermore, this living miracle is being exemplified among the highly educated of the West and the Far East. Islam now counts in its fold thousands of such converts in Europe, America and Japan, among them being doctors, engineers, scientists, philosophers, professors, historians, well-known musicians and sportsmen/women of international fame.

It surely makes the underlying message of the mission easier as the characteristics, qualities and achievements of the Prophet were so diverse and so comprehensive that any person may find in the Prophet's life a sublime example upon which to model himself, whatever the circumstances of his life or personality.

The Prophet was orphaned even before he breathed the air of this world, so that humility was, as it were, born in him.

His early years were spent in the free air of the desert, so that simplicity and straightforwardness were a part of his upbringing. During that childhood, he witnessed his people engaged in the internecine battle of al-Fijar. The necessity of a general peace and

a broad human sympathy was thus settled in his heart from very early on.

He did not marry until he was twenty-five. That period of bachelorhood was ennobled by the purest chastity and modesty. People who saw him in those days bore witness to his modesty and delicacy of temperament.

The Prophet chose trade as the means of obtaining his living. Those who have high aspirations, who can work steadily and perseveringly, who understand business and the demands it makes, can learn from him how to combine effort and ambition, and that no occupation is more honourable than trade.

He was perfect in manly beauty,¹ and born into the noblest family. Even so, he accepted the hand of a widow, aged forty years. It was his first marriage but he set a glorious example on the need of widows for a second marriage and, at the same time, disillusioned those who prefer to be slaves of youthful beauty. That a man can lead a perfectly contented married life even in the face of such disparity in ages, is borne out by the fact that the Prophet did not take a second wife during the twenty-five years lifetime of his first wife² and cherished her memory ever after.

His first wife was a wealthy woman, but he always worked independently of any financial aid from his people or his wife. He was contented with what he earned by himself. Thus, he set a fine example for those who take pleasure in self-help. The saintly man who left lasting impressions of his large-heartedness on the hardened, feud-crazy Arabs of his city, and made a place for love and respect in the core of their hearts, is an example for all that can overcome, indeed transform, selfishness and wickedness into virtue.

1 Muhammad (SAW) was distinguished by the beauty of his person, an outward gift which is seldom despised except by those to whom it has been refused. *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* - Gibbon - p-663.

2 i.e. for twenty six years.

The Prophet realised the blessings of social cooperation. He founded a Society '*Hilf-al-Fudul*' (the pact of grace). Its aims were to establish a peaceful order and protect the weak and the poor. He carved out a straight path for statesmen who sincerely aimed at the promotion of peace and prosperity in their countries. He taught them the democratic way of making the public partners in the administration.

The glorious traditions of all great prophets before him are manifestly visible in the precepts and preachings of the last of them.

People accused him of falsehood and rejected him as the Prophet. `Isa (Jesus) was also rejected by his people. During the whole of the first phase of his prophethood, the Prophet Muhammad (SAW) endured those false charges and humiliations with perfect poise and patience and thanked God for His favours in the midst of every trial.

Like the Prophet Yahya (John), he sounded the message of God in deserts as well as habitations.

Like the Prophet `Isa he revived the splendour and sanctity of the house of God. Like the Prophet Noah, he visited his benighted people in their houses, their assemblies, their fairs and public gatherings, and even on the road, the hills and the plains.

He disassociated himself, like the Prophet Ibrahiim, from his wayward kin and migrated to Yathrib (Madina), to find a more agreeable and chastened soil in which to plant the tree of Islam and like the Prophet Dawuud (David) he successfully walked through the blockade of his enemies on the night of Hija.

The Prophet Yunus (Jonah) had to live in a whale's belly before he could gather his harvest of the faithful. Parallel to that, the Prophet Muhammad (SAW) had to spend three days and nights in the cave of Thaur before he could travel on to Yathrib (Madina) to continue his mission.

The Prophet Musa (Moses) had delivered the children of Israel from the bondage of Pharaoh. Likewise, the Prophet Muhammad (SAW) secured freedom for his people from the dominating influence of the Empires of Rome, Persia and Abyssinia.

Like the Prophet Sulaimaan (Solomon), he built at Madina a mosque, later known as the Prophet's mosque, for the worship of God. That 'House' has since been radiating the glory of God. No evil-minded Nebuchadnezzar has ever been allowed to undermine its glory. Fully air-conditioned, this mosque accommodates more than 500,000 devotees at a time, a world record.¹

Like the Prophet Yusuf (Joseph), but on a broader scale, the Prophet Muhammad (SAW) provided grain for his recalcitrant brethren in Makka, long before his conquest of the city. Although the Makkans had always persecuted him and his followers, he conquered their hearts and overwhelmed their conceit, by his compassion and magnanimity. Standing in the reclaimed House of God, on the day of the conquest of Makka, he cheered them by reiterating words with which the Prophet Yusuf had cheered his brethren, "Let there be no reproach cast on you this day."

Moses liberated the Jews from the bondage of the Pharaoh. The Prophet Muhammad (SAW) did much more. He reclaimed Northern, Eastern and Southern Arabia from the domination of Constantinople, Iran and Abyssinia respectively. Besides he was a ruler like the Prophet Musa and at the same time the leader of all ceremonies of worship,² like the Prophet Harun.

1 A magnificent and monumental landmark by which the Khadam-ul-Harmain (servant of the sacred houses), has justified his title.

2 Bosworth Smith remarks: Head of the State as well as the Church, he was Caesar and Pope in one; but, he was Pope without the Pope's pretensions, and Caesar without the legions of Caesar, without a standing army, without a bodyguard, without a police force, without a fixed revenue. If ever a man had the right to say that he ruled by a right divine, it was Muhammad, for

In him were combined and harmonised the zeal and ardour of the Prophet Nuh, the tenderness of the Prophet Ibrahiim, and the forgivingness of the Prophet Dawuud, the endurance of the Prophet Yaqub, the prestige and wisdom of the Prophet Sulaimaan, the meekness of the Prophet `Isa and the contentment of the Prophet Ismaa`il. In fact, the salient characteristics of all earlier Prophets were assembled and exhibited in his comprehensive personality, for by the decree of God, he was to be the last of the Prophets and stood for all of them collectively.¹ It is for that reason, the Qur'aan itself confers on him the sublime title 'Mercy for all the worlds'. (*Rahma-tul-lil-`Aalamiin*) - 21:10

I know I cannot do justice to that heavenly light in its proper fullness and glory, but I am duty-bound to do the best I can. God forgive me for my shortcomings and mistakes. However if, in His Mercy, He accepts my labour, may the reward thereof be credited to my dear father Haji Qazi Ahmad Shah (died 1328 A.H.).

he had all the powers without their supports. He cared not for the dressings of power. The simplicity of his private life was in keeping with his public life. Reverend Bosworth Smith, Muhammad and Muhammadanism - p-95.

- 1 "Allah surely has shown great favour on believers in raising a messenger from among them", "a minaret of light", "whose beautiful pattern of conduct is unparalleled", and "Allah will perpetuate the exaltation of his name for all times," "and who has been described in the Torah and the Gospels as the Unlettered Prophet", "and the last of the messengers deputed for the guidance of the whole universe"- "an irrefutable Proof (*Burhan*) of manifest truthfulness from the Lord"- "a Light overwhelming all other lights"- "a Light which pulled out the Believers from the depth of darkness and directed them towards the straight path." "Allah endowed him with an exalted standard of character."* Ed.

* (Qur'aan) (3:164); (33:46); (33:21); (94:4); (7:157); (4:174); (65:11); (68:4).

Rahma-tul-lil-`Aalamiin

Qazi Muhammad Sulaiman Salman Mansurpuri
Session Judge, Patiala

- First Urdu Edition, 1912.
- Arabic Translation Published by Dar-us-Salfia, Bombay, 1989.
- English Translation 2002, Lahore.
- And yet another Arabic Translation f. Cairo, Egypt 1998.

PART - I

(PRINCIPAL EVENTS)

- 1. BIRTH AND EARLY LIFE OF MUHAMMAD (SAW)**
- 2. MISSIONARY ACTIVITIES**
- 3. MIGRATION OF THE MUSLIMS TO ABYSSINIA**
- 4. ASCENSION (MI`RAAJ)**
- 5. FLIGHT OF THE PROPHET (HIJRA)**
- 6. THIRTEEN YEARS OF MISSION IN MAKKA**

1. BIRTH AND EARLY LIFE OF MUHAMMAD (SAW)

It was the season of spring¹ and early dawn² on Monday³ the 9th of the first Rabi` in the first year of the Fiil⁴ (Elephant), corresponding to the 22nd of April 571 A.D, and to the first of the month of Jeth 628 of Bikram by Indian reckoning, when the Prophet Muhammad (SAW) was born at Makka. He was the only son of `Abdullah b. `Abdul Muttalib b. Haashim b. `Abdu Manaaf (II - G - p-59), and the lady Aamina, daughter of Wahb, chief of the B. Zahra clan. His grandfather fondly named him 'Muhammad'⁵ while his mother, on the direction of an angel in a vision, gave him the name 'Ahmad' (SAW).⁶

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- 1 The Prophets Yahya and Dawuud were also born in spring.
 - 2 By the sun-dial it was 4:20 a.m. (Makka time).
 - 3 Monday had great significance in the Prophet's life. His birth, advent of prophethood, arrival at Quba (adjacent to Madina) and his death, all occurred on Monday. This enables us to scrutinise dates in various history books.
 - 4 i.e. fifty-five days after Abraha's (of Yaman) abortive attack on Makka.
 - 5 The word 'Muhammad' is derived from 'hamd' (praise) as its root. Muhammad signifies abundance of praise both in quality and quantity. The name 'Ahmad' denotes the attribute and magnitude of praise. Hassaan b. Thaabit poet laureate and one of the Prophet's companions said in a verse, "In order to testify to his glory, God has derived his name from His own. Behold, the Glorious is Mahmud (all praise) and His Prophet is Muhammad (the praised one)." It should be noted that the Prophet has a peculiar relation to 'hamd' (praise). He is known both as Muhammad and as Ahmad. And the exalted place, wherefrom he will intercede for his followers and for all the creatures from Adam to the last child is named as 'Maqam-i-Mahmud' (the Praise-Worthy station). His followers are called 'Hammadun' (those who praise God most), and the name of his flag is 'Liva-al-Hamd' (the Flag of Praise).
 - 6 A holy tradition says, "My name on the earth is Muhammad, but in the heavens, I am Ahmad." The noble and inspired Aamina saw an angelic vision and was given the name Ahmad for her child in the same way as Haajira named her son Ismaa'il, "...and the angel of the Lord said unto her,

The child, both on his father's and mother's side, was descended from the grand Patriarch Ibrahiim (Abraham,¹ father of nations), in the lineage of his eldest son Ismaa'il, and the lady Haajira (Hagar of the Old Testament), daughter of Riqiyun, Pharaoh of Egypt. Haajira's status with God was so esteemed that angels would appear before her with Divine commands. The Prophet Ibrahiim settled her and Ismaa'il in a valley where Makka now stands. For the infant, a spring of water (the historic well of Zamzam) gushed forth from the earth which miraculously flows unabated to this day and is now a part of the precincts of the Ka'ba.

God endowed Ismaa'il with twelve sons, of whom Qaidhar (Kedar) is the best known. The Old testament makes frequent mention of him. Among the children of Qaidhar was `Adnaan and of `Adnaan was Qusayy, who four generations up, was the forefather of Muhammad (SAW). The lady Aamina's lineage is traceable to Fihr, alias Quraish (meaning whale). She was head of the B. Zahra tribe. Thus, both on his father's as well as mother's side, the Prophet was descended from the most noble of Arab families.²

As soon as the news of a son by the widow of his best beloved son `Abdullah,³ who had died when only twenty five, was brought to `Abdul Muttalib, he hastened to his daughter-in-law and carried the new born to the Ka'ba to invoke God's blessings

behold, thou art with child, and shalt bear a son, and shalt call his name Ishmael; because the Lord hath heard thy affliction" (Genesis 16:11). Maryam (Mary) named her child 'Isa (Jesus) "...and, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name Jesus." (Luke 1:31)

- 1 The earlier name of Abraham was Abram. God named him Abraham, meaning father of nations (Gen. 17:5). The tribes of B. Ismaa'il, B. Israel, B. Esau and B. Ketura, all belong to his line.
- 2 II - G - p-68. Isaiah 9:6 records, "For unto us a child is born and the government shall be on its shoulders."
- 3 "His best beloved 'Abdullah was the most beautiful and modest of the Arabian youths." Gibbon - p.662.

on him. On the seventh day after the traditional sacrifices, he held a feast for the Quraish to celebrate the event. "What name has been chosen for the baby?" the guests asked. "Muhammad", he replied. "But this is not one of the traditional Arab names", they said in surprise. "Yes, I wish that my boy should measure up to all the praise and laudation that the world can shower on him," replied the boy's grandfather¹.

It was the custom of the noble families of Makka to give their infants, when eight days old, for nursing to women of the open desert, in order that the child might grow up in healthy surroundings. Accordingly, the infant Muhammad (SAW) was handed over to Haliima of the clan of Sa`dia.² She would visit Makka every six months with the baby to cheer his mother and other relatives. The weaning took place when he was two years old, but seeing that her son was doing well, lady Aamina allowed Haliima to retain him for another year or two. When he was four, she decided to keep him at home, but her mother's love was destined for him for no more than two years and some months, after which she passed away. `Abdul Muttalib, his grandfather, assumed responsibility of bringing up the lad but he too, breathed his last when the boy was eight years and ten days old. (II - G - p-73)

Abu Taalib, the orphan's uncle (full brother of the orphan's late father), now took charge of the boy. It is mentioned in some chronicles that when the Prophet-to-be was twelve, he travelled to Syria with his uncle. On the way, in Busra, the Christian monk Bahira recognised him as the promised Prophet the civilised world was expecting at that time. Bahira advised Abu Taalib not to take the boy to the land of the Jews, lest, recognising him, they should do him some harm. Thereupon the affectionate uncle sent him back home.

1 *Fatuhul-Buldan* - Abul Fida p-110

2 II - G - p-170.

On this narrative, Tirmidhi, the well-known traditionalist, states that Abu Taalib had sent Bilaal to accompany him, but Ibn Qiyyim holds that this is absurd, for, at that time, Bilaal was neither with Abu Taalib nor with Abu Bakr and, quite possibly, was not even settled at Makka. Zad - Ibn Qiyyim, p-76.

The Qur'aanic verse, *"Before the advent of the Prophet, the Jews used to look forward to victory by his means, but when he came and they recognised him as the awaited Prophet, they denied him,"*¹ tells us that at that time the Jews were awaiting the promised Prophet and believed that on his coming they would be victorious over the disbelievers. This was their faith until the Prophet announced himself. This verse also proves that Bahira's apprehension was ill-founded. Had the Jews recognised him as the Prophet-to-be while he was yet a child, they would certainly have looked upon him as one who would lead them to victory and would have done their utmost to serve and please him. The entire narrative, we conclude, is a legend.

When the Prophet-to-be stepped into adulthood, he thought of going into business, but he had no capital. There was in Makka a wealthy lady by the name of Khadija Tahira, who used to invest her money in trade. When she heard of Muhammad's (SAW) great virtues, and after ascertaining his competence, integrity and truthfulness, she approached him for looking after her trade interests. He accepted the offer and executed her business with great diligence and success. On this trade mission, he was accompanied by the noble lady's servant Maisara, who had ample occasions to observe his conduct. When they returned, Maisara reported his observations in such laudatory words that she offered

1 (Qur'aan 2:89). The Christian priests aver that the message the Prophet gave, was actually instilled in his mind by the Christian monk Bahira. If this is true then the Prophet's message includes repudiation of the Trinity, the Crucifixion of Jesus, the infallibility of the Pope and monasticism. Will the Christians accept these instructions of their monk Bahira?

her hand to him in marriage. After consulting his uncles¹ and other elders of his clan, he accepted the offer.

The Prophet at that time was twenty-five years old, while the noble Khadija was forty. The marriage proved to be a most contented one. The venerable Khadija bore him three sons and four daughters (The Spirit of Islam - Amir `Ali, p-12 - 1985 ed., Lahore). She bore with cheer all the sufferings of early Islam and when she died after twenty-five years as his wife, the Prophet felt the utmost sadness and loneliness. His affection and regard for her never faded. Throughout his life, he would talk of her with devotion and even treat her lady friends with particular respect.

After this marriage, Muhammad (SAW) devoted most of his time to reflection, worship of the one true God and the betterment of his fellow beings.

At about the same time, he drew the attention of the chiefs of the main clans and tribes to the deplorable conditions of law and order in the country. There was no security of life, the highways were infested with robbers, and the weak and the poor were at the mercy of the strong and the wealthy. A conference was held in which the tribes of Haashim, Muttalib, Asad, Zahra and Tamiim participated. It was resolved that a society be formed, the aims and objectives of which would be to:

1. Establish peace and security in the country;
2. Provide means of protection for travellers;
3. Help the poor and downtrodden.

This society did much to protect life and property. During the days of his prophetic mission, the Prophet used to say, "Even today if some one invoked help in the name of that society, I

1 Hamza, uncle of Muhammad (SAW) asked for Khadija's hand for his nephew. Twenty she-camels were given as a dowry. II - G - p-711.

would be the first to do it.” The order of knighthood in Britain had the same objective but it was formed centuries later.

His philanthropic deeds had already won for him a place in the hearts of the people. All alike revered him. They did not address him by name but as ‘as-Saadiq’ ‘al-Amiin’, the truthful, the trustworthy.¹

He was 35 years of age when an incidental test of his intelligence and qualities of leadership was carried out by his fellow Makkans. The Quraish had to rebuild the Sanctuary of the Ka`ba, whose walls had cracked due to heavy rains leading to floods.² All the tribes had equal share and say in the process of reconstruction. Thus, it was that when the ‘Black Stone’ had to be replaced in its specific position, the question arose as to who should have that honour. For four days, the problem remained unresolved. At last Abu Ummaiya b. al-Mughira, a respectable old man, suggested the choosing of an arbiter. This suggestion was accepted and it was agreed that who ever entered the Ka`ba first the next morning, would be the arbitrator. As God willed, the Prophet was that person. When they saw him, they were delighted and exclaimed with one voice, “Here comes the truthful, the trustworthy. We shall abide by his judgement.” (II - G - p-86, 1990 ed., Oxford University Press, Karachi).

1 Revelation - St. John V.20:11, “And I saw heaven open and beheld a white horse and that sat upon him was called Faithful and True and in righteousness he doth judge and make war.”

2 Renovations were made by the tribes of Jurhum, Qusayy, Imaalqa and the Quraish. The repairs were necessitated by floods, never as a result of destruction by invaders, for such a calamity never occurred in the 5000 years of its history; a blessing that is unique in the annals of historical places of worship. The temple of Solomon at Jerusalem for instance, was subjected to repeated destructions.

FIXING OF THE BLACK STONE

They presented their dilemma before him and it may well be that he surprised them by the promptness and simplicity of what he did. Spreading his mantle on the ground, he placed the stone in its centre and asked the four tribal chiefs each to hold the mantle by one of the corners and thus carry it to the spot where the black stone was to be fixed, the place where it had been laid five thousand years ago, by the grand Patriarch Abraham. Muhammad (SAW) then lifted the stone and fixed it in its position. This stone also marks the starting point of the circumambulations - *Tawaaf* of the Ka`ba, which pilgrims have to make as an essential part of the Hajj ceremonies. The Prophet-to-be thus averted a situation that could easily have led to another long-lasting feud. In those days, the tribes drew swords on the slightest of pretexts, such as the horse of one tribe running ahead of that of another, or the cattle of one drinking at a common water-shed before that of another, or, if in a public contest, a poet attributed particular excellence to a tribe other than their own.

PRELUDE TO THE PROPHETHOOD

Some seven years before Muhammad (SAW) announced his prophethood, there would appear to him a strange, bright light,¹ gladdening to behold.²

In the dazzle of this light, there was no shape or sound, and the Prophet-to-be rejoiced and wondered what its cause might be. The nearer the time of the enunciation came, the more solitude he sought. He would often retire to a cave³ in the Hira hills, taking with him only some ground oats and water. Here he would meditate, reflecting and glorifying⁴ God. He would prolong his

1 Sahihain from Ibn `Abbaas (chapter prophethood).

2 Safar-us-Sa`dat (Afzal Printing Press, Calcutta, 1252 H) p-31.

3 This 12 x 5¼ feet cave has become known as the Hill of Light (Jabal-al-Nuur).

4 Safar-us-Sa`dat, p-31.

stay there until his simple provisions were consumed.¹ It was at this stage that he began to have dreams in which whatever he saw by night would also occur the next day.²

BEGINNING OF THE PROPHETHOOD

After forty years and one day³ of his life on earth (by lunar reckoning) and on Monday⁴ the 9th of the first Rabi` (12th Feb., 610) AD, while he was in the cave, the Archangel Gabriel appeared before him and announced, “Muhammad, acknowledge the good news - you are the messenger of God and I am Jibril.”⁵ Immediately afterwards, the Prophet hurried back home, and lying down on the bed, asked his wife to throw a covering sheet over him. When calm returned to him, he said, “What I am told, makes me afraid for my life.”⁶ “What can you be afraid of?” Sayyida Khadija said, comforting⁷ him: “You are kind to the near of kins, you are truthful of speech, you help the widows and orphans and the oppressed, you are sympathetic to the miserable, and you are hospitable. God will never let any harm come to you.”⁸ For the greater satisfaction of her heart, Sayyida Khadija asked him to accompany her to the house of her aged cousin, Warqa b. Naufal, a knowledgeable Christian.⁹

1 Sahian f. `A`aisha.

2 `A`aisha – Mishkat – p-513.

3 Bukhaari from Ibn Abbass (chapter prophethood). Moses was also 40 years old when he received his prophethood. (See Acts – New Testament).

4 All historians agree that the birth took place on Monday, but Monday falls only on 9th Rabi. Therefore, the 8th, 10th and 12th Rabi quoted by other historians as possible dates have been found arithmetically wrong.

5 Safar-us-Sa`dat, p-35.

6 The Prophet meant the colossal difficulties that lay ahead of a prophet (Safar-us-Sa`dat, p-35).

7 Mishkat - p-146, and Sahihain from `A`aisha.

8 Sahihain from `A`aisha and Mishkat – p-514.

9 Bukhaari - 1:3 and ‘A Short History of the Arabs’, p-13 by Prof. L.A.Sedillot.

We have already stated in the Prologue that Christianity had made its way into Arabia through the efforts of Negus and Caesar. There were men in Arabia who had given up the ways of the idolaters and taken to the teaching of Judaism and Christianity, and knew many of the events which were to come to pass. Their knowledge of the Divine Books enabled them to tell their people that the promised Prophet was about to appear and that he would overpower Satan. Among these knowledgeable persons, `Uthmaan b. Haarith, `Ubaid, Zaid b. `Amr and Warqa b. Naufal were well-known. Zaid b. `Amr was uncle to `Umar b. Khattaab. He had travelled far and wide in search of the promised Prophet but he was told that the Promised One would appear from Makka. Thus he waited and watched, but death claimed him before that. The noble Khadija asked her husband to tell Warqa all that he had heard and seen. The Prophet spoke of Jibril and his message. Presently, the old blind man spoke, "He is the same holy Spirit, who appeared to the Prophet Moses. I wish that I were in my youth today! Alas! I could then live to the day when your people will expel you." The Prophet asked him, "Will my people turn me out?" He replied, "Yes, so shall it be. Every man, who has offered such a teaching has been opposed and ostracised. I wish I could live until the day of your migration and be of some service to you!"¹

On the 18th of Ramzaan, 1 A.H. the angel Jibril reappeared to the Prophet and made the unlettered Prophet recite the following words of God:

*In the name of Allah the Most Merciful and Compassionate.
Recite by the name of thy Lord Who created,
Created man of a blood-clot.
Recite: and thy Lord is the Most Bounteous,
He teaches by the pen*

1 Sahihain from `A`aisha Mishkat - p-514.

Rahma-tul-lil-`Aalamiin

Taught man that which he knew not. (Qur'aan 96:1-5)¹

'*Ruh-al-Amiin*' the noble Jibril then took the Prophet to the mountain and made ablutions for him to see. Then, the Prophet did the same as he had seen. After that the noble Jibril led him in prayers.

1 "And the book is given to him that is not learned saying, Read this, I pray thee: and he saith, I am not learned" (Isaiah 29:12). That the holy words of the Qur'aan are literally the words of Allah are foretold in Deuteronomy - 18:18. I will raise them up a prophet from among their brethren, (i.e. the Arabs) like unto thee (Moses), and will put my words in his mouth; and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him.

2. MISSIONARY ACTIVITIES

The Prophet began his mission from his house. Khadija tul-Kubra, his wife, `Ali, his cousin (8 years of age), Abu Bakr, his friend, and Zaid b. Haaritha, his personal attendant, were the first converts of his mission. They accepted his message and embraced Islam immediately on hearing him.¹

Bilaal, `Amr b. `Anbasa and Khaalid b. Sa`id b. `Aas also accepted Islam a few days later.

Abu Bakr was a man of high character, one of the chief magistrates of the Arabs, and a wealthy merchant by calling. He had a wide circle of influence among the people of Makka. Through his teaching, `Uthmaan b. `Affaan, Zubair b. al-`Awwaam, `Abdul Rahmaan b. `Awf, Talha b. `Ubaidullah and Sa`d b. Abu Waqqaas accepted Islam. Then followed Abu `Ubaida b. al-Jarrah, later titled Amiin-al-Ummah (the Trustworthy of the Community), `Abdul Asad b. Bilaal, `Uthmaan b. Maz`un, `Aamir b. Fuhaira Azdi, Abu Hudhaifa b. `Utba, Saa`ib b. `Uthmaan b. Maz`un and al-Arqam.

Among women, the Prophet's aunt (wife of his uncle `Abbaas) Umm-al-Fadl, Asma`a d. `Umays, Asma`a d. Abu Bakr, and Faatima, the sister of `Umar the Great, followed the noble Khadija in the path of Islam.

In those days Muslims used to offer their prayers in a valley of the mountain. The Prophet in the first three years of his mission taught men in private.

Soon afterwards the Almighty Lord sent forth His further Commandments:

*O thou, wrapped up in a mantle; Arise and warn;
Thy Lord magnify; thy raiment purify;
Shun pollution;
And bestow not favours, expecting return;*

1 II - G - p-114-116.

And for thy Lord's cause be patient. (74:1-7)

These verses indicate the object of the Prophet's mission:

1. To warn people and purify them.
2. To impart and interpret to man the Greatness of God.
3. To teach people purity of action - in body as well as in soul - and the grace of moral beauty.
4. To teach them free of charge or obligation, and expect no good in return.
5. To bear patiently and gracefully all trials and tribulations that he may face in the course of his Divine mission.

His mission gained in strength by degrees, and its progress can be distinguished in five stages.

1. He invited his kindred and close friends;
2. The inhabitants of Makka and the Quraish;
3. The Arabs in the suburbs and outlying tribes;
4. The people all over Arabia;
5. All civilised nations and heads of established religions of the world.¹

We must bear in mind that England, France, India, China, Egypt and Iran were in the grip of fetishism, idolatry, savagery, Mazdaism, pornography and sectarianism resulting in murder and chaos. The conditions in Arabia were, perhaps, worse still. As such, the All-Wise Creator chose Arabia, being the centre of the world, as the starting point for the reformation of the whole world, and the Prophet set about his mission with guidelines from the Qur'aan, "*And warn thy tribe of near kindred and warn thy nearest relations.*" (26:214). He invited his kindred to a supper.

1 "And I saw another angel flying in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel (the Qur'aan) to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred and tongue and people." (Rev. - 14:6) The Prophet did exactly likewise.

They were all Haashimites¹ - 40 to 50 in all. That meeting was concluded in distaste as Abu Lahab (uncle of the Prophet) indulged in such vagrant yammering that the Prophet could not have his say. The following day the Prophet invited them to a dinner and thereafter addressed the gathering: "All of you hear and behold, I have come to you with all the good and gains of this world and the Hereafter. And I do not know, if any other man in the whole of Arabia may have brought a message so attractive and glittering and precious. Say, who will outpace others to have it?"

All heard him, but held their tongues. `Ali (aged 8 years) stood up and declared,

"O Prophet of God, I am here to obey you."

The Prophet addressed Abu Taalib, "Will you please listen to `Ali in confidence." The gathering burst into laughter and they began to make jokes at the expense of Abu Taalib, "Behold, Muhammad desires thee to obey the behests of your son."²

THE SERMON FROM THE MOUNT OF SAFA

One day the Prophet climbed up the hill of Safa, close to the Ka`ba, and began to call aloud the people of Makka by the names of their tribes. A multitude assembled at the foot of the hill. He enquired of them, "Tell me, what do you think of me. Am I a liar or truthful and trustworthy?" All with one voice attested to his integrity.³

1 The tribe of the Prophet, known after the philanthropist Haashim.

2 Fatuhul-Buldan - Abul Fida, Vol-III, p-24.

3 Revelation 19:11 "And I saw heaven opened, and beheld a white horse; and he that sat upon it was called faithful and true, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war." (19:12) His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns; and he had a name written that no man knew, but he himself.

The Prophet continued, "Behold, I am standing on the top of this hill and you are at its bottom. I am looking all around. Well, if I were to warn you of an armed band of robbers whom I sighted at a distance, coming over to ravage Makka, tell me, would you believe my word?" The people replied, "Indeed, we would!"

That was but a parable to make them understand his point. Then he warned, "The hour of death is fast approaching and you all shall be returned to Allah, your Creator. I am looking at the shape of things in the Hereafter, just as you see objects of this world."

In this way, He tried to make them understand the nature of his prophetic role, to make them realise that as God willed, he could penetrate and peer into the unseen shape of things. Without a word of appreciation, however, the assembly dispersed in disgust.

SECOND PHASE OF THE MISSION

The Prophet began to visit individuals in their homes or he would join them in their fairs.¹ He would approach, confront them in the street and by-lanes. He would delineate to them the soul-destroying evil of worshipping idols, stones and trees. He condemned their evil parties, dissuaded them from slaying or burying their daughters alive, from fornication, and from gambling. He would ask them to keep their dress clean, their tongues immune from falsehood, vulgarity and vilification. He desired them to honour their word and keep their pledges, and not cheat when making a bargain. Above all, he guided them to understand that God is Absolute and One, Self-subsisting, Eternal, Sublime and All-powerful. He urged them to realise that the sun, the moon, the earth and the firmament were all His creations, worshipping Him, and created for the service of the Universe and

1 The national fairs of `Ukaz, Yua`inna and Zil Majaaz attracted thousands from long distances. The Prophet would not miss such gatherings.

its dwellers. He taught them to turn to God for help and guidance. He, the One God, gave them health, heard their prayers and blessed their good deeds. Every cause and effect flowed from His will. Neither the angels nor the Prophets could go against His commands.

To the deaf ears of the proud and perverted Quraish, the Prophet's call had no meaning.

1. They failed to appreciate or value the notion of prophethood. They would not accept that a mortal like themselves should be elevated to the rank of a Prophet to teach and guide them in the God's ways.
2. Besides this, they did not believe in the Hereafter or the consequences of good or bad deeds.
3. They jealously guarded their lineages and bragged of the nobility of their forefathers. They regarded it a humiliation to accept the fraternity and equality of men, so vigorously maintained in Islam.
4. There were among them many tribes opposed to the Haashimites, and they felt a sense of humiliation in accepting the guidance of a member of the opponent clan.
5. Most of them were illiterate and given to promiscuity, drinking, gambling, breaches of faith, and general irresponsible behaviour. Islam appeared to them a direct challenge and a growing menace to their way of life.

The Quraish, therefore, in order to extinguish all traces of Islam, obtained the support of other Makkan tribes and decided to pursue and persecute everyone who dared accept Islam.

A few examples are quoted:

1. Bilaal was a negro slave of Ummaiya b. Khalaf. His master coiled a rope around his neck and dragged him over hills and sands, while the rope cut into his flesh. He was stretched out

on the hot sands under the sun and a heated stone was placed on his chest. He was repeatedly beaten with sticks and left in the blazing sun without food. But Bilaal¹ would still chant aloud “al-Ahad, al-Ahad” (One God, the One God). Moved by his heart-rending plight, Abu Bakr purchased him from Ummaiya b. Khalaf and freed him in the way of God.

2. `Ammaar,² his mother Summaiya, and his father Yaasir, had already accepted Islam. Abu Jahl subjected them to varied forms of persecution and torture. One day the Prophet saw them being beaten and oppressed. He consoled them, saying, “You of the Yaasir, endure all; because your abode is Paradise.” The damned Abu Jahl struck a spear in Summaiya’s womb and so murdered her in the vilest manner.³
3. Aflah, known as Abu Fakiha was tied up by the foot and dragged over stony ground.⁴
4. Khabbaab b. Aratt⁵ was pulled by the long hair of his head, choked by having rings placed around his neck, forced to sit on hot slabs and made to lie on hot coals.
5. Bua`ina, Zanira, Naadia, Umm-e-`Ubais were slave-girls and their stone-hearted masters subjected them to inhuman atrocities.
6. Even the close relatives of the persecutors were not spared. `Uthmaan b. `Affaan, later to be the third Caliph, was rolled up in palm leaves and smoked above a fire by his uncle.⁶

1 Bilaal died in 20 A.H. in Damascus at the age of 63.

2 Martyred in the battle of Siffin at the age of 91-92.

3 Mada rij-al-Nabuwat (2:50) - 1281 A.H.

4 A`ijaaz-ul-Tanzil - p-53.

5 Died at Madina at the age of 63 years.

6 Zad. (1:297)

7. Musa`b b. `Umair,¹ an aristocrat by birth, was driven out of his house by his mother.
8. Other companions of the holy Prophet were rolled in the warm skins of freshly slaughtered animals and then left out in the blazing sun. Others were dressed in coats of arms and then laid on hot, burning stones. Their unflinching faith in their cause enabled them to survive unlike earlier communities who played false with their Prophets for a mere reward of a few coins.

THE PROPHET HARASSED

More often than not, the Quraish would spread thorns in the Prophet's way on dark nights. They would throw filth and offal at his door. However, the Prophet responded to these provocations by remarking, "You sons of `Abdu Manaaf (a common ancestor), you seem to be good neighbours."²

Ibn `Amr b. al-`Aas related what he saw with his own eyes. The Prophet was one day offering prayers in the Ka`ba. `Uqba b. Abi Mua`it came there, rolled his mantle into a rope and coiled it around the Prophet's neck, choking his breath. Yet the Prophet remained unmoved and did not change the posture of his prayer. Suddenly, Abu Bakr came over, pulled `Uqba away³ and recited the Qur'aanic verse, "*Would you kill a man because he says: My Lord is Allah, and has brought you clear proofs?*" (40:28)

Some of `Uqba's associates surrounded Abu Bakr and beat him severely.

1 Martyred in the battle of Uhud.

2 Tabari. (2:229)

3 Bukhaari - chapter al-Manaqib. (4:240)

On another occasion, when the Prophet was praying in the Ka`ba, Abu Jahl said to a group of the Quraish sitting in the yard, "A camel has been slaughtered in the city. Someone should go and fetch its entrails and throw them on that man." Again `Uqba arose and came back with the offal and stretched it on the head of the Prophet, while he was in prostration. The Prophet continued his prayer, while the Quraish scoffed in laughter and embraced each other in their glee.

`Abdullah b. Mas`ud, a companion of the Prophet, saw this incident but was helpless among the menacing crowd. However, Sayyida Faatima, the Prophet's youngest daughter, who happened to come by, removed the offal from her father and condemned those who were guilty of that action.¹

The Quraish now began to feel that their individual and isolated acts of harassment had failed in their purpose. They put their heads together to carry forward a more organised plan of action to crush the Prophet's mission.

A committee of twenty-five Makkan Chiefs was formed and Abu Lahab chosen as its leader. The strategy was to win over those who came to pay homage to the Ka`ba, so that they might not be impressed by the Prophet's sweet words or moved by his teaching.

One member said, "We shall report him to be a soothsayer." Waliid b. Mughira, who was a shrewd old man, observed, "I have seen many soothsayers; but there is a world of difference between Muhammad's graceful speech and a soothsayer's verbosity."

Another suggested, "We will proclaim him a madman." Again Waliid remarked, "Muhammad has nothing of madness in him." Another said, "Well, we will say he is only a poet." Waliid replied, "We know very well the qualities of verse. Muhammad's speech has no resemblance to a poet's composition."

1 Bukhaari (al-Jihad wal-Siar). (3:234)

Yet another man proposed that they should report him to be a magician. Once more Waliid interposed, "Muhammad leads a life of such cleanliness, purity and grace that he could never be confused with a dealer in the black art."

Now all entreated the old man, "Uncle, tell us then, what shall we say of him?" Waliid said, "The fact is that there is an amazing sweetness in Muhammad's speech. It rains strange, sweet drops. If we are to say something of him, we can only say that his speech causes separation between father and son, brother and sister, husband and wife.¹ He should, therefore, be avoided." The committee dissolved after passing the following resolution:

Muhammad (SAW) must be avoided in every possible way. He should be laughed at when he speaks. His followers should be subjected to all kinds of oppression.

1 Ibn Hisham. (1:288)

3. MIGRATION OF THE MUSLIMS TO ABYSSINIA

When harassment and persecution of his followers exceeded the limit of human endurance, the Prophet permitted all those who could afford it, to migrate to Abyssinia. A small party of twelve men and four women sailed to Abyssinia from the port of Shua`ibiyya.¹ The leader of this small party was `Uthmaan b. `Affaan. His wife Ruqayya, daughter of the Prophet, accompanied him. The Prophet observed, "After the Prophets Ibrahiim and Lut this is the first pair to migrate in the way of Allah."¹

PURSUIT OF MUSLIM EMIGRANTS

Then followed a larger caravan consisting of eighty-three men and eighteen women.² Ja`far Tayyaar, the Prophet's cousin, was among this party. The Quraish pursued them up to the coast but the caravan had sailed by that time. The non-Muslims of Makka called upon the King with presents and applied for the extradition of the Muslims, who had deserted their country. The royal court summoned the Muslims where the Prophet's cousin, Ja`far b. Abu Taalib delivered the following address:

"O King, we were deep in ignorance, worshipped idols, committed abominations, ate carrion, talked obscenely and aimlessly. There was left in us nothing of human values. We lacked sincere hospitality. We showed no charity to neighbours or women. There was no law or rule of conduct for us. In that miserable plight, the Merciful God appointed the noblest among us as our guide, saviour and mentor. We knew full well his noble lineage. We had fully tested his credibility, his integrity, his moral excellence and piety. He invited us to the Unity of God. He made us understand that none shared His Divinity. He released us from

1 Zad. (1:97)

2 II - G - p-146-47.

the chains of idolatry. He taught us to speak only the truth, to keep our pledges, to keep away from soul-destroying sins, to avoid all that was evil or evil-looking. He has commanded us to bow in prayer, to give away alms, and to observe fasts. Our people have become our enemies only because we have taken to the road of piety, peace and salvation. We suffered most by the high-handedness of the Quraish. And when we saw no way out, we were forced to seek shelter in your country.”

The King, seemingly impressed, desired that some portion of the Qur’aan be recited. Ja’far chanted Sura Maryam. The recitation went straight to the king’s heart and his eyes were moved to tears. He said, “Muhammad is ‘that Prophet’ of whose advent Jesus Christ foretold us. I thank God that He has allowed me the time of that Prophet.” Thereafter, the King commanded the court to be cleared of the Quraish and in disgust refused to accept their presents.¹

Having failed in their Abyssinian mission, the Quraish tried to bring the Prophet round by temptation and intimidation. `Utba, as spokesman of the Quraish, sounded him out:

“My nephew Muhammad! If you aim at amassing wealth, we shall provide you so much of it that you will be the richest among us. And if you seek after honour, we are willing to accept you as our leader. And if you aspire to build a kingdom, we shall elect you as our king. In fact, we are agreeable to all or any of the above terms, and in return you only spare the condemnation of our gods and goddesses. Finally, if you apprehend something wrong with your brain we will see to your treatment.”

The Prophet replied, “I aspire to neither wealth, nor honour, nor the crown. You can judge of me and my mind from the verses revealed to me.”

In the name of Allah, the Most Merciful and Compassionate.

“Ha`Mim. A revelation from the Benevolent and Ever-Merciful. This Book is a discourse in Arabic whose verses have been distinguished for people having knowledge. Those who accept the commandments of God, for them there is glad tidings in it, for others, warning. Yet most of the people have turned their faces away from it, and they do not give ear. They say, our hearts are immured against what you call us to and in our ears is a heaviness. There is a curtain drawn between you and us. You do what you choose, we go by our ways. O Prophet, tell those people: I am only a mortal like you, but it has been revealed to me that your God is one God; so take to the path straight to Him and ask for His forgiveness and woe be to the idolaters, who do not give a due share of their wealth for the welfare of the needy, and disbelieve in the Hereafter. But surely blessed are those who believe and do righteous deeds. For them there is an enduring reward.” (41:1-8)

`Utba was lost in the soul-stirring verses of the Qur’aan. At the end he fell silent, then went to the Quraish who were impatient to know the result of his mission.

`Utba spoke, “You people of Quraish! I have heard a discourse which is neither poetry nor a soothsayer’s rhetoric. And neither is it magic nor an enchantment. Do what I counsel - leave Muhammad to himself.” The audience remarked, “Lo! `Utba, too, has been charmed by the words of Muhammad.”¹

Having failed to tempt the Prophet, the chieftains of Quraish approached Abu Taalib, the Prophet’s uncle and spoke as follows,

“We have conceded a great regard for you so far. Your nephew is set upon censuring and damning our gods, whom we and our forefathers have worshipped; now he has exhausted our patience. We request you to ask him to stop his acts of sacrilege. If he does not listen to you either, we will do him to death and you alone shall not be able to wreak vengeance.”

1 1 A.H. (1:294)

Abu Taalib's heart was moved. He sent for his nephew and advised him to stop the condemnation of idols, saying, "Otherwise, I too, will not be in a position to protect you."

The Prophet resolutely replied, "Uncle, if they were to place the sun on my right hand and the moon on the left, I would not desist from my mission. Nor shall I add or take away a single letter from the Divine Commandments, even if my life ends in this pursuit."¹

The Quraish now invited him to a sort of national assembly, held in the precincts of the Ka'ba. The Prophet was only too willing to attend. "O Muhammad", they said, "By God, we do not know of any other man who has caused so much hardship to his people as you have. There is no misfortune that has not befallen us because of you." Then they resorted to the same old tactics, offering temptations, intermingled with threats. As ever, the Prophet remained firm in his stand. After further deliberations, the Quraish came out with a somewhat better strategy: "Well Muhammad, you see in what stress we pass our days. We have the least of water and our means of living are extremely limited. Why cannot you pray to God that He may move these hills away from us and give us full flowing canals, as they flow in Syria and Mesopotamia,² and that He may raise our forefathers to life from the dead, and that among them Qusayy b. Kilaab³ be particularly resurrected, for he was our Chief and spoke the truth. We will then ask him about you and if he attests your claims, and you also fulfil the rest of what we have asked, then we shall accept your claims,

1 1 A.H. (1:266)

2 How blind the unbelievers were! They were afraid of the fate of their sanctuary, thinking that without its gods and goddesses it would attract no one. Yet this sanctuary was to be the greatest centre of pilgrimage in the history of mankind and when the Arabs believed, how wide were the lands their faith embraced - much beyond Syria and Mesopotamia!

3 Qusayy was the grandfather of Abdul Muttalib - the grandfather of the Prophet. Qusayy had brought peace, order and prosperity to his country.

and realise that you do indeed hold a place of excellence with your God and that He has surely sent you as 'His Messenger' as you so hold."

The Prophet calmly replied, "I have not been sent to you for the realisation of such ends. I have been sent as a Harbinger of good news and a Warner and I have given you the Message; and told you what God wants of you. If you take it into your hearts, you can assure yourself of prosperity here and in the Hereafter and if you reject this Message, I will only wait for the further Commands of God."

Then the Quraish retorted, "All right! At least pray to God that he may appoint an angel to follow you wherever you go to announce that this man is a Messenger of God and thus restrain us from opposing you. Pray to Him also, that He may lay out spacious gardens full of fruits and flowers, raise up palaces and yield treasures of gold and silver so that you will not have to go to the market for shopping. If that much was done for you, we would then be able to realise your status and excellence among us, and also acknowledge you as the Messenger of God."

Finding the Prophet still firm in his resolve, the Quraish foolishly said, "Well then, let a piece of the sky smash down on us, as so often threatened by you." The Prophet simply reaffirmed that God might do so only if He so willed. Then the Quraish continued, "Why did your God not tell you in advance about the nature and implications of our questions and their appropriate answers? We feel justified in believing what we have heard that there is a certain person in Yamaama known as Rahmaan, who teaches you all these funny things. We declare on oath that we shall never believe in what you preach or practise and we shall rather die than allow you to continue your activities." Amidst the rising tempers, one roared out, "We worship angels, who are the daughters of God!" Another shouted, "We shall only believe in you if God and His angels array themselves before us." Sensing

that the assembly was drifting towards a pandemonium, the Prophet stood up to go, when a cousin of his, (by his aunt `Aatika d. `Abdul Muttalib) `Abdullah b. Abu Ummaiya b. al-Mughira, said, "Look, Muhammad, your people wanted certain demands to be fulfilled, certain distinctive signs to be shown so that the truth or otherwise of your position be established you failed to do that. I cannot now place any faith in you, even if you ascended the heavens by a staircase and then descended it accompanied by four angels, who also attested to your mission."¹

So it was that the Quraish persisted, in their blindness, in rejecting the message, and the Prophet Muhammad (SAW) remained equally firm in presenting his teaching with a view to purging their whole social order of its corruption. His assurance that a welfare state would naturally emerge from the ruins of idolatry and men's surrender to God fell on deaf ears, except for the men of understanding who possessed repentant hearts and lofty souls. For them, to believe was an experience of ecstasy as well as of hope for a future, radiant with possibilities for a great social order. These were not vain hopes either; the astonishing transformation of illiterates and nomads among the Arabs into scholars, scientists, law-givers and conquerors is now an undeniable part of history.

HAMZA EMBRACES ISLAM

It was the sixth year of his prophethood. The Prophet was sitting on mount Safa, meditating. Abu Jahl approached and let loose a battery of abuses. Finding the Prophet still unperturbed, he aimed a stone at his head which struck and caused some bleeding. Hamza was returning home from a hunting expedition.

1 `Abdullah b. Abu Ummaiya who appeared so unbending, unreasonable and outspoken, embraced Islam before the conquest of Makka. His conversion was not short of a miracle in view of his initial downright rejection of Islam (1. H - 1:315).

He learnt about the insulting conduct of Abu Jahl and was convulsed with indignation that his innocent nephew should have been treated in that way. He made straight for Abu Jahl and vented his anger by striking him hard with his bow. Following this act of spontaneous retaliation, Hamza went to his nephew and said, "Muhammad, I have avenged you and paid Abu Jahl in the same coin." The Prophet simply answered, "Uncle, I never rejoice in acts of retaliation. I shall feel really overjoyed if you surrender to God."

This touching example of restraint, from one who could hardly have recovered from the public humiliation he had just suffered, penetrated the warrior's heart and led him to wonder how it was possible to have no rancour, no ill-feeling against an arch enemy who had publicly insulted and wounded him only a few moments ago. In the midst of increasing trials and persecutions how could he still believe, and so resolutely, in the success of his mission?

Such thoughts rocked Hamza to the soul and suddenly his heart opened up to the light of Islam. As he was the first adult from the Prophet's own family to embrace Islam, the Prophet was overjoyed by his conversion.

‘UMAR’S DRAMATIC ACCEPTANCE OF ISLAM

Three days after the significant addition of Amiir Hamza to the Islamic community, `Umar b. Khattaab was dramatically won over. `Umar was young, straightforward and outspoken, volatile in temperament, tall, muscular, well-built, and brimming with the pride and prejudices of Arab aristocracy. He was one of the few Quraish who could read and write well. He was a known genealogist, adept in the art of the quick assessment of 'Men and Matters', and also a sort of Secretary-General of Foreign Affairs for his people, as well as an Administrator and Statesman.

`Umar was not impressed by the mission of the Prophet Muhammad (SAW). He took it as a bubble that would burst with the passage of time. But as time passed, the mission gathered in strength and stride. He saw the centuries-old traditions of the Quraish being increasingly traduced and their gods and goddesses denounced. `Umar felt that he could no longer be a distant spectator. The division and discord among the Arab hegemony, generated and deepened by Muhammad's (SAW) mission, seemed to him to be leading to the destruction of all that was dear to an Arab's pride. Without bothering to take anyone into confidence, he made up his mind and set out from his house, armed and fully resolved, to silence the Prophet forever.

On his way, he met a friend,¹ who, sensing his intent from the look in his eyes, questioned him and was bluntly told that he was going to do away with Muhammad (SAW). Not surprised, his friend retorted, "Before you go so far and so deep, you better put aright your sister Faatima and her husband Sa'id, who I understand have already surrendered to God and His Messenger."

Shocked by the news, `Umar directed his steps to his sister's house. There he heard something unfamiliar being recited. He banged at the door, shouted for his sister and, stepping in, began grappling with her and her husband. The bleeding Faatima pleaded, "`Umar, be composed, and listen to the Book, which has transformed our lives and made us insensitive to threats to our life. If the message does not root out your ill-conceived notions, you may proceed as you wish." `Umar agreed. Khabbaab b. al-Aratt, deputed by the Prophet to teach the new converts, was called out of hiding. He recited the first part of Sura Taha:

"We have not revealed this Book to you that it may add to your difficulties, but it is an admonition for him who fears God and a revelation from Him, Who created the earth and the high ascending heavens. The Beneficent Lord, established on the Throne - to Him, belongs what so ever is

1 Nu`aim b. `Abdullah-al-Nahham. (II - G - p-156).

in the heavens, in the earth and between them and underneath the earth. Whether you speak aloud or inaudibly, He knows the secret thoughts as well as that which has been closely hidden. Allah, there is no God but He, His are the most beautiful names.” (20:2-8)

The recital ran through `Umar’s heart. He was visibly moved, shaken from within and tears flowed from his eyes. Never before had he heard such strikingly inspiring verses. With his heart instantaneously surrendered, he retraced his steps towards the Prophet’s house.

Hamza (the lion of God), who was now virtually a sort of Chief-of-Staff of the Prophet’s establishment, saw `Umar approaching, armed to the teeth, and reported to the Prophet accordingly, at the same time preparing himself for the probable encounter. The Prophet instructed that `Umar be allowed to enter. There were scenes of unprecedented joy and a rapturous thunder of *Allahu Akbar* (God is Great) when in all humility and grace, `Umar (entitled by the Orientalists as the St. Paul of Islam, the moving spirit of its expansion and organisation, in a sense its true founder)¹ declared himself to be a slave of God and a believer in the prophethood of Muhammad (SAW).

Until then, the Muslims used to offer their prayers in their homes. Following `Umar’s conversion, they started to assemble² openly in the precincts of the Ka`ba for their devotions.³ This

1 Briffault’s Making of Humanity - p-185 (Pak. Ed)

2 `Umar’s conversion to Islam was a victory; his migration to Madina was a help; and his government was a divine mercy. We could not pray in the precincts of Ka`ba until he became a Muslim, and when he did so he fought the Quraish until he could pray there and we joined him. Ibn Mas`ud. (II - G - p-155).

3 The death of `Umar was a real calamity to Islam. Stern but just, far-sighted, thoroughly versed in the character of his people, he was especially fitted for the leadership of the unruly Arabs. He was a man of towering height, strong build, and fair complexion. Of simple habits, austere and frugal, always

further inflamed the Quraish and they decided to convene a broad-based conference in the month of Muharram, the 7th year of prophethood, which passed the following resolutions:

1. Whereas the tribe of B. Haashim, though not converted to Islam, does not disassociate or disclaim the missionary activities of Muhammad (SAW), we henceforth disallow and cease all matrimonial relationship with them.
2. Furthermore, we shall not allow them to walk on the roads and by-roads of Makka.

accessible to the meanest of his subjects, wandering about at night to inquire into the condition of the people without any guard or court - such was the greatest and most powerful ruler of the time. `Umar could easily have nominated `Ali or his own son, the virtuous `Abdullah, surnamed Ibn `Umar, as his successor to the Caliphate; but with the conscientiousness which characterised him he entrusted the election to six notables of Madina. At the time of the surrender of Palestine, he showed his benevolence and nobility of character towards the people of the Book "The Patriarch sued for peace, but refused to surrender the place to any but the Caliph in person. `Umar acceded to the request, and travelling with a single attendant, without escort and without any pomp or ceremony, arrived at Jabia, where he was met by a deputation from Jerusalem. To them he accorded the right of free exercise of their religion, and the possession of their churches, subject to a light tax. He then proceeded with the deputation towards Jerusalem, where he was received by Sophronius the Patriarch. The chief of Islam and the head of the Christians entered the sacred city together, conversing on its antiquities. `Umar declined to perform his devotions in the Church of the Resurrection, in which he chanced to be at the hour of prayer, but prayed on the steps of the Church of Constantine; 'For', said he to the Patriarch, 'had I done so, the Mussulmans in a future age might have infringed the treaty, under colour of imitating my example'. A deputation from Ramleh received the same considerate terms; whilst the Samaritan Jews, who had assisted the Moslems, were guaranteed in their possessions without the payment of any tax." (History of the Saracens - Sayyid Amir `Ali, p-39-40).

3. We shall not sell anything to them, nor buy from them.¹

BLOCKADE OF THE PROPHET AND HIS CLAN

This unanimous resolve, in the form of a pledge, was displayed on the main gate of the Ka`ba. As a result of these punitive measures, the Prophet and his clan were forced to leave their homes, driven into a valley and blockaded from the rest of the world. Their children wept in hunger and their cries of woe echoed far beyond. The converts to Islam, who were not of the Prophet's clan, were interned in their houses.² Disorderly behaviour during pilgrimage had all along been considered sacrilegious. This centuries-old tradition was disregarded in the case of the Prophet, His uncle, the wretched Abu Lahab, dogged the footsteps of the Prophet and exclaimed, "You people, do not heed him. He who listens to him shall be ruined; he is only a madman."

For three years the Prophet, his tribe and companions endured acute hardships with patience, grace and fortitude. But when the idolaters, although unrepentant and unrelenting, were tired and worn out, they withdrew their guards and sentinels. White ants dented their pledge, posted on the gate of the Ka`ba. The Prophet came out of the valley and resumed his mission openly.

One day the Prophet entered the Ka`ba when all the Chieftains were sitting there. Abu Jahl disparagingly remarked, "O you of the tribe of `Abdu Manaaf, behold, there comes your Prophet." Then `Uqba b. Rabi'a said, "Well, if that be so, any of us may pose as a Prophet or an angel." Hearing these remarks, the Prophet first addressed `Uqba, "You never supported the cause of God and His Messenger, and held fast to your ignorance." Then

1 Zad. (1:299)

2 Zad. (1:3)

he turned to Abu Jahl and said, "The day is fast approaching, when you shall mock less, and grieve more."

Then he addressed the Quraish in general, "The time is drawing nearer, when all of you will enter the fold of Islam."¹

In the tenth year of his mission, Abu Taalib, the Prophet's uncle and father of his cousin `Ali, died. After the death of `Abdul Muttalib, Abu Taalib had brought him up and had stood by him faithfully and protected him throughout the years. His death was a serious blow to the Prophet.

DEATH OF KHADIJA TUL-KUBRA

The Prophet had hardly recovered from that grief when, only three days later, another shock overwhelmed him. His peerless wife and dear companion, Khadija tul-Kubra, breathed her last. She had been the Prophet's wife for 25 years, a period which witnessed events of the greatest importance for the whole history of mankind. A devoted wife to her last breath, a wise counsellor and an affectionate companion, she had carried out her role in a faultless manner and with a clear understanding of her responsibilities. She had already dedicated her entire wealth for charitable purposes and placed it at the disposal of her beloved husband. She fully deserved the distinction of being the first person to enter the fold of Islam, a distinction not destined for any other male or female in the entire community of Islam. Her spontaneous acceptance of Islam is a testimony to the Prophet Muhammad's (SAW) truthfulness and integrity, his person and character, for who could have known him better than she?

Incidentally, she was the only wife of the Prophet who bore him children that survived. She also brought up `Ali and trained Zaid under her motherly care, who both later turned out to be

1 Tabari. (2:231)

unforgettable characters in the history of mankind and unrivalled champions of Islam.¹

When the first revelation was received by the Prophet, in the Cave of Hira, it was she to whom he returned, shaken by apprehensions. It was she who there and then discounted all his fears by re-affirming her regenerated faith in his stainless character, his deep concern for the downtrodden and the needy, his generous hospitality, and his fondness for children - qualities which only a Prophet could possess.

In view of her high qualities of head and heart and the purity of her faith and character, the Prophet placed her as one amongst the four greatest and divinely inspired women of this world and the Hereafter.² Finally, Khadija tul-Kubra had the unique honour of receiving the Divine salutations through Gabriel - the Arch-Angel, an honour not shared by any other women in the whole religious literature.³ These two deaths encouraged the Quraish to intensify their hostilities. On some occasions they threw dust at the Prophet. Once he reached home with his head spattered with dirt. Sayyida Faatima, his daughter, could not restrain her tears as she washed his head. "Why should you cry, dear daughter?" the Prophet said, "God will protect your father."

PREACHING TO OUTLYING TRIBES

Shortly thereafter, the Prophet decided to extend his activities to the scattered tribes of the open desert. Zaid b. Haaritha, a freed slave and later his adopted son, attended upon

1 Ed.

2 The other three were Aasia, wife of the Pharaoh, Mary (Maryam), the mother of the Prophet `Isa, and Faatima-al-Zahra, daughter of the Prophet.

3 Bukhaari (chapter Wives of the Prophet - narrator - Abu Huraira).

him. The Prophet would stop over wherever he saw any habitation, and give a brief sermon. Finally, he entered the town of Ta`if, a hill station. Its greenery and cool climate made it a place of some pride and preference for its inhabitants, the B. Thaqif. The headmen of the clan were three brothers, `Abdu Yalail, Mas`ud and Habiib, sons of `Amr.

The Prophet approached them only to hear one of them retort, "I shall have my beard shaved off in front of the Ka`ba, if God has ordained you as His Prophet." The second one jeered, "Could God not find anyone else but you for this appointment? You don't even have an animal to ride. God could easily have chosen one among the rulers or chieftains." The third said, "I shall not talk to you if you are the Messenger of God, as it may be very dangerous to ignore your message. If you are an impostor, it would be absurd on my part to listen to you." The Prophet thereupon remarked, "You better keep your reasoning to yourself. Innocent people are likely to be swept off the path of God by your absurd observations."

After this unpleasant encounter, the Prophet ignored the chiefs and addressed the commoners. This step infuriated the chiefs all the more and they set their slaves and louts of the street to stone the undeterred preacher in the midst of his address. Bleeding profusely but undaunted by their aggression and violent abuse, he still continued calling them to the path of God. Finally, he was driven towards a house belonging to `Utba and Shaiba, sons of Rabi`a. They witnessed what was happening from a distance and their hearts softened. They asked their slave, `Addaas, to deliver a few bunches of grapes to the besieged man. The Prophet accepted this hospitable gesture and before eating the grapes, he recited, "*In the name of Allah, the Compassionate and Ever-Merciful.*" `Addaas was struck by this unusual invocation and said, "People of this place do not invoke such blessings." The Prophet asked him where he came from, and what his religion was. `Addaas replied, "I am a Christian and I come from Nineveh." The Prophet observed, "Are you an inhabitant of the

native place of the pious Jonas, son of Mathias?" `Addaas struck with wonder, asked, "How on earth could you know about Jonas and his moral excellence?" The Prophet replied, "He is a brother of mine. He was a Prophet and so am I." Hearing this, `Addaas bowed his head in reverence and kissed the Prophet's head, hands and feet.

`Utba and Shaiba noticed the strange behaviour of their slave and felt as if he was slipping from their control. They questioned him and were told, "My Master has told me a word, which none but a Prophet could tell. Today there is no man superior to him on the face of this earth." "But your religion is better, stick to it", they warned him.¹ Despite all the rebuffs and violence he had suffered, the Prophet continued with his preaching. The heartless people stoned him again and he was knocked down senseless. Zaid carried him on his shoulders out of the city. He sprinkled water on the Prophet's face until he regained consciousness. This journey was exhausting and fruitless as the Prophet was not able to win over a single person. Yet the Prophet found his heart full of the love and glory of God. Even in these moments of persecution, he earnestly solicited his Creator's help in these words, "O Merciful Allah! I am conscious of my weaknesses and resourcelessness. I look to You for help and guidance in my predicament. You alone are the flowing fountain of Compassion and Redeemer of all those who are trapped in the web of complications. My unpopularity and inability to impress stands in the way of my mission. You alone are my Master and Well-Wisher. Do not leave me at the mercy of wayward enemies who possess immense resources. As long as I enjoy Your confidence and grace I care not for the hostile reception and callous conduct of the grossly ignorant. I seek guidance from the light of Your Glory which dispels all darkness and sets the world in the right direction. I seek Your approval in all my actions. I obtain from You all the energy, all the strength and guidance to be able to do the right and abstain from the

1 Tabari. (2:229)

wrong.”¹ On the Prophet’s return journey from Ta’if, where he had been laughed at, manhandled and stoned into silence, he refused to seek the wrath of God for their atrocious behaviour; rather, he prayed that their next generation would come forward and put faith in the Glory of the One Supreme God.²

After his return to Makka, the Prophet travelled to various habitations beyond the town, including the tribe of B. Kinda, which was headed by Malih. Abu Bakr Siddiq accompanied the Prophet. Next, he contacted chiefs of the clan of B. `Abdullah and reminded them, “Your forefather was `Abdullah (i.e. servant of God); do you not take pride in this?” All rejected the Prophet in a manner as never before.³ He then turned to the tribe of B. `Amr b. Sa’sa’a, headed by Bukhaira b. Faras. Bukhaira asked, “Well, if we accept your teaching and then overpower your opponents, will you pledge that the succession would be transferred to me after you?” The Prophet replied, “That depends on the Will of God. He will appoint as my successor whomever He chooses.” Bukhaira retorted, “Yea, you desire us to shield you against the combined opposition of the Arabs; and when your mission is fulfilled, there will be someone else to derive the benefits thereof. Go your way, we have nothing to do with you or your mission.”⁴

In between these days, Suwaid b. Saamit came in contact with the Prophet. He was known as Kaamil (the accomplished) among his people. The Prophet offered him the message. Kaamil said, “Perhaps you possess the same thing which I do.” The Prophet asked what that could be. He recited certain verses of his and the Prophet said, “That is good but I have the Qur’aan. It excels in grace and wisdom. It is the fountain of truth and the basis of all guidance.” The Prophet then recited a few verses of the Book and Suwaid b. Saamit embraced Islam without further

1 Tabari. (2:230)

2 Bukhaari and Muslim. (Mishkat 3:150)

3 Tabari. (2:232)

4 Tabari. (2:232)

hesitation, but when he returned to Yathrib, the tribe of Khazraj killed him.¹

Soon thereafter Abul Haisar Anas b. Rafi` came to Makka, along with certain young men of the tribe of B. `Abdul Ashaal. Ayaaz b. Mua`d was one of them. They had come to make an agreement with the Quraish. The Prophet had the following dialogue with them, "I possess something which if acquired, would open for you the floodgates of prosperity, spiritual as well as material. They asked, "What can that be?" He replied: "I am the Prophet of God, deputed to invite people to adore only the One God and associate none with Him." The Prophet explained to them the tenets of Islam and read out a piece from the Qur'aan. Ayaaz b. Mua`d, then in the prime of his youth, observed, "My people, by God, this will do greater good to you than the mission you have journeyed for." But Anas picked up a handful of pebbles and threw them in his face and said, "You shut up! We have not come here for this mission."

That event occurred before the battle of Bua`th flared up between the Aus and Khazraj. Ayaaz died a few days later, his lips hymning the praise and glory of God.² The seed of Islam was sown in his heart, and it bore fruit by the time of his death. In those very days, Damaad Azdi of Yaman, a noted sorcerer in Arabia, visited Makka. Being told that Muhammad (SAW) was possessed, he approached the Prophet and said, "Look here, Muhammad (SAW), I will read out to you my enchantment." The Prophet said, "Hear me first", and went on: "All praise is to God, we are grateful to Him for His benedictions, and seek His help and guidance in every act. He, whom God shows the true path, cannot deviate from it. And he from whom God withholds His guidance, none can direct him to His path. I bear witness that none but Allah deserves worship and I also declare that Muhammad (SAW) is His servant and Messenger." The Prophet had not finished when Damaad

1 II - G - p-197.

2 Tabari (2:232) and Ibid.

interrupted and solicited that the words be repeated; so impressed was he by the force of their meaning, grandeur and eloquence. He observed, "I have seen many magicians, soothsayers and poets, but I have never heard such fascinating words, which seem to spring from an ocean, whose depth of beauty and guidance cannot be fathomed. Muhammad (SAW), stretch out your hand that I may declare my allegiance to Islam."¹

1 Muslim - Hadith No. 868.

4. ASCENSION (MI`RAAJ)

The Prophet's Ascension took place on the 27th of Rajab in the 10th year of his mission. God invited him to see His signs in the heavens and the earth.

The Prophet was bodily carried by *Buraq*,¹ from the Ka`ba to the distant mosque in the sacred city of Jerusalem, in the company of Jibril, the Arch-Angel. Then he alighted and tethered the animal to a ring in the gate of the mosque. There he led the Prophets in prayers, and was subsequently lifted up into the seven heavens, up to Sidrat-al-Muntaha, the Lote tree and the Bait-al-Ma`mur, i.e. the Ka`ba in the heavens. From there he ascended to God's very presence on the 'Sublime Throne' and was exalted by several revelations and given 'the knowledge' to grasp the spiritual mysteries of the human soul, struggling in space and time.

COMMENTS BY SHAH WALI-ULLAH DEHLVI

This journey was made by the Prophet bodily and in a state of awakening, through an overwhelming of his human faculties by the angelic faculties. By this Divine process the flame of earthly desires was made to die out, the nature of the holy Prophet was made agreeable to receive and assimilate the hallowed pouring forth of grace and guidance and his whole body was transformed into a spiritual fineness.

The human consciousness having been replaced by the spiritual consciousness, the evolution of the human mind was thus perfected.

1 A white animal, half mule, half donkey with wings on its side with which it propelled its feet. Earlier Prophets also used to ride it - II - G - p-182, (from `Abdullah b. Mas`ud).

The Prophet's first stop was at Jerusalem¹ as that blessed place has been the recipient of Divine Commandments and rituals, the Mosque there being is the venue of the holy Prophets, a centre place from where the vision of the Prophets could pierce through into the domain of angels.

His reception by the Prophets signifies that all the individual and collective peculiarities and attributes of the earlier Prophets were henceforth to be assembled in the Prophet Muhammad (SAW). This process was in the sequence of God's plan, as the Prophet Muhammad (SAW) was chosen to be the last of the Prophets, entrusted to deliver the 'The Final Message' in the shape of the inimitable Qur'aan.

The Prophet ascended to the heavens so that he could see Allah's signs which He willed him to see. Thus, the Prophet witnessed Allah's mighty sovereignty and power by which He does what He so wills.

This journey ended near 'the House full of lights', situated parallel to the Ka`ba at Makka, and the holy mosque at Jerusalem.

The holy Prophet was offered two cups, one containing milk and the other containing wine. The Prophet Muhammad (SAW) chose milk as his drink. Gabriel (Jibril) told him that his choice conformed to the nature of man. Thereafter, five prayers were made obligatory and their reward was made equivalent to 'fifty prayers'. The Prophet had the fifty prayers (initially ordained) reduced to five at the behest and advice of the Prophet Moses, whom he had met in the heavens, and who excelled among the earlier Prophets in the reform, regeneration and motivation of his following.²

1 For details on the Prophet's Ascension see Vol-II of this book.

2 The above extract is an abridged account of the Mi`raaj (Ascension) as given by the profoundest of scholars, Shah Wali-Ullah in his magnum opus, the Hujatullah-al-Baligha. His father, Shah `Abdur Rahim, was also a scholar of distinction and a conspicuous member of the Board of Scholars

TUFAIL b. `AMR EMBRACES ISLAM

Tufail b. `Amr was chief of the tribe of Daus who dominated the suburbs of Yaman. He came to Makka for pilgrimage. He was a poet and was reckoned as a knowledgeable person. He was given a warm, lavish reception outside the city of Makka by the heads of all the tribes.

The Prophet passed that way, and the Quraish chiefs raised their fingers towards him and warned Tufail to avoid and ignore his teachings, as if by some sort of magic, he brought about separation among brothers and sisters, between husband and wife, and father and son. Besides, he had also desecrated the sanctity of their gatherings and condemned their centuries-old traditions. They did not wish that a similar calamity should befall Tufail, his family and his people. It would be in his best interest not to listen to the Prophet's sacrilegious vituperations.

The Quraish gave their advice so convincingly that Tufail, when visiting the Ka`ba, plugged his ears with cotton so as not to allow even the sound of the Prophet's voice to penetrate his ears.

One day, visiting the holy Ka`ba at early dawn, Tufail stood behind the Prophet in his prayers. It seemed to Tufail the will of

set up by Emperor Aurangzeb for the compilation of Fatawa-e-Alamgiri (edicts of a panel of jurists). Shah Wali-Ullah's eldest son, Shah `Abdul `Aziz, wrote in Persian an exegesis of the Qur'aan. The first literal translation of the Qur'aan into Urdu was rendered by Shah Rafi`-uddin and a free translation was beautifully done by Shah `Abdul Qadir. These translations with short comments are held in great esteem for their authenticity and clarity by scholars all over the world. The great Shah had four sons and three of them mentioned above were pillars of Islam. The fourth son, Shah `Abdul Ghani died young but left for posterity his celebrated son, Shah Ismaa`il Shahiid who, besides being a scholar, was an eloquent speaker. He was an outstanding and ardent freedom fighter and sacrificed his life for the cause of Allah at Balakot (near Abbottabad) in Pakistan. In the world of Islam, there has been probably no other family which contributed such a wealth of literature covering all branches of Islamic ideology in the last 1000 years. (Ed).

God that the Prophet's words should reach his ears. He found him reciting in his enchanting voice verses of the Glorious Qur'aan, the very sound of which 'moves men to tears and ecstasy'. Tufail began to censure himself, "I am a poet, a man of letters, capable of distinguishing between the graceful and the clumsy. Wherein lies the sense of my fear of hearing what he says? I should listen, and if it makes no sense, I shall ignore him." With that logical resolve, he stood by and listened.

He was so fascinated by that soul-absorbing 'recitation' that he followed the Prophet to his home and narrated in full what the Makkans had said of him. He further solicited the favour of hearing more of the sublime rhetoric. The Prophet recited some verses of the Book. Exclaimed Tufail, "By God, I have never heard before such an enlightening discourse. It is to me the purest guidance." Tufail embraced Islam there and then.

Tufail (whom the chiefs of Quraish addressed as their revered brother and chief) now felt privileged to address the Prophet as his mentor and saviour, and considered it an honour to be one of his humble disciples. The news of his conversion to Islam was a bitter blow to the Quraish.¹

ABU ZAR GHIFAARI ACCEPTS ISLAM

Abu Zar was on a visit to Yathrib, where he came to know that a Prophet had appeared in Makka. He asked his brother Anis to go to Makka and verify the news. Anis, a reputed poet and orator, came to Makka, visited the Prophet, and then reported to his brother that Muhammad (SAW) taught righteousness and shunned all evils. Abu Zar, not satisfied with this brief report, himself made his way to Makka on foot and chose not to ask anyone about the alleged Prophet. He drank from the Zamzam

1 Zad. (3:634)

well¹ and settled himself in the precincts of Ka`ba. `Ali Murtaza came by and asked him in a loud voice if he was a wayfarer. Abu Zar replied that he was, and `Ali took him to his house where he spent the night. His host did not influence him in any way and Abu Zar volunteered no information either.

The next day Abu Zar again went to the Ka`ba, telling no one why he was there. Again, `Ali Murtaza approached him and said, "Have you found your goal?" Abu Zar said, "No." `Ali Murtaza led him to his house once more and Abu Zar said, "I can take you into my confidence if you keep it to yourself." `Ali gave his word. Abu Zar said, "I have heard of a man over here who claims to be the Prophet of God. I sent my brother to get news of him, but he did not gather satisfactory information. I have come myself to know all about him." `Ali Murtaza said, "You are welcome and it is good that you have opened your heart to me. I am just going there as well. Follow me. I will go in first, and see if it is the proper time for you to be admitted. If not, I will stand by the wall as though adjusting my shoe." `Ali Murtaza ushered him in. After preliminary introduction, Abu Zar told all about his brother's earlier visit to Makka on his behalf. The Prophet welcomed him and explained the teachings of Islam. He declared his acceptance there and then. The Prophet asked him to keep his conversion to himself and go back to Yathrib. Abu Zar replied, "By God, I will announce my conversion before I return." Abu Zar made his way to the Ka`ba, and declared his faith in a loud voice. The Quraish rushed around, called him an apostate and struck him right and left. `Abbaas came over and shielded him and said, "You wretched people! He comes of the tribe of Ghifar from whom you buy your dates." The following day, Abu Zar repeated

1 Bukhaari - From Ibn `Abbaas. Abu Zar was in Makka for about a month. He lived throughout on the water of Zamzam and did not lose weight. (Madaraj-un-Nabuwwah).

the same words of faith, was beaten and once again `Abbaas obtained his release. Thereafter, he returned home.¹

CAUSES LEADING TO THE MIGRATION

It was the eleventh year of the mission and the season of pilgrimage had begun. The Prophet, in the gloom of the night, heard some voices by the side of `Aqaba,² a suburb of Makka, and followed them. There he found six men³ from Yathrib. They had already learnt from the Jews of their town that a Prophet was to appear in the near future as foretold by their scriptures. The Prophet spoke to them of the Glory and Benevolence of God. He also dwelt upon the evil effects of idolatry which corrode the heart and pollute the soul. Devotion to Allah and Allah alone purifies the mind and soul. This sermon filled their hearts with the love of Allah and His Benevolence. They swore allegiance to the Prophet and accepted Islam there and then. And when they got back to their homes the following year, a deputation of twelve⁴ Yathribites came to Makka, and deepened their faith and inspiration through contact with the holy Prophet at the same place. They signed a pledge. Its terms were:

1. We shall worship only the One God and shall associate none with Him.

1 Bukhaari - Ibn `Abbaas. (1:504)

2 Situated between Hira and Mina. Mina is about three miles from Makka.

3 (1) (Abu Imaama) Asa'd b. Zurara. (2) `Awf b. al-Harith; (3) Rafe' b. Maalik; (4) Qutba b. `Aamir b. Hadida; (5) `Uqba b. `Aamir b. Hani; (6) Sa'd b. Rabi' (al-isti'ab).

4 (1) (Abu Imaama) Asa'd b. Zurara; (2) `Awf b. al-Harith; (3) Rafe' b. Maalik; (4) Qutba b. `Aamir (5) Mua'd b. Harith; (6) `Aqba b. `Aamir; (7) Zakwaan b. `Abdu Qais; (8) Yazid b. Tha'laba; (9) `Ubaada b. Saamit; (10) al-`Abbaas b. `Ubaada; (11) `Abdul Haitham b. al-Tayyihaan; (12) `Uwaim b. Sa'ida. II - G - p-198 and Tabari - Vol-II - p-236.

2. We shall not slay or commit adultery.
3. We shall not slay our daughters.
4. We shall not slander anyone nor speak ill of anyone behind his back.
5. We shall obey the Prophet in every virtue.

Musa`b was appointed teacher of this delegation and accompanied them to Yathrib. Musa`b belonged to a wealthy family and had been the darling of his clan. Handsome, charming and elegantly dressed, he lived a princely life. It was also said of him that out of all Makkans, he resembled the holy Prophet most in outward appearance. When he moved about, riding on horse back, slaves accompanied him but since his conversion to Islam, a complete change had come about in his lifestyle. He put aside all ostentation and adornment. When he took to preaching Islam, he had only a simple blanket wrapped about him, held in place with thorns.

THE SECOND PLEDGE AT `AQABA

Musa`b lodged in Yathrib with Abu Imaama Asa`d b. Zurara and the people spoke of him as al-Muqri (the teacher). One day Musa`b and Asa`d and a few Muslims gathered in a garden of B. Zafar at the well of Maraq. They had to devise ways of introducing Islam to B. `Abdul Ashaal and B. Zafar clans.

In the mean time, Sa`d b. Mua`d and Usaid b. Hudair, the tribal heads who had not been converted to Islam, became alarmed by the activities of Asa`d and his teacher-guest. Sa`d said to Usaid, "Asa`d and Musa`b are misleading our simple folk. I would have stopped this rot myself but for Asa`d who is my first cousin. I, therefore, want you to give a stern warning to these corrupters of our society and forbid them to visit our quarters."

Armed with a lance, and determined to stop the nefarious activities of Asa`d and Musa`b, Usaid walked towards B. Zafar garden, where Musa`b and others were holding their meeting.

Asa`d said to Musa`b, "There comes the Chief of B. Zafar. If he is won over, half the victory will be assured." The moment the furious Usaid stood over them, Musa`b showed him full courtesy and requested him to be seated and favour them with a patient hearing. Musa`b spoke thus: "Our invitation is only a Message of love. If it does not strike your heart, you will be fully justified to ignore it." Musa`b's captivating personality and politeness worked and softened Usaid's stance. He stuck his lance in the ground, sat down and agreed to listen to what he had to say.

Musa`b explained to him the salient features of Islam - in particular the unity of Lord God, His blessings on mankind, His grace and compassion and the role of the Prophet, appointed by God to guide mankind to the path of God. Musa`b recited some passages of the Qur'aan in support of his above exhortations. The verses of the Qur'aan instantly struck Usaid's heart. He appeared to be a person transformed. He enquired, "What should one do to join your faith?"

Musa`b replied, "Please take a bath¹ and put on a new garb and then testify to the unity of Allah and the prophethood of Muhammad (SAW)." Usaid washed his clothes and offered (thanksgiving) prayers accordingly. After embracing each other Usaid said, "Sa`d b. Mua`d is the Chief of `Abdul Ashaal. If he were won over, there would be none left to oppose you. I shall see that he is sent to you". After giving Musa`b this assurance, Usaid left.

Sa`d had been waiting impatiently for Usaid when he saw him from a distance. He felt that Usaid did not have the same countenance as when he had earlier gone to reprimand Asa`d.

1 Every garden in Yathrib had a bathroom attached to the well for public use. Ed.

Usaid came and sat by him. Sa`d asked how the encounter had fared? Usaid replied, "I have made them understand clearly that they should do nothing against our wishes. But an unpleasant thing happened. The B. Haarith came and they threatened Asa`d." Sa`d was filled with anger and, drawing his sword in readiness to defend his brother, hastened to the spot only to find Musa`b and Asa`d sitting there quite composed. He realised that it had been a ploy to get him to hear what they had to say and scolded them. Then he addressed Asa`d, "You could not possibly pluck up courage to come to our quarters, if there were no relationship between us." Asa`d turned to Musa`b, "He is our great chief and his word is final for his tribe." Musa`b then requested Sa`d, "Be gracious and allow me to submit my views in a friendly atmosphere. If our submissions do not move your heart, you may hold fast to your views." Sa`d was impressed by Musa`b's affable manners, graceful speech and sweet temperament and put down his weapon. Musa`b recited a passage from the Qur'aan, *"In the name of Allah, the Beneficent and the Merciful. Haa-Miim. By the scripture, which makes plain Lo! We have sent this Qur'aan in Arabic to make it easy to understand. It is full of wisdom and its (teachings) are sublime."* (43:1-4)

Sa`d b. Mua`d was struck by the eloquence and wisdom treasured in the passage and also asked what he should do to embrace Islam. After being so directed, Sa`d arose, bathed, changed his dress, affirmed his faith and offered prayer in thanks. Thereafter, he made his way to his associates and summoned his tribesmen in a commanding voice, "You of `Abdul Ashaal, what opinion do you hold of me?" All replied with one voice, "You are our noble chief. Your opinion and your judgements have always been sound." Sa`d observed, "Listen then all of you, men and women, I consider it a sacrilege to talk to anyone, who does not put his or her faith in God and His Prophet."

He had spoken his mind, and the whole tribe of `Abdul Ashaal accepted to Islam by the end of that day.

The inspiring sermons of Musa`b introduced Islam to all men and women of the tribes of Aus and Khazraj, later entitled and honoured by the Qur'aan as Ansaar (Helpers).

THE THIRD PLEDGE AND THE INVITATION TO THE PROPHET

The following year, the thirteenth of the prophethood, seventy-three men and two women travelled to Makka. They were deputed by the devout Muslims of Yathrib to extend an invitation to the Prophet to come over to their city and settle down among them.

This caravan of zealous Muslims, headed by Abu Imaama Asad b. Zurara, encamped at `Aqaba where the God-fearing people of Yathrib used to meet the Prophet during the previous two years. The Prophet, too, arrived there in the company of his uncle `Abbaas,¹ who had not yet declared his faith 'for political considerations'. `Abbaas chose to address them, "You people, you know that the Quraish are deadly opposed to the teachings of Muhammad (SAW). If you are to enter into a pact with him, you must realise that for you, it will be a dedicated task, needing the highest commitment. It would be a challenge to the Quraish, leading to bloody war. Be far-sighted and thoughtful before you announce your decision." They listened patiently to `Abbaas and looked to the Prophet for his gracious command.

The Prophet recited Divine Words, which reaffirmed their faith, courage and confidence. The inspired converts collectively invited the Prophet of God to move to their city so that they might receive the full benefit of his teachings and guidance.

In reply, the Prophet asked them, "Will you give me your full support to the end, to the fulfilment of my mission? Will you

1 Tabari. (2:361)

stand by me and my companions, just as you stand by your own kith and kin?"

"What should be our reward, if we did so?" asked the people of the Caravan. The Prophet affirmed, "Paradise - a place for those who are delivered and thus earn the pleasure and approbation of God."

They said, "O Prophet of God, reassure us that you would not forsake us at any time in your life." The Prophet assured them, "Worry not about that; we shall not part till death." This pledge he honoured until the end. The Prophet's assurance thrilled their hearts and with a thunderous shout of joy they swarmed around him to make an oath of allegiance unto death. Satan, witnessing all this from the top of a mountain, shouted and wailed, "You people of Makka, behold! Muhammad (SAW) and his followers are conspiring against you." The Prophet knew who it was and commended them to ignore his call.

`Abbaas b. `Ubaada said, "With your permission, may we demonstrate the art of sword-play to the Makkans before dawn?"

But the Prophet observed, "No, I am not permitted to take to aggression."¹

THE CHOSEN TWELVE

The holy Prophet chose twelve of them to be his representatives (Naqiibs), just as the Prophet `Isa (Jesus Christ) had chosen twelve men to carry out his missionary work. Their names were:

1. From al-Khazraj: (1) Abu Imaama Asa'd b. Zurara; (2) Rafe' b. Maalik; (3) `Ubaada b. Saamit; (4) Sa'd b. Rabi'; (5) Munzir b. `Amr; (6) `Abdullah b. Rawaha; (7) Bara b.

1 Zad. (1:304)

- Ma`rur; (8) `Abdullah b. `Amr b. Haraam; (9) Sa`d b. `Ubaada. The first three also participated in the first pledge.
2. From al-Aus: (10) Usaid b. Hudair; (11) Sa`d b. Khaithama; (12) Abul Haitham b. Tayyihaan.¹

The following day the Quraish heard of what had passed during the night. They hastened in pursuit of the Yathribites but their caravan had left the place at twilight. Only Sa`d b. `Ubaada and Munzir b. `Amr were still there.

Munzir was able to get away, but they apprehended Sa`d b. `Ubaada, tied him up with the waistband of his camel, and led him to Makka, where they beat him and dragged him by his locks. He himself recalled that a beautiful man, apparently of sweet temper, came over during his ordeal: "I said to myself, 'He will be the man, if there is one noble man among these people.' But when he drew nearer, he struck me on the face. Then another person came over. He felt pity for me and asked, 'Do you not have privilege of neighbourhood with any one of the Quraish?' I said, 'Yes, Jubair b. Muti`m and Haarith b. Ummaiya, grandsons of `Abdu Manaaf visit us on business, and I have given them protection many times.' He said, 'Then cry for help in their names and announce your connection with them.' I did that. He then himself informed them that Sa`d of the Khazraj was shouting their names for help. They said, 'Yes, we are under obligation to him.' They came and had me released."

The steadfast believer then departed for Yathrib.

Following the oath of allegiance, the Prophet encouraged his companions to migrate to Yathrib, as Makka for them had become a hot-bed of terror. The companions welcomed this way out. To part with their family and loved ones was far less grievous to them and they felt a joy and relief in the welcoming atmosphere of Yathrib.

1 Al-Isti`ab. (Hyderabad - 1318 A.H.)

A few of the moving examples are quoted here:

1. Suhaib Rumi was one such emigrant. The Quraish surrounded him, and said, "You came to Makka as a penniless pedlar. Since your residence here, you have earned thousands. Today you are deserting us with your cash and kind. That shall never be so." Suhaib observed, "Well, if I surrender all I possess, will you let me go?" They agreed and he handed over all he had and made his way to Yathrib. When the Prophet heard of it, he exclaimed, "Suhaib has struck a profitable bargain."¹
2. Umm-e-Salma states, "Along with my husband, Abu Salma, we made up our minds to emigrate. He seated me on his camel. My son was in my lap. We were about to start when a crowd of B. Mughira gathered around Abu Salma." "You can go, but you cannot take your wife, for she is our daughter." Men of the clan of B. `Abdul Asa'd also appeared on the scene. They pulled the camel down by its nose-string and snatched the child from the mother's lap. Then B. Mughira drove Umm-e-Salma to their house. As Abu Salma had enjoined on himself the emigration as a religious duty, he set off for Yathrib without his wife and son. Umm-e-Salma went daily to that place of separation at dusk and wept in her grief, and somewhat relieved by the flow of tears, returned home. This heart-rending observance of hers continued for a year. At last, one of her cousins took pity on her and interceded with both tribes to permit her to join her husband. The child was also restored to her. Umm-e-Salma, with her child as her only possession, left for Yathrib². Similar difficulties were faced by almost all emigrants.
3. It is stated by `Umar b. Khattaab that `Ayyaash and Hisham both planned to accompany him in their emigration.

1 Sirat Ibn Hisham. (Suhaib died at the age of 73 in Madina) (2:121)

2 Ibn Hisham. (2:112)

`Ayyaash b. Abu Rabi`a reached the appointed spot on time but the idolaters way-laid Hisham b. al-`Aas. `Ayyaash had hardly reached Yathrib when Abu Jahl, with his brother Haarith, followed him there. `Ayyaash was their half-brother. All three had the same mother.

Abu Jahl and Haarith reported to him that their mother was in a wretched state of mind. She had taken an oath that she would neither comb her hair nor sit in the shade, until she had seen `Ayyaash's face. They cajoled him to return with them for the consolation of their mother and then return to Yathrib.

However, `Umar Faaruq sensed a trap and warned `Ayyaash, "Your mother will comb her hair if a louse scratched her head and she will have to hasten to a shady place in the scorching heat of Makka." `Ayyaash answered, "No, I will honour my mother's oath and then speed back." `Umar said, "Well then, take my dromedary. She is very strong and fast. If you sense a trap, you can easily run away from them and they shall not be able to catch you."

`Ayyaash accepted the kind offer and the three set off on the return journey. When they were nearing Makka, Abu Jahl said, "Brother, our camel cannot keep pace with yours. It would be better to give me a seat with you." `Ayyaash nodded assent and seated him on his camel. His two half-brothers bound his feet and hands tightly and drove him to Makka. They rejoiced at the success of their stratagem. "Behold, how simpletons are disposed of!" `Ayyaash was thrown into a prison-cell along with Hisham b. al-`Aas.

Much later, Waliid b. Mughira, on the behest of the Prophet, went to Makka, scaled the prison walls and rescued him thus earning the Prophet's pleasure.¹ These three incidents should suffice to indicate the commitment of the Muslim emigrants and the sufferings they had to endure, even in the pursuit of a refuge.

1 Ibn Hisham. (2:118)

They had to give up their possessions, bid farewell to their homes, and risk every danger that their unrelenting enemies put in their way.¹

PLOT TO ASSASSINATE THE PROPHET

After the Prophet granted permission to emigrate, there were few Muslims left in Makka with the exception of his noted companions, Abu Bakr and `Ali. The Quraish saw in this the best opportunity to do away with the Prophet. In a secret meeting, they discussed ways and means of carrying out his assassination. An experienced old man from Najd also took part in these discussions. The following chiefs of the most influential tribes were parties to the conspiracy held in Dar-al-Nadwa founded by Qusayy b. Kilaab.

1. Shaiba b. Rabi`a and `Uqba of B. `Abd Shams, the sons of Rabi`a and Abu Sufyaan b. Harb.
2. Tua`ima b. `Adiy, Jubair b. Muti`m and Haarith b. `Aamir of the B. Naufal.
3. Nadr b. Haarith b. Kalada, of the B. `Abd-al-Dar.
4. Abul Bakhtari b. Hisham, Zam`a b. Aswad of the B. Asad b. `Abdul `Uzza and Hakim b. Hizam.
5. Abu Jahl b. Hisham of the B. Makhzum.
6. Nubayh and Munabbih, sons of Hijjaj, of the B. Sahm.
7. Ummaiya b. Khalaf, of the B. Jumah.²

One suggestion was to chain the Prophet, throw him in a prison and build up a wall around him, so that he would taste the

1 "Did you suppose that you would go to paradise without such trials as came to those who passed away before you." (Qur'aan 2:214) Ed.

2 Out of these fourteen plotters, eleven were killed at Badr. Abu Sufyaan, Jubair and Hakim embraced Islam.

death of the poets Zuhair and Nabigha. However, the crafty old man from Najd observed that news of the Prophet's imprisonment would leak out, and the Muslims would act to force his release.

A second suggestion was to bind him to a particularly unruly camel and drive him into the desert. The camel might take him anywhere and he might meet his death as if by accident. Again, the old man doubted the wisdom of this proposal. He reminded them of the power and charm of the Prophet's speech and apprehended that wherever he met people, he would persuade them of his cause.

Finally, all agreed to a plan put forward by Abu Jahl. Each clan would nominate one young man as its representative. Together, these representatives would surround the Prophet's house during the night and when he emerged from his house to offer morning prayers, they would jointly attack and kill him. (Qur'aan 8:30) In this way, all the clans would be equally responsible. It was generally believed that the Prophet's own tribe and his followers together would not dare to take on all the tribes of the conspirators. (II - G - p-222) That was as much as human minds could plan. What the Almighty and All-Wise Creator devised against them is now a golden part of Islamic history. The Prophet made his beloved cousin `Ali lie on his bed in his place, comfortable under his mantle, and assured him of Allah's protection. He himself passed through the seemingly impregnable blockade, reciting verses of the holy Qur'aan from chapter 36 (Yasiin) and throwing dust in the eyes of the conspirators. None

saw¹ him escaping.² This momentous event happened on Thursday, the 12th September, 622 A.D.

The Prophet went directly to the house of Abu Bakr, his trustworthy companion. Abu Bakr speeded up preparation for the onward journey with the collaboration of his daughter Asma`a, who cut her girdle in two and fastened the mouth of a bag of oatmeal.

Under the cover of night, they set out to Mount Thaur, about five miles from Makka. The path was uneven and stony. The ascent to the mount was precipitous, and naturally caused cuts and bruises to their feet. Abu Bakr carried the Prophet on his shoulders for the last part of the ascent until they reached the opening of a cave.

Abu Bakr, after sweeping the cave, and shutting up its small openings, invited the Prophet in.

Meanwhile, around the house of the Prophet, the Quraish waited for him in vain. The early soothing hours of the dawn served only to add to the anguish of the besiegers. Driven to desperation by their unrewarded vigil, they broke in and found `Ali instead. They interrogated him. `Ali answered, "I know nothing! Nor was I commissioned to keep a watch over the Prophet's exit. You were probably overtaken by sleep and you let him slip away."

In shame and anger the Quraish dragged `Ali to the Ka`ba, detained him for sometime and then let him go.³

1 So Michael let David down through a window; and he went and fled and escaped. And Michael took an image and laid in the bed and put down a pillow of goat's hair and covered it with a cloth. I Samuel 19:12-13. (Flight of David).

2 And we have set a bar before them and a bar behind them and (thus) covered them so that they see not. (Qur'aan 36:9)

3 Tabari. p-245

The Quraish then immediately rushed to Abu Bakr's house, and knocked at his door. Asma`a, the daughter of Abu Bakr, answered the call. She was questioned as to the whereabouts of her father. When Asma`a avoided to give any information, the ill-mannered and ill-fated Abu Jahl slapped her on the face so hard that her earrings fell off.¹ An incident deserves to be recorded here. Asma`a stated that her father took away every penny that was in the house (about 6000 Dirhams). Abu Bakr's father, Abu Qahafa,² who had become blind with age, said to his granddaughter, "I feel Abu Bakr has put you at double risk. Not only has he deserted you, but also left you without means to survive." Asma`a replied, "Grandfather, it is not so. He has left enough money for us." Then she took a piece of stone, wrapped it in a cloth several times and placed it where their money was usually kept. He touched the heavily wrapped stone and heaved a sigh of relief. (Ibn Hisham 2:133)

1 Tabari. p-247 and II - G - p-224.

2 Abu Quhafa later embraced Islam. As such, four generations of Abu Bakr were Muslims, a distinction. "The austere and frugal measures of his (Abu Bakr) simplicity insulted the vain magnificence of the Kings." (Decline & Fall of Roman Empire – Gibbon)

5. FLIGHT OF THE PROPHET (HIJRA)

The Prophet and Abu Bakr remained in hiding in the cave for three days¹ and under cover of night, Asma`a brought food for them. `Abdullah b. Abu Bakr kept them in touch with news from Makka.² `Aamir b. Fuhaira, a reliable and inspired shepherd of Abu Bakr's flocks, drove the goats as near to the cave as possible, supplied them with milk, and obliterated all tracks on his way back.³

The sincerity and devotion of Abu Bakr was well rewarded when God revealed the verse, "*Grieve not; Lo! Allah is with us.*" (9:40)

On the fourth night, two camels, well-fed and specially groomed by the family of Abu Bakr for the historic flight, were driven to the foot of mount Thaur by the faithful shepherd `Aamir b. Fuhaira for the onward journey of the Prophet⁴, Abu Bakr, `Aamir and `Abdullah b. Arqat,⁵ (a polytheist employed as a guide). The party was scheduled to reach Yathrib on Monday, the 16th of September, 662 A.D. This Hijra has its parallel with the flights of former Prophets and had similar objectives. (Details may be compared with the narratives of Prophet Ibrahiim, Musa and Dawuud in the Old Testament).

As with earlier Prophets, God was with the Prophet in his Hijra and throughout His help was near at hand.

The guide avoided the main route and instead led them by the seacoast. The Prophet's party was in the plains between the fort of Raabigh and the seacoast when Suraqa Mudlaji, lured by a

1 And when you have stayed three days then you shall go down quickly. (Flight of David) I, Samuel. (20:19)

2 Tabari. (2:247)

3 Bukhaari. (1:553)

4 The Prophet had paid the price of the camels. II - G - p-224.

5 II - G - p-223.

reward the Quraish had announced for the capture of the Prophet, caught sight of them.

`Abdul Rahmaan Mudlaji, cousin of Suraqa, narrated what followed: "Suraqa with his shield on, his spear well-aimed sped like the wind on his mare. He was filled with delight, and was confident

that the prize of a hundred red camels was virtually in his grasp but his fleet-footed mare stumbled and Suraqa fell headlong on the ground. Undeterred, he got up, patted the mare and resumed the chase. The Prophet, who was chanting the Qur'aan in deep communion with his Lord, was told that a pursuer was drawing close. The Prophet prayed, 'My Lord, save us from this evil'. There and then the forelegs of Suraqa's mare sank into the ground and again Suraqa fell flat. Then he realised that it was a folly to challenge one who was divinely protected, still less to seek to overpower him. In utter humiliation, he begged mercy of the Prophet, which was granted. To make amends for his attempt, Suraqa promised to misdirect and keep away any other pursuer. He also asked for a letter of security, which was prepared by `Aamir b. Fuhaira and given to him."¹

The emigrants made the first break in their journey by the tent of Umm-e-Ma`bad. She was well-known for providing comfort to the travellers and storing plenty of water for their use. Abu Bakr asked her if she had something for them to eat. "I would

1 Suraqa was known as Suraqa b. Ju'sham. In fact, Ju'sham was his grandfather and his father's name was Maalik. He came from Kanan. Raabigh and its suburbs were the territory of his tribe. When Suraqa was going back, the Prophet observed, "How splendid he shall look, when the jewel-studded golden bangles of the ruler of Persia will be put around his arms." Suraqa embraced Islam a day after the battle of Uhad. When Persia was conquered in the Caliphate of `Umar the Great, the Crown and other jewellery of the Emperor was laid before the caliph. The dutiful Caliph summoned Suraqa and put around his arms the royal bangles and loudly proclaimed, "God is great. Suraqa an Arab bedouin, puts on the Emperor's bangles." Bukhaari - 4:256-57 and II - G - p-225.

have offered it myself if I had anything", answered the old woman. The Prophet saw a goat standing there and asked if she would permit him to milk it. She replied, "It is there because it is too weak to keep pace with the flock and has no milk in its udders. You can see it for yourself."

The holy Prophet asked for a bucket, uttered the benevolent name of Allah and began to milk the goat. The pail was soon full of milk. The empty pail was filled for the second time and was consumed by the Prophet and his companions. The Prophet milked the goat for the third time and left it for Umm-e-Ma`bad. The refreshed travellers thereafter resumed their journey.

Shortly after their departure, Umm-e-Ma`bad's husband stepped in. Seeing the bucket full of milk, he asked his wife, "Where did this milk come from?" She replied, "Someone divinely gifted came here and the milk is a manifestation of the high spiritual status of the blessed visitor." The man said, "Well, what did he look like?" Umm-e-Ma`bad said, "His face, modest and broad, winning, neither plump nor bold, handsome, graceful; his black, broad and bright eye-lids as if lined with antimony; fine close brow; long neck, long curly hair; serene and full of grace and nobility, captivating every one, graceful, soft-spoken, accent distinct, speech to the point, not short so as to seem lowly, nor tall so as to seem tedious for the hearer. A fresh, green branch of a handsome tree, a graceful sight, an object of reverence for those around him, still and silent when he speaks, trying to excel in compliance when he gave an order; most respected and most honoured."¹

Hearing the description, the husband said, "Surely he is the noble soul from the Quraish. I shall call upon him."²

At the last stage of his journey to Yathrib, the Prophet was pursued by Buraida Aslami. He was the head of his clan. The prize

1 "Muhammad (SAW) was distinguished by the beauty of his person." Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire - Gibbon - p-663.

2 Zad. (3:55) The bedouins called the Prophet 'The noble soul'.

of one hundred red camels had tempted him to manipulate the capture of the Prophet. With a band of seventy adventurers, Buraida Aslami overtook the Prophet's party. The moment he came face to face with the Prophet, so dazzled was he by the grace and radiance of his person, that he embraced Islam, as did all his men after a brief conversation. He was so excited by his conversion to Islam that he tied his turban to his spear, hoisting it as a white flag, a sign to the world around him that an era of love, peace, liberty, and justice had dawned.

6. THIRTEEN YEARS OF MISSION IN MAKKA

During the first phase of the Prophet's mission, the number of converts did not exceed a few hundred, but they were converts of the best quality and character, as God willed. Foremost among them were:

1. `Ali, Abu Bakr, `Uthmaan and `Umar.¹ They succeeded the Prophet and were his Caliphs. Their excellence as scholars, their refined spirituality, intelligence and skill displayed in the administration of a welfare state, was based on total justice and equality.
2. Musa`b b. `Umair, Ja`far Tayyaar and Abu `Ubaida b. al-Jarrah. They were dedicated missionaries. Their enlightened minds drew thousands to the fold of Islam from the people of Yathrib, Abbysinia and Najraan.
3. `Abdullah b. Mas`ud and `Abdul Rahman b. `Awf. Their knowledge of the Traditions left secure the oracular wisdom of the Prophet for all posterity.
4. Zubair, Talha and `Ammar b. Yaasir. Their sacrifices and devotion to the cause of Allah have no parallels in history.
5. Bilaal, Shamus, Umm-e-Habiba and Khunais. Their indomitable perseverance, endurance and resignation to God's will humbled their persecutors.
6. Sakran, Shamus, Umm-e-Habiba and Khunais. They migrated to Abbysinia in order to keep the torch of Islam alight.
7. Lubaid, Suwaid, Saamit, the accomplished (*Kaamil*), and Anis, brother of Abu Zar Ghifaari. They won over

1 This gradation is probably in line with the timing of their acceptance of Islam. Ed.

the wild inhabitants of the desert with their eloquence and stirring verses. Being experienced and knowledgeable, they made good use of human psychology in winning over hordes of bedouins.

8. Tufail b. `Amr Dausy, ruler of a part of Yaman, embraced Islam in Makka and through his efforts and influence, Islam gained a firm hold in Yaman.
9. Abu Zar Ghifaari. He converted his family and half of his tribe to Islam.
10. Damaad Azdi, the reputed soothsayer of Yaman.
11. The tribe of B. `Abdul Ashaal in Yathrib.
12. Tamiim, Na`im, some inhabitants of Syria and several people from Abyssinia and Najraan.

On the way, Zubair b. al-`Awwaam, who was returning from Syria with a caravan of merchants, greeted the Prophet, and presented to him and Abu Bakr, precious white garments.¹

THE PROPHET ENTERS QUBA

The Prophet entered Quba on the eighth day of Rabi`-ul-Awwal,² in the thirteenth year of his mission, (Monday,³ the twenty-third of September, 622 A.D.). The people of Yathrib had been in eager anticipation of his arrival, ever since they received news that he had left Makka. Every day they waited until midday. It is difficult to express the joy they must have felt when at last they caught sight of him. They swarmed around the Prophet, singing in loud chorus, "God is Great, God is Great." Some of them had not seen the Prophet before and so found it difficult to

1 Bukhaari. (4:257) - chapter Hijra

2 Sarur-Al Mah`zun (Shah Wali-Ullah Dehlvi) - d. 1176 A.H.

3 Bukhaari. (4:257) II - G has mentioned 8th Rabi`-ul-Awwal as a Friday which is incorrect.

distinguish between him and Abu Bakr Siddiq. Abu Bakr sensed this situation, quietly moved himself behind the Prophet, and held a sun-shade over his head.

The Prophet halted in Quba for three days till Thursday and the first thing he did there was to lay the foundation of a mosque.¹

`Ali, whom the Prophet had asked to stay behind, in order to restore goods which had been left in trust with the Prophet by the people of Makka, joined him at that time, having covered the whole distance from Makka on foot.

THE PROPHET ENTERS MADINA (YATHRIB)

It was Friday, the twelfth of Rabi`-ul-Awwal,² when the Prophet left Quba and arrived at the quarters of B. Saliim, in Yathrib. It was about time for the Friday prayers and he offered his devotions there with one hundred followers. That was the first Friday congregational prayers held in Islam.

FRIDAY SERMON TO B. SALIIM

The Prophet spoke thus: "All praise and thanks are only due to Allah. I offer my praise to Him and seek His aid, grace and guidance. I repose my faith only in Him. I do not disobey Him and I am against those who disobey Him. I stand witness that none deserves worship but Allah alone. None is His partner and Muhammad (SAW) is His Servant and Messenger. He has sent him to the world with His Guidance, Light and His Warning. He appointed him at a time when no Messenger of His had been sent to this world for centuries. Knowledge had declined. Misguidance

1 Abi Mas`ud. (Commentary) V.8 - p-152.

2 Corresponding to the 27th of Sept. 622. A.D. (Zad-al-Ma`ad gives the day as a Sunday, which is incorrect).

deepened. The Messenger had been sent to mankind as the Day of Judgement and the final end draws nearer.”

“He who obeys the commands of Allah and His Messenger shall find the way to salvation. And he who goes against His commands will go astray. By disregarding the Laws of God, man acts only against his own nature and thus adopts the wrong direction. You Muslims, I counsel you to obey God.”

“The fairest advice which one Muslim can offer to another is to persuade him to keep fresh in mind the Hereafter. Avoid things and ways forbidden. Take it into your hearts. It will shield you against all evils. And when any one directs his action sincerely to God, openly, or secretly he is enabled to master the remembrance of God and obtain a world of happiness here and in the Hereafter, where the worth of deeds will be rightly assessed. But if anybody fails entirely to rise to that standard of devotion and piety, he will wish in vain that his record of deeds and actions be kept at a great distance from him. Those who accept His word as inviolable and carry out His instructions, for him God ordains, ‘We never change our Word and We do no injustice to our servants.’ (i.e. good deeds will be amply rewarded).”

“You Muslims, keep fear of God in mind, in all your affairs, open and secret, for the sins of those who fear God are written off and their reward is increased. Persons conscious of God will receive His bounteous Grace. It is only fear of Him which softens the displeasure, wrath and indignation of God; It is only obedience to Him which exalts one’s status.”

“You Muslims, enjoy life and its pleasures with moderation but do not be so lost in them as to fall short of your duties to God. For that purpose God has revealed His Book to guide His servants into His way. He wants to distinguish the righteous from the wrong-doers. God has been kind and gracious to you, you should be likewise to others. And do your best in the way of God with singleness of mind. He has chosen you for the mission; and He has named you ‘Muslims’ (i.e. surrendered to God). He wants the

deniers of God to perish by their denial of Truth and the survivors to survive in Truth. And all acts of virtue flow from His creatures by the grace of God. O, you people! Repeat the name of God; and act for the future life. Truly, he who levels his affairs with God, his affairs with people are automatically levelled. Aye, God holds sway over His servants; they do not hold any sway over Him. God is the Master of His servants, but they have no say in His affairs. God is the Greatest of all; all means and ability to do good, proceed only from Him.”¹ At the end of the sermon, the Prophet entered the town by the South. And from that moment, the name Yathrib was changed into Madina-tun-Nabii (the city of the Prophet), which is now commonly known as Madina. His entry was glorious. All lanes were resounding with the soul-stirring verses in praise of God. Men and women, the old and the young were struck with wonder by the enthralling beauty of the Light of God. Scholars from amongst the people of the Book on that day of historic welcome may have remembered the verse, “God came from Teman and the holy One from Mount Paran.”² His glory covered the firmament and the earth was filled with His Praise.” (Selah 3:3, Habakkuk) The innocent girls of the Ansaar (Helpers) celebrated his entry by chanting a song of praise whose meaning is, “From the Southern hills³ the full moon (i.e. the Prophet, who had entered Madina from the South) arose with grace. Let us bow in gratitude for Lord God’s favours to mankind (in the person of the Prophet). Let us obey his commands.” These girls were the

1 Tabari (English Version) State University, New York), p-2.

2 The Old Testament speaks of Makka as Paran because Pharan b. `Awf b. Hamiir had conquered and annexed it. Genesis XXI:21 says, “Ishmael lived in the desert of Paran.” The Qur’aan says, “The first sanctuary for mankind was that at Becca.” - 3:96. Paran is also spoken of in Numbers (1:12) and Deuteronomy (43:11). All these references establish that Paran signifies Makka. The Arabs spell it as Faran.

3 Thani-at or Hills. During his flight, the Prophet passed by the hills of Bol, the hills of Jaabir and the hills of Marwan. Thania Vida, a place for farewell, is a hillock close to Madina. The people of Madina bid farewell to their guests by the side of this hill. These hills are mentioned in Isaiah. (42:11)

daughters of those who had travelled to Makka* to swear allegiance to the Prophet or who had embraced Islam through the teachings of Musa`b b. `Umair and Ibn Maktuum.

UNPRECEDENTED SACRIFICES BY THE ANSAAR

The people of Madina, now referred to as the Ansaar or Helpers, were neither owners of large capital nor wealthy landlords; but they showed unprecedented hospitality and affection to all new converts from Makka. Whenever any Makkan escaped and chose to migrate to Madina, struck by poverty, hunger or loss of family, the Ansaar were eager to claim the fugitive, and the matter was determined by drawing of lots. The lucky winner led the comforted emigrant to his house and transferred to him half of all he possessed - house, clothes, ornaments and furniture, land and cattle.¹ Above all, he placed

* Mecca, sometimes also called Becca, (as in Psalm 84:6 and the Qur'aan), literally means a place of concourse (pilgrimage and `Umra). It is thought by some to be the Mesa of the Scripture, a name not unknown to Arabians and supposed to be taken from one of Ismaa'il's son (Sales refers to Massa as the seventh son of Ishmael Gen. 25:14). George Sale, translation of the Qur'aan - p-3. (preliminary discourse)

1 "No other religion in history spread so rapidly as Islam... The West has widely believed that this surge of religion was made possible by the sword. But no modern scholar accepts that idea, and the Koran is explicit in support of the freedom of conscience. Testimony is overwhelming that 'followers of the Book' were usually given decent treatment, sanctuary and freedom to worship as they wished. Many Westerners, accustomed by their history books to believe that Muslims were barbarous infidels, find it difficult to comprehend how profoundly our intellectual life has been influenced by Muslim scholars in the field of science, medicine, mathematics, geography and philosophy. Crusaders who invaded the holy Land to fight Muslims returned to Europe with new ideas of love, poetry, chivalry, warfare and government. Our concept of what a university should be was deeply modified by Muslim scholars, who perfected the writing of history and who brought to Europe much Greek learning. More than most religions, Islam preaches the brotherhood of all races, colours and nations within its fold.

himself at the emigrant's disposal for any service, and finally thanked God in all humility that he was enabled to share his possessions with such a dedicated person. We now quote Isaiah XXI, which foretells all the above events under the caption:

AN ORACLE CONCERNING ARABIA

- 21:13 In the forest in Arabia shall ye lodge, O ye travelling companies of Dedanim. (Dedan was the grandson of Abraham. Hence this refers to the Ansaar, descendants of Dedanim).
- 21:14 The inhabitants of the land of Tema (Madina) brought water to him that was thirsty, they provided with their bread him that fled. (Tema was the eighth son of Ishmael.)
- 21:15 For they fled from the swords, from the drawn sword, and from the bent bow, and from the grievousness of war.
- 21:16 For thus hath the Lord said unto me, within a year, according to the years of a hireling, and all the glory of Kedar shall fail. (The Makkan were Kedar's descendants).
- 21:17 And the residue of the number of archers, the mighty men of the children of Kedar, shall be diminished; for the Lord God of Israel hath spoken it.

Verse 13 commands the Dedanim to receive and entertain the emigrants with bread and water. Dedan was the grandson of Abraham from Keturah, his third wife, and brother of Sheba.¹ The

Muhammad himself probably had exactly the same skin colouring as Jesus Christ - a very sun-tanned white - but today his followers embrace all colours; black men from Africa, yellow men from China, brown men from Malaysia, white men from Turkey." James A. Michener. *Islam, the Misunderstood Religion*. Reader's Digest, American ed. May, 1955.

1 Genesis. (25:1) Abraham's wife Keturah bore him Jokshan, father of Sheba and Dedan.

Children of Sheba and Dedan settled in Yaman. The havoc caused by the inundation of Arm,¹ (Yaman) scattered these tribes. The tribes of Aus and Khazraj, known as the Ansaar, were the descendants of these tribes. The well-known historian Ibn Khaldun has dealt with the subject at length. Thus the verse foretells that the emigration of Makkan Muslims would be forced upon them by the swords and bows of the Quraish and that their supporters at Madina would be from the descendants of Dedan and Sheba, their cousins.

Tema² was the eighth son of Ismaa`il whose children settled in the South of Madina. The Book commands the Madinites and the inhabitants of the suburbs to receive and tend to the refugees. Verses 16 and 17 foretell the bitter end of the Quraish; who are here spoken of as the children of Kedar,³ the second son of Ismaa`il. It is also foretold by V.21:16 that within a year the archers of the Quraish would diminish in numbers and their supremacy would end. Exactly one year after the flight (Hijra) the battle of Badr took place, where eleven of the noted chiefs and well known fighters of the Quraish were killed, their prestige and power thereby suffering heavily. The prediction is very clear as all the relevant persons and places have been specified.

1 The Qur'aan (34:16); and II - G - p-693 says, God destroyed the dam (by a torrent).

2 Genesis. (25:15)

3 Kedar is spelled by Arabs as Qaidhar. Some Scriptures spell it as Qidar.

PART - II

- 1. A CONTRAST BETWEEN CONDITIONS IN MAKKA AND MADINA**
- 2. THE AFTERMATH OF THE OCCUPATION OF MAKKA**
- 3. INVITATIONS TO RULERS OF OTHER COUNTRIES**
- 4. DEPUTATIONS**
- 5. THE BEGINNING OF THE PROPHET'S ILLNESS**

1. A CONTRAST BETWEEN CONDITIONS IN MAKKA AND MADINA

In Makka, the Quraish wielded all power and dominated in all matters. Most of them were polytheists.

Madina, by contrast, was the metropolis of a multi-racial society, consisting mostly of Jews, Idolaters, and a small number of Christians. The Jewish tribes of B. Naadir, B. Qainuq`a, and B. Quraiza, rolled in wealth and lived in fortresses. Ever since Prophet Musa had foretold in his exhortations (Deuteronomy - 18:15)¹ that God would raise a Prophet from among his brethren, the Jews had been looking for his appearance. They were told that the Prophet, who would come of the children of Ismaa`il, would rid the Jews of their humiliation and restore their former glory and sovereignty. Ever since their expulsion from Syria into slavery and servitude, they had eagerly looked forward to the appearance of the Promised Comforter. So it was that the Jews of Madina welcomed the awaited Prophet from the Ismaa`ilites, but when they came to know that the Prophet confirmed his faith in the Messiah, believed his teachings to be God-inspired, and that the Jews had acted criminally against him, they turned hostile to the Prophet.

Similarly, ever since the chosen servant of God, `Isa, had given in his last sermon the heartening news of Paraclete, the Comforter, and his everlasting teachings, and had commanded his followers to obey him, the Christians had also been looking forward to his appearance. They believed that the awaited Prophet would punish the Jews for their persecution of the Christians, add glamour to the glory of the Christians, and reaffirm the

1 God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren (the Arabs), like unto me; unto him ye shall hearken.

a) Deuteronomy (34:10): And there arose not a prophet since in Israel like unto Moses.

b) Genesis (16:12): And he (Ishmael), shall dwell in the presence of all his brethren.

truthfulness of the Messiah. But when they found that the Prophet did not confirm their self-made dogma,¹ viz. the Trinity, the

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- 1 In the beginning, for years the Church preached only three articles of faith:
- a) Duty unto God, e.g. man must glorify the High and the Exalted;
 - b) Duty to self, e.g. man should personally lead a life based on virtue and righteousness;
 - c) Duty to mankind, e.g. he should do good to his fellow beings. But the external influences changed the shape of Christian beliefs.

We reproduce below the relevant quotations from *An Apology of Defence of the Christians against the Accusation of the Gentiles* written by Tertullian at Rome, during the persecution of Severus. It dates about A.D. 200.

“These holy Scriptures teach us that there is one God, Who made the world out of nothing, Who, though daily seen, is invisible; His infiniteness is known only to Himself; His immensity conceals, but at the same time, discovers Him. He has ordained for men, according to their lives, rewards and punishments. He will raise all the dead that had ever lived from the creation of the world, will command them to reassume their bodies, and thereupon adjudge them to felicity that had no end, or to eternal flames.” (p-41-42)

From Tertullian’s able work, we see what Christianity was while it was suffering persecution and struggling for existence. We have now to see what it became when in possession of imperial power. Great is the difference between Christianity under Severus, (d. 211 A.D.) and Christianity after Constantine. (d. 337 A.D.). Many of the doctrines which at the latter period were pre-eminent, in the former, were unknown. (p.45) Two causes led to the amalgamation of Christianity with Paganism:

- a) The political necessities of the new dynasty.
 - b) The policy adopted by the new religion to ensure its spread.
- “Though the Christian party had proved itself sufficiently strong to give a master to the empire, it was never sufficiently strong to destroy its antagonist, ‘Paganism’.” p-46, “In this, Christianity differed from Islam, which absolutely annihilated its antagonist, and spread its own doctrine (of unity of God) without adulteration.” p-46

“As years passed on, the faith described by Tertullian was transmuted into one more fashionable and more debased; it was incorporated with the old Greek mythology. Olympus was restored but the Divinities passed under other names.” p-47, “Views of the Trinity, in accordance with Egyptian traditions, were established. Not only was the adoration of Isis (In Egyptian mythology - one of the Chief deities, sister or sister-wife of Osiris), under a new name restored, but even her image, standing on the Crescent moon, reappeared.” p-47, ‘Conflict between Science and Religion’ by Dr. J.W. Draper, published by Kegan Paul and Co., New York, 1878.

Crucifixion, Monasticism and the Infallibility of the Pope, they too, became hostile.

To understand the problems in Madina, it is essential to briefly review the position of `Abdullah b. Ubayy b. Salul. He was a distinguished person in Madina, with great influence over the tribes of Aus and Khazraj and envisaged being the leader of the two combined. It was to his displeasure then that he found that the Aus and the Khazraj were fast going over to Islam, so he himself (after the victory of the Muslims in the battle of Badr) made a show of joining the Muslim ranks. To retain his former popularity and influence among the Jews, however, whose animosity towards the Prophet had increased very considerably, he had divulged his secret intentions to them beforehand and found in them a receptive audience.

`Abdullah b. Ubayy felt that Islam had crushed all his aspirations, so he did his best to harm the Muslims as and when he could. The group that he led came to be known among the Muslims as the hypocrites.

This background reveals that there were various obstructions to maneuver, in the seemingly favourable atmosphere of al-Madina. To counteract the duplicity and guiles of `Abdullah b. Ubayy and his followers, who were flourishing with the firm support of the Jews, the Prophet laid special stress on building the character of the new converts according to the sublime teachings of Islam. Through his own exhortations and the ardent efforts of his earliest companions, these teachings were communicated to every believer in Madina.

These efforts bore fruit as prophesied in the Qur'aan, "*For indeed the life to come, will be better for thee than its earlier part.*" (93:4)

We have already stated that there was a multi-racial society in Madina, but the Jews were particularly powerful and lived secure in their commanding fortresses.

The Prophet examined the entire situation in Madina. In the first year of his emigration he thought it advisable to enter into an inter-communal Pact, ratified by all concerned, so that even in the divergence of race and creed, a general unity and consensus might be obtained and all the parties to the Pact ensured of an equal opportunity in the evolution of society and civilisation.

Extracts from the Pact are:¹

1. That the parties to this Pact shall be counted a single nation.
2. The Jews of B. `Awf shall be treated as one nation (Ummat-e-Wahida) with the Muslims.
3. If any one wages a war against any party of the alliance, the members of the Pact shall take a united stand.
4. The parties to the Pact will be mutually linked by ties of sincerity, and mutual benefits, and shall not cause damage or injury to mutual interests. In the case of war, the Jews will share the expenditure with the Muslims.
5. The privileges of the people allied to the Jews will be reckoned at par with the Jews.
6. No person shall act to the detriment of any party to the Alliance. The oppressed shall be helped and aided.
7. It will be deemed a sacrilege for the parties to the Alliance to shed any blood on the soil of Madina.
8. Those under protection of the Allies will be privileged to the same rights as the allied parties.

1 Ibn Hisham. (2:147)

9. In case of any misunderstanding, dispute or breach of peace among the allied parties, the final determination shall rest with God and the Prophet (upon him be peace and God's blessing).

All the tribes residing in Madina ratified the Pact. The Prophet desired to extend it to the *bordering* tribes to the mutual advantage of all. His aims were that tribal wars should cease to disfigure the land of God with human blood and the Quraish of Makka should not be given any opportunity to provoke the members of the Pact to stand up in war against the Muslims.

With this message of peace, the Prophet travelled to Waddaan, a place equidistant from Makka and Madina, and persuaded the tribe of B. Damra b. Bakr b. `Abd-Manat to join the alliance. Makhshi b. `Amr-al-Zamri signed the Pact on behalf of his people. Then he travelled to Razwi in Rabi` I, 2 A.H. and persuaded the people of Mount Buwat to join the alliance. In the month of Jamadi II of the same year, the Prophet travelled up to Zul `Ushaira, a place between Yanbue and Madina, and obtained the signatures of B. Mudlaj to the Pact.

If the Prophet had more time to spread the blessings of that Pact over a wider area, he would have extended the frontiers of peace and stable co-existence. However, the machinations of the Quraish of Makka did not cease although the Muslims had emigrated to Yathrib, a place of refuge and more than three hundred miles away.

The Quraish had previously made a long voyage to extradite the refugee Muslims from Abyssinia, but that was the domain of a King and beyond their physical control. They could not have done more on that occasion than what they did. Now that the Muslims were accessible by land, the Quraish pursued their evil intent more vigorously and increased the pressure. To begin with, they wrote threatening letters to `Abdullah b. Ubayy b. Salul and his associates, among the Aus and the Khazraj, "You have given

shelter to this ‘Muhammad’ (SAW). Now it is up to you to fight him out of your place. Failing that, you should know that we have sworn to fall suddenly upon you, kill your young men, and take your women as prisoners.”

On receipt of that letter, Ibn Ubayy and his associates plotted to make war on the Prophet. When the Prophet discovered the conspiracy, he personally contacted the war-mongers and said,

“O You people, the Quraish have laid a snare for you. If you yield to their threat, your loss will be far greater than if you refuse to carry out their threat. If you fight the Muslims, you will be slaying your own sons and brothers. If you fight the Quraish, you will be fighting those who are strangers to your families.” This put the perspective right before their eyes and the assembly dispersed seemingly satisfied.

Now the Quraish conspired in secret with the Jews. Having won them over, and confident of success, they sent an ultimatum to the Muslims. “That you have fled (safely) may mislead you to underestimate us. Your survival in Madina will only be short-lived; we shall soon swoop upon you and dispose of you.” This message¹ was followed by trial raids.

In Rabi` I, 2 A.H. Kurz b. Jaabir-al-Fihri, one of the Quraish Chiefs, seized the grazing cattle of the Muslims from the fields of Madina. The intention was to impress on the Muslims that the Quraish could take away their cattle at will, even from as far away as Makka.

Thereafter, in the month of Ramzaan, 2 A.H., Abu Jahl made it known in Makka that the Muslims would waylay a Makkan caravan, laden with gold and merchandise from Syria. By this ploy he hoped to win over people whose capital was invested in the caravan and people whose relatives formed the caravan, as

1 Abu Dawuud from `Abdul Rahmaan b. Ka`b. (3:404), No. 3004.

well as those in whom hatred of the Muslims persisted. All such misinformation prompted the Makkans to force a war on the Muslims.

The relentless persecution of the Muslims by the Quraish had forced them to seek refuge and a place to worship in peace. However, no further fleeing was possible. Now there was left no other alternative but to face a determined enemy. If the Muslims had lapsed into complacency, they would have been annihilated with no one spared to raise aloud the name of the One God. That would have been the negation of Islam.

A battalion of 1,000 well-equipped men with 700 camels and 300 horses, under the command of Abu Jahl, advanced towards Madina. The caravan, for whose protection he ostensibly set out, had since arrived safely in Makka. Yet Abu Jahl decided to go ahead with his offensive. There was no doubt left that the Quraish aimed only to annihilate the unequipped and partially unsettled Muslims as was earlier threatened by them.

The Prophet held a counsel with his companions, the Muhajirs and the Ansaars. The Muhajirs answered to his satisfaction. Again he asked and again the Muhajirs responded to his satisfaction. He repeated his query a third time. The Ansaars then felt that the question was being addressed to them. Their tribal chief Sa'd b. Mua'd submitted, "Perhaps your Holiness feels that the Ansaars do not think themselves duty bound to go out of their town and support you. I submit on behalf of the Ansaars: Make or break your pact with anybody; use as little or as much as you please, we shall obey what we shall be commanded. Even if you swoop down to the spring of `Imraan, or command us to dive deep into the sea, we shall be everywhere with you." Miqdad added, "O Prophet of God, we are not like the followers of the Prophet Musa, who said, "Go thou and thy God, fight the foe, we

shall sit here and wait.” We will fight for your cause on your right and on your left. All of us here are ever at your service.”¹

The Muslims had made no preparations for a full-scale war. Now in haste they could muster only 313 men from the Muhajirs and the Ansaar (the emigrants and the helpers). Until then, the Muslims were not permitted to seek war but finally after a bitter test of patience and endurance spread over fourteen years, Allah permitted the Muslims to rise up in self-defence:

“Permission to fight is given to those against whom war is wrongfully waged; because they have been molested and God is Powerful to protect them. They (Muslims) were driven from their homes, because they accepted only God as their Lord. And if God had not asked some men to repel by means of other, then surely all monasteries and churches, synagogues and mosques in which Allah’s name is abundantly extolled would have been pulled down.” (Qur’aan 22:39-40)

The grounds upon which permission to resist the invaders was given to Muslims, are distinct and clear:

1. Those who were to stand up in self-defence were the oppressed.
2. Those who were determined to invade, and would not be persuaded to desist, were the aggressors.
3. The oppressed Muslims were forced out of their homes and dispossessed of all they owned, only because they held a different belief.

The last but most significant argument was to act in support of a general principle - freedom of religion. It is also self-evident that not only did the Muslims have to defend their personal, national or religious obligations but that they had also pledged to protect all who stood by different faiths, or

1 Zad. (3:173)

else the sanctity of Pacts would have been weakened. Moreover, as God says, *"A precedent would have been laid to level the places of worship of all nations."* (Qur'aan 22:40)

THE DECISIVE DAY - THE BATTLE OF BADR

In the month of Ramzaan, 2 A.H. the Prophet set out from Madina with 313 followers, more than 60 emigrants and 240 Ansaars. There were only two horsemen and sixty camel-riders with them. It was a strange coincidence that the number of those who fought Jalut under the command of Talut was also 313.¹ At Badr, the defenders found that the enemy was three times more in number, and had ten times more arms and equipment.

A day before the actual combat, the Prophet inspected the battlefield and pin-pointing certain spots, foretold where the enemies of God would be felled the next day. It was Friday, the 17th of Ramzaan. Before the battle began, the Prophet prayed to God with humility. "If these Muslims perish, none will remain on earth to cry aloud Thy Unity." The Muslims also prayed in similar words and so it was that with the help of God, the invaders were completely routed. Abu Jahl was killed on the spot that the Prophet had indicated for him. Eleven out of the fourteen Chiefs who had taken part in the plot to murder the Prophet on the night of Hijra were slain. The three who survived eventually sought shelter and solace in Islam.² In all, seventy of the enemy were killed and another seventy were taken prisoner.

1 "No strength have we today to stand up against Goliath (Jalut) and his forces. But those of them who believed replied: Many a small band by the grace of Allah overcame a great army. Allah is with the steadfast. Fill our hearts with patience O God and make us firm of foot and help us against the unbelievers." (Qur'aan 2:249)

2 Bukhaari from Bra` (5:5), Tabari (2:273)

According to the law as it stood at that time, infused with the spirit of vengeance and the desire to overawe other warring tribes, it would have been quite reasonable to slay the prisoners. However, the Prophet released all of them against a ransom, excluding those who could teach the children of the Ansaar.

The total defeat of the Makkans also upheld the truth of the prophecy in the Book of Isaiah, "Within a year, according to the years of a hireling, and all the glory of Kedar shall fail; and the residue of the number of archers, the mighty men of the children of Kedar, shall be diminished; for the Lord God of Israel hath spoken it." (Isaiah 21: 16-17)

What was foretold in the Qur'aan did indeed happen, "*Verily God hath all power to succour them to victory.*" (22:39) The day of this battle of Badr is spoken of in the Qur'aan as *Yaum-al-Furqan* - the Decisive Day; because the Muslims, as well as those of the Scriptures, found therein the truth of their Books, in support of the truth of Islam. The Qur'aan says of this event, "*God helped you at Badr, when you were weak, now observe your duty to God, thus, show your gratitude.*" (3:123)

ANOTHER CONSPIRACY TO MURDER

A few days after the battle of Badr, two Makkans, Safwan b. Ummmaiya, whose father was killed, and `Umair b. Wahb, whose son was still a prisoner of the Muslims, met in a wasteland and devised a plot against the Prophet.

`Umair observed, "If I did not have a debt which I must but cannot repay, and if I had no concern for my family who would be left behind helpless, I would myself have sped to Madina and returned only after I had murdered Muhammad (SAW)."

Safwan consoled him, saying, "I will pay off your debt and take it upon myself to sustain your family until I breathe my last."

`Umais said, "Well, let it remain a close secret." Then `Umais sharpened his sword, smeared it with poison and set off for Madina. He was settling his camel in front of the Prophet's mosque, when the animal grunted aloud. `Umar Faaruq recognised him and also saw through his mischief as `Umais was also armed with a sword. Then he went to the Prophet and informed him of `Umais b. Wahb's arrival. The Prophet commanded, "Let him come to me." `Umar took hold of `Umais's sword and bending him by the neck, led him to the Prophet, who said, "Umar, release him, let him come to me." `Umais stepped forward and saluted the Prophet. The Prophet asked: "Say what brings you here?" to which Umais answered, "Only to obtain the release of my son." The Prophet enquired, "What about this sword?" `Umais replied, "This sword and our other swords did not achieve anything before!" The Prophet again desired him to speak the simple truth, but `Umais repeated the same answer.

The Prophet then observed, "Behold; you and Safwan went out of Makka into a wilderness. Safwan promised to pay off your debts and sustain your family after you, and you pledged to murder me. You have come here only with that purpose.¹ `Umais, why did you not realise that God was my Protector?"

`Umais was non-plussed by this disclosure, and affirmed, "Now my heart believes that you truly are the Prophet and Messenger of God. It was a light affair for us, the Quraish, to disbelieve the myth of (as I thought then) heavenly news and revelations unfolded by you; but how can I interpret the revealing of this close secret, which was known to no third person other than myself and Safwan? I am thankful to God, that He had forged this way to lead me to Islam." The Prophet commanded his companions to instruct `Umais to the teachings of Islam, and release his son. `Umais submitted, "O Prophet of God, but permit me to go to Makka and preach Islam and annoy the idolaters as vehemently as I used to molest the Muslims."

1 II - G - p-319.

`Umair returned to Makka and preached Islam whereupon many people became Muslims by his endeavours.

There in Makka, after `Umair's departure, Safwan,¹ jubilant over his strategy and confident of its success, assured the chiefs of the Quraish that they would soon forget all they had suffered at Badr. He was shocked then by the news of `Umair's conversion and swore, "I shall never speak to `Umair in my life, nor render him any service."

After the defeat at Badr, Abu Sufyaan had sworn not to bathe until he had avenged the Muslims. Accordingly, he set out with 200 riders towards Madina. When he reached its outskirts, he left his followers behind and entered Madina himself under the cover of night. He met Sallam b. Mishkam, a Jew. They spent the night drinking and conspiring. They probably decided that the time was not yet ripe for any action. Abu Sufyaan left for Makka by dawn and on his way back burnt a few young date-palms, killing a Muslim and his ally. When the Muslims heard news of him, they pursued his party to Qar Qara Tul Kudr and so the expedition was known by that name. The cavalry of Abu Sufyaan, to lighten their weight, threw away some of their bags of flour, which the Muslims picked up. Thus the expedition also came to be known as the raid of al-Sawiq.

BATTLE OF UHAD

The Quraish sallied forth towards Madina in the month of Shawwaal, 3 A.H. It was their fourth attack. This time they raised money by general contributions. Abu `Azza, the poet,² had travelled to gain the support of B. Kinaana in favour of the Quraish. Fifty thousand grams of gold, the profits of a trip to Syria, nothing of which was distributed, were diverted to the war

1 Safwan, a chief of Makka, embraced Islam in 9 A.H. Tabari (3:15)

2 II - G - p-370.

fund. In all, an army of 5000 warriors,¹ of whom 3000 were cameleers, 200 horsemen, 700 armoured footmen and the rest fully armed, advanced on Madina. The Prophet was of the opinion that a defence should be offered from near Madina,² but the final decision, resolved by a majority of votes, was to meet the invaders at Uhad.

The Muslim army numbered one thousand. At the last moment `Abdullah b. Ubayy b. Salul turned traitor and withdrew his 300 followers.³ Only 700 ill-equipped Muslims remained to face 5000, who besides being properly armed, were full of rancour and revenge. To begin with, the Muslims paralysed the enemy and twelve of their famed standard bearers were killed, eight of them by the valiant `Ali. However, most of the Muslim archers,⁴ against explicit instructions, but tempted by the conduct of their colleagues who had started collecting booty after the initial successful onslaught of the Muslims, left the valley of the mountain opening, where they had been stationed. The vigilant enemy finding the opening, manoeuvred around and were able to attack the Muslims from two sides. The Muslims suffered heavy losses and a large number of the army were demoralised and scattered. Only twelve companions remained by the side of the Prophet, among them, Abu Bakr, `Umar, `Ali, `Abdul Rahmaan b. `Awf, Sa'd b. Waqqaas, Talha b. `Ubaidullah, Zubair b. `Awwaam and Abu `Ubaida b. al-Jarrah. Encouraged by this turn of fortune, the enemy closed in on the Prophet.

The enemy hemmed in the Prophet, and began to hurl stones at him. The stone thrown by Ibn Shahab struck his arm, but `Utba b. Abu Waqqaas's stone smashed his tooth. The Prophet fell to the ground and was carried into the safety of a cave. Rumours spread of his martyrdom. The womenfolk rushed forward to help.

1 Ibid - p-163. (Some historians give the number as 3000)

2 Ibid - p-371.

3 Ibid - p-372.

4 II - G - p-379.

Sayyida Faatima washed her father's wounds and when the blood from his forehead did not cease to flow, she burnt a straw mattress and filled the wound with its ash. `Ali brought water in his shield. `A`aisha and Umm-e-Sulaim brought water bags for the wounded.¹

Seventy companions gave their lives as martyrs.² The greatest loss was the martyrdom of Musa`b b. `Umair whom the Prophet had deputed to explain the teachings of Islam to the people of Madina and whose ardour had won over to Islam a considerable number among the Aus and Khazrij.

His wife Hamna b. Jahsh, came to the battlefield. She first heard news of her brother's martyrdom and uttered '*Inna Lillah*' (we are to return to God) and prayed for him. Then, when she was told about the martyrdom of her uncle, she again repeated, '*Inna Lillah*'. However, when the news of her husband's death was broken to her, she screamed a wild cry in spite of herself. The Prophet remarked, "Behold, how deeply she loved her husband."

Yet another disastrous, poignant and personal blow for the Prophet was the martyrdom of his uncle, Hamza. True to his character, the lion of God had fought gallantly, dispatched some standard bearers and well-known fighters and 'spared no one, like a huge camel'.³ He was a source of great strength and pride for the Prophet, and for his cause. The vile, vengeful enemies dishonoured and mutilated Hamza's body. Safiya, Zubair's mother, came to see the corpse. Zubair stopped his mother at a distance, but she said, "I know my brother's body has been dishonoured but that should be an occasion of glory for us. Zubair, my son, I shall neither weep nor cry. I will only offer prayers for my brother's soul and come back."⁴

1 Muslim from Anas, p-1953.

2 Bukhaari from Sehl b. Sa`d and from Khabbaab. A lined sheet was put over the corpses as a shroud, their feet left uncovered, and grass laid over them.

3 II - G - p-375.

4 Tabari. (2:532)

In this battle Anas b. Nadr also achieved martyrdom. He beheld certain brave Muslims throwing their arms down and squatting in grief. "What makes you sit there?" he asked. They said, "The Prophet of God has been killed." "Then let us go forward and give our lives in the way he did." Having uttered these words, he fought on single handedly, receiving seventy wounds before his headlong entry into Paradise.¹

Sa'd b. Rabi` was another prominent martyr of this battle. The Prophet sent men to find him. He was panting and failing for breath. Asked how he was, Sa'd answered, "Count me now among the dead. But convey my *Salaam* (greetings) to the Prophet of God for guiding his followers, and tell my brothers they should not allow the enemy to touch the Prophet's skin."²

Years later, a companion of the Prophet said, "I went to see Abu Bakr. A little girl was sitting on his chest. He stroked her affectionately again and again. I asked him who she was." Said he, "She is the daughter of Sa'd b. Rabi`. He was more excellent than I, and he will be counted among the personal associates of the holy Prophet on the day of Judgement."³

Also martyred in this battle was `Umara b. Ziyad. The last effort of his life was to push forward his cheek to touch the Prophet's foot.⁴ That indelible gesture of profound love for the Prophet was beautifully expressed by a poet:

My slaughtered head beneath his feet

*Such luck would that I could meet.*⁵

1 Ibid.

2 Ibid. (517)

3 Tabari - p-528.

4 Shifa Qadi `Ayad (died 544 A.H. on Friday) printed at Siddiqi Press, Barailly, (India) in 1282 A.H., p-47.

5 **THE BATTLE OF UHAD IN THE QUR'AAN**

Uhad is as much a signpost for Islam as Badr. In defeat Muslims must not be dejected or give up their struggle. Faith means hope, striving steadfastly

Deeds of unparalleled courage and devotion were seen of Abu Dujaana, Hanzla (bathed by angels), `Ali Murtaza and Talha. Talha averted with his hand arrows aimed at the Prophet of God. That hand became useless for ever. The rumour of the martyrdom of the holy Prophet overwhelmed Hind,¹ a woman of B. Dinaar and wife of `Amr b. al-Jamuh. She rushed to the battlefield to verify it. On her way she was informed that her father, husband and son had been lost in the battle. Each time she asked, "But tell me about the holy Prophet." Finally, she was told, "He is safe and secure by the grace of God." "No, not that way", she replied, "but let me see his face." When she indeed beheld his revealing face from a distance, she was reassured and said, "Now O God, all distress can be borne." (Zurqani - 6:290)

Some companions asked the Prophet to invoke the curse of God against the perfidious enemy. He told them, "I am not sent to solicit curses. Rather, I am sent as a preacher and a mercy to

towards one's goal. "If a wound has touched you, be sure a similar wound has touched the others. Such days of varying fortunes We give to men by turns: that Allah may know those that believe, and that He may take to Himself from your ranks, Martyrs - witnesses to truth. Allah's object also is to purge those that are true in Faith and deprive of blessing those that resist Faith. Do you think that you would enter heaven without Allah testing those of you who fought hard in His cause and remained steadfast? Muhammad is no more than a Messenger: many were the Messenger that passed away before him. If he died (as it was assumed in the battle of Uhud) or were slain, will you then turn back on your heels? If any did turn back, not the least harm will he do to Allah; but Allah will swiftly reward those who serve Him with gratitude. Nor can a soul die except by Allah's leave, the term being fixed. If any do desire a reward in this life, We shall give it to him." The archers at Uhud deserted the posts for the sake of plunder i.e. 'a reward in this life' and thus put themselves and the whole of their army into jeopardy. (A. Yusuf `Ali) Qur'aan 3:144 - Note 461.

- 1 The valiant lady (a symbol of resignation to the will of God) is a pearl of undiminishing splendour in the crown of woman-hood. In fourteen Centuries of Islam, the author is the first historian to find out her name. May God be pleased with his effort. Ed.

mankind. O God, guide my people to Thy Way; for they do not know what they are doing to me.”

After the battle of Uhad, the enemies of Islam continued their machinations. They pursued tactics to keep alive their animosity. In 4 A.H., they devised a plot in collaboration with seven people of the B. al-Qara and B. `Adal. They came to Madina and requested the Prophet to send some preachers with them, because their tribes were in a mood to accept Islam. The Prophet of God sent ten disciples under the leadership of `Aasim b. Thaabit.

When those saintly men were out of the safety of Madina, 200 armed men ambushed them. `Aasim¹ and seven of his companions were martyred, while Khubaib b. `Adiy and Zaid b. al-Dathinna were captured alive. Sufyaan of Hudayyal took them to Makka and sold them to the Quraish, who detained them without food and drink for some days in the house of Haarith b. `Aamir. One day, Haarith's child, holding a sharp knife in his hand, went up to Khubaib. When his mother saw that the boy was as good as in the custody of the prisoner, whom they had kept without any food or drink, she was terrified of what might happen to him and screamed. Khubaib observed, “She understands that I will slay him; but she does not know that such a foul act and that too upon an innocent child is not a part of Islamic teachings.”² However, the atrociousness of the Quraish knew no bounds. After some days, they led the two men to a cross and said, “We will release you if you release yourself from Islam.” Both men retorted with pride, “What shall we do with our lives bereft of Islam?” Then the Quraish asked them if they had any last wish. Khubaib expressed his desire to offer prayers. He was allowed to do so. Later, he said, “I would have taken long in my prayers, but I did

1 On this occasion `Aasim said, “No weakling I, an archer bold,
What God decrees, men shall behold,
Life must return to Him, its mould,
I fight though I leave a mother, cold.” II - G - p-426.

2 II - G - p-428.

it hastily lest the enemy should construe it as fear of death.”¹ Now the Quraish urged their spearmen to pierce their bodies which they did, finally hanging both men on the cross.

The poet laureate Hassaan b. Thaabit mourning Khubaib wrote:

What ails thine eye that its tears cease not flowing

On thy breast like loose pearls?

O eye be generous with thy tears, weep for Khubaib

Who did not return with the warriors.

These great Muslims believed in earning Allah’s pleasure and in the Eternal Bliss of the hereafter. They endured their suffering without a murmur of complaint. One particularly brutal man of the Quraish pierced Khubaib’s liver with his spear and said, “Don’t you wish that now Muhammad was with us in your place?” Spiritedly he replied, “By God, to save my life, I would not bear that even the Prophet’s foot be hurt by a thorn.”

Khubaib’s last words were, “O God, we have conveyed unto them Thy message, now do Thou send news to Thy Prophet of the foul play they have done to us.”² Sa’id b. `Aamir (one of the collectors of revenue under Caliph `Umar) would, at times, suddenly shriek, fall into spasms and lose consciousness. `Umar once asked of him the cause of such abnormal behaviour. He told him, “It is not any kind of disease. I witnessed the tragic scene of Khubaib’s crucifixion. I shudder whenever I recollect that.”³ A similar plot was hatched by Abu Bra` `Aamir b. Maalik. His nephew was the ruler of Najd. He approached the Prophet, for the services of a number of missionaries who could teach and guide the people of Najd. He gave assurances that the preachers would be protected. The Prophet chose seventy disciples,⁴ all scholars of

1 II - G - p-430.

2 II - G - p-428.

3 II - G - p-429.

4 Zad from Bukhaari. Ibn Hisham has given the number as 40.

high character, and entrusted them to Abu Bra` `Aamir under the leadership of Munzir b. `Amr, a great soldier-saint.

The deputation set out and reached the well of Ma`una, in the jurisdiction of the Bannu `Aamir. Haram b. Milhan was sent from there with the Prophet's epistle to `Aamir b. Tufail, the governor. He ordered the murder of the Envoy. Jabbar b. Salma was the man who stabbed him in the back. Falling to the ground, the God-inspired Haram cried, "By the God of the Ka'ba I have achieved my goal." (II - G - p-453)

His dying words so touched the assassin Jabbar that he raced to the holy Prophet and embraced Islam.¹ `Aamir b. Tufail meanwhile ordered a wholesale massacre of the Muslims. Ka`b b. Zaid, who survived under a mass of slain bodies, managed to escape and informed the Prophet of what had happened. Among those killed was the infallible `Aamir b. Fuhaira, Abu Bakr's freed shepherd. His body was lifted up (as a mark of respect by angels) between heaven and earth after he had been martyred.²

THE OCCUPATION OF MAKKA

In that very year (8 A.H), the Muslims were obliged to lead an army on Makka. It was again the month of Ramzaan. The expedition had not been planned but was a spontaneous reaction to a grave provocation. Two years earlier in 6 A.H., the Muslims had concluded with the Quraish, for a period of ten years, the Pact of Hudaibiya. One of its articles laid down that the tribes to the Pact were free to go over to the Quraish or to side with the Prophet. Under these terms, the B. Khuza'a joined the Prophet and the B. Bakr went over to the Quraish. Two years had not even

1 Ibid.

2 II - G - p-435. An early convert, `Aamir was relied upon during the Prophet's hiding in the cave of Thaur and distinguished for accompanying the Prophet in his Hijra. Similar roles of honour were conferred on other slaves - Bilaal, Zaid, Salmaan the Persian and Usaama b. Zaid etc., a peculiarity of Islam.

passed since the Pact was signed when the B. Bakr, helped with arms from the Quraish, suddenly attacked the B. Khuza`a by night while they were at the well of al-Watir. `Ikrima b. Abu Jahl, Suhail b. `Amr (who had signed the Pact on behalf of the Quraish) and Safwan b. Ummaiya, together with their men, fought incognito by the side of the B. Bakr.¹ The helpless Khuza`a looked for some safe quarter, even fleeing to the Ka`ba for refuge, but in every place they were slain without remorse. The beleaguered refugees in the precincts of the Ka`ba even made supplications in the name of God, but the only answer they received was, "No God is here today."² Only forty men survived the massacre to tell of the horrors they had been through. `Amr b. Saliim al-Khaza`i expressed the event in these moving couplets:

*They have trampled us under foot like hay,
Knowing that none will help on that day,
They thought us to be humble and few,
They fell upon us, when we were asleep.*

The Prophet marched towards Makka to enforce and honour the terms of the Pact, to help the oppressed, and to inspire confidence among friendly tribes for the prevention of such misconduct in the future. With a following of 10,000 men, the Prophet set out towards Makka. On the way, the Prophet's cousin Abu Sufyaan³ b. al-Haarith b. `Abdul Muttalib met him. Also with him was `Abdullah b. Abu Ummaiya. These men had perpetrated all sorts of persecutions to root out the Muslims and Islam so the Prophet turned his face from them. The mother of the faithful, Umm-e-Salma, submitted, "O Prophet of God! Abu Sufyaan is the son of your real uncle and `Abdullah the son of your real aunt, so near kith and kin should be considered for pardon." Then `Ali suggested, "You should employ the same words which the

1 II - G - p-540.

2 II - G - p-541.

3 The other Abu Sufyaan was the son of Harb. II - G - p-546.

brothers of Joseph had used to implore their pardon.” This they did, and recited, *“By God, verily He has chosen you above us; and verily we are at fault.” (Qur’aan 12:91)*

The holy Prophet replied, *“This day there is no reproach on you. May God cover your sins, and Allah is the Most Merciful of all who show mercy.” (Qur’aan 12:92)*

Abu Sufyaan delivered these extempore verses, “I swear that I held aloft the flag of Laatt and `Uzza to overpower the army of Muhammad (SAW), I was like a hedgehog who strikes against uneven ground and finds no way forward. The Guide (i.e. the Prophet) and not my intellect, has shown to me the straight path.”¹ Reverting to the march towards Makka, the Makkans were still unaware of the expedition. The Muslims camped at a distance from Makka. Their presence was known only when the Prophet commanded camp-fires to be lit.² The following dawn, the Prophet commanded the army to enter Makka by different routes. They were instructed that no one should be apprehended or killed who sought refuge in the Ka`ba; who laid down his arms; who sought shelter in Abu Sufyaan’s house;³ or in the house of Hakim b. Hizam or who was wounded; or was a prisoner; and no one who fled, was to be pursued. (II - G - p-548)

Only the soldiers under Khaalid’s command faced light opposition but there too the Makkans eventually fled. In that skirmish, two Muslims and twenty-eight of their enemies were slain. The rest of the army entered the city without any opposition. With his head bowed, the Prophet of God entered the city on the 20th day of Ramzaan and did so, reciting the Sura of Victory from the Qur’aan.⁴ In that attitude of humility and communion, he found his way to the House of God. Behind him on the camel was seated Usaama, the son of his freed slave, Zaid. Then he entered the Ka`ba and his first act was to dislodge the idols in the House

1 II - G - p-546.

2 Bukhaari. (2:613)

3 Is there any example in history of such human considerations? Ed.

4 “Surely we have bestowed upon you manifest victory.” (Qur’aan 48:1)

of God.¹ By his staff and the edge of his bow, he hurled down all of the 360 idols one by one, chanting:

Truth has come (to light), and falsehood has vanished: verily falsehood (by its nature) was to perish. (Qur'aan 17:81)

Truth has come, and falsehood (Idol-Worship) shall reappear no more. (Qur'aan 34:49)²

Having cleansed the House, he sent for `Uthmaan b. Talha whose family had been the key-bearer of the Ka`ba for ages.

In the early days of his mission, the holy Prophet had asked `Uthmaan b. Talha to open the door of the Ka`ba for him, but he had refused. The Prophet had observed, "Well then, you will behold a day, when this key will be in my hands and I will hand it over to anybody I choose." `Uthmaan had retorted, "Shall the youth of Makka be humbled and laid low on that day?" the Prophet puzzled him by replying, "No, they will be in greater glory."

The Prophet took the key, opened the door, went in and raised aloud the cry of 'God is Great'. Then he offered prayers of thanksgiving and humbly laid his forehead on the floor before the Most Exalted and the Most High.

In the meantime, all the chiefs and other people of note assembled in the yard. They had persecuted the Prophet and the Muslims, waged wars and slain scores of promising believers. They had forced hundreds to quit their homes.

They sent their death-squads as far as Abyssinia, Syria, Najd and Yaman in pursuit of the Muslims. They had denied them (and

1 Bukhaari `Abdullah b. Ma`qal.

2 This was the fifteenth century A.H. yet the truth of the verse had all along manifested itself with flourish.

Isaiah. (42:8), "I am the Lord, that is my name: And my glory will I not give to another, neither my praise to graven images."

Isaiah. (42:17), "They shall be turned back, they shall be greatly ashamed that trust in graven images, ye are our gods."

their hosts) all peace of mind in Madina, a shelter 300 miles away from Makka. Some twenty-one years of persecution and sustained hatred had earned for them only total defeat.

After the Prophet had sought comfort in worship and gratitude to God, `Abbaas, the Prophet's uncle, suggested that the key of the House of God should be bestowed upon B. Haashim.

The Prophet observed, "No, this is a day of showing favour and grace."¹ He sent for `Uthmaan b. Talha and restored the key to him, observing, "He will be a tyrant, who will force out this key from you." Then, he addressed the men of the Quraish, who knew in their hearts what they deserved from him. However, rather than condemn, he consoled them,

"O Quraish! God has shattered today all your ill-conceived pride in ancestry and taken from you the arrogance of the days of ignorance. Man springs from Adam and Adam sprang from dust."²

Then the Prophet recited, "*O mankind, We have created you of one man and one woman. Your tribes and clans, We have assigned only for a distinction. The truth is that before God, he is the most noble of you who is the most righteous.*" (*Qur'aan* 49:13)

He added, "O Quraish what do you think I am about to do with you?" They replied, "You are a noble brother, son of a noble brother."

1 II - G - p-554.

2 "No house was robbed, no women insulted. The army followed his example." "It was thus Muhammad entered again his native city. Through all the annals of conquest, there is no triumphant entry comparable to this one." (Stanley Lanepoole. *Speeches and Table-Talks of the Prophet* p-46-47) The Chiefs of the Quraish were prostrate at his feet. "What Mercy can you expect from the man whom you have wronged?" "*We confide in the generosity of our kinsman. And you shall not confide in vain: begone! You are safe, you are free.*" *Decline & Fall of the Roman Empire* - Gibbon, p-684.

The Prophet concluded, "You are free to go your way, there is no reproach on you today." (Tabari - 3:61).

Then, the Messenger let them go, though God had given him power over them and they were his spoils.¹ Thereafter, he climbed up the Mount Safa. There he took the allegiance of those who accepted Islam that day, each individual being announced and presented by `Umar.²

The terms of allegiance were, "I shall not associate any thing or body with God in His Person, in His Privilege of worship and devotion in His Attributes and in His Prerogative of help and relief; I shall not steal, nor fornicate, nor spill blood without (legal) justification nor kill daughters, nor charge anyone falsely; I shall obey the Prophet of God in His ways to the limit of my power."

The women had also to declare, "We shall not cut our faces in any bereavement, nor slap our cheeks, nor pull our hair, nor tear off clothes, nor put on a black dress, nor squat over a tomb in grief."

The manner of accepting allegiance from the women was equally inspiring. *The Prophet dipped his hand in a basin of water and then took it out. Then the women dipped their hands in the same basin of water.* On other occasions, a verbal declaration was accepted.³

UNPRECEDENTED ACTS OF MERCY

The biography of the Prophet would be incomplete without some brief description of his acts of mercy and pardon shown to the Makkans. It had already been announced to the army that no one was to be slain. Only four men and two women were excepted

1 II - G - p-553.

2 Ibid.

3 The terms given to the vanquished Makkans are the same as were given to the devoted people of Madina at the time of the first allegiance at al-`Aqaba. In victory or defeat, the Prophet's infallible sense of justice remained unaffected. Tabari (3:62) "He did not change in power or poverty."

because they already stood charged for culpable homicide (Sa`d from Ibn Dawuud). Even in this event, only one of the four, Ibn Khatal, was executed. He had accepted Islam but after murdering his slave, only because he had not cooked his meals on time, had then fled to Makka. The other three, `Ikrima b. Abu Jahl, Habbar b. al-Aswad, and `Abdullah b. Abi Sarah were pardoned.

1. `Ikrima, Abu Jahl's son, had actively supported his father. In addition, he had been personally responsible for attacks on the Muslims, both directly and surreptitiously. It was he who had instigated the B. Khuza`a, allies of the Muslims, to defect. In bravery and ferociousness, he was considered equal to 1000 soldiers.
2. Habbar had attacked the camel of Sayyida Zainab, the Prophet's daughter, when she was on her way to Madina from Makka, and caused her to fall. She was then pregnant and died as a result of miscarriage.
3. `Abdullah b. Abi Sarah used to say, "All revelations come to me. Muhammad (SAW) hears from me and then dictates to his disciples."

One of the two men, guilty of murder, was allowed to pay blood money. Abu Sufyaan's wife, Hind, was also forgiven. She had cut out the liver of the noble Hamza, the Prophet's uncle, minced it with her teeth, and made a necklace of his nose and ears. Wahshi, the killer of Hamza, (the lion of God) was also pardoned.

Such magnanimity could only have come from God's Messenger, sent as a 'mercy to all the worlds'. The Prophet never desired to conquer their lands, their bricks and mortar, but only the hearts of the implacable Makkans by his grace, forgiveness, and compassion. There was, therefore, no booty taken in the conquest. The enemy had taken possession of the houses and properties of the Emigrants. Now the Emigrants appealed to the Prophet for their restoration; but the Prophet rejected all such appeals, and replied, "Why do you reclaim what you left or sacrificed in the way of God?"

A day after the conquest, the Prophet was circumambulating the Ka`ba when Fadala b. `Umair, marking the opportunity, thought of slaying him. When he approached nearer, the Prophet said, "Is this Fadala coming here?" Fadala said, "Yes". The Prophet said, "What were you scheming in your mind?" Fadala said, "Nothing, I was only chanting Allah, Allah." The Prophet laughed at his words and said, "Well, then seek forgiveness of God," and he placed his hand on the would-be assassin's breast.

Fadala states, "The touch of his hand generated relief to my heart, and stirred such a love for the Prophet that nothing thenceforth looked dearer to me than he. I left for my house. As I passed before the door of my mistress, she invited me as usual into her house. I said 'no'. She said, 'Only a word'. I said, 'No, never, God and Islam forbid such ways'."¹ The conquest of Makka had been foretold in a number of chapters of the Books of earlier Prophets. However, I would like to refer only to one outstanding prediction from chapter Yusuf of the Qur'aan:

This chapter was revealed in Makka before the Hijra. In it, God comforted the Prophet by saying, "*This is of the tidings of the Unseen which We inspire in thee (Muhammad).*" (12:102)

Let us compare the narrative of the circumstances in which Prophet Yusuf and Prophet Muhammad (SAW) lived through.

1. Yusuf's brothers envied him for his spiritual excellence and their father's exceeding love of him. They threw him in a dry well out of jealousy. Similarly, the brethren of Prophet Muhammad (SAW) envied him.
2. The Prophet Yusuf was thrown and hidden in a well and the Prophet Muhammad (SAW) hid in a cave.
3. The Prophet Yusuf endured some years of imprisonment and the Prophet Muhammad (SAW) endured three years of blockade and detention in the valley of Abi Taalib.

1 Zad-al-Ma`ad, p-412, Vol-III (Arabic version).

4. The Prophet Yusuf rose to glory in Egypt, away from his home at Canaan, and the Prophet Muhammad (SAW) appeared in full glory at Madina.
5. Brothers of Prophet Yusuf called upon him for obtaining grain in the days of famine; the Makkans, the brothers of Prophet Muhammad (SAW), approached him with the same request, although they still denied his excellence and message. Bukhaari states, "Abu Sufyaan went to Madina and waited in attendance on the Prophet and solicited, 'O Muhammad! You enjoin fair treatment of kith and kin in your teachings. Pray to God for us!' The Prophet prayed for them and the famine conditions disappeared."
6. The Prophet Yusuf gave grain to his brothers for their families and the Prophet Muhammad (SAW) commanded Thumaama b. Athal to send grain from Najd to the famished enemy of Makka.
7. The Prophet Yusuf's brothers acknowledged his excellence over them in the end and the kins of the Prophet Muhammad (SAW) confirmed his excellence and superiority over them.
8. The Prophet Yusuf had comforted his erring brothers by saying, "May God forgive you." The Prophet Muhammad (SAW) likewise comforted his brethren Abu Sufyaan b. al-Haarith b. `Abdul Muttalib and `Abdullah b. Ummaiya, who had harassed him for years together. Moreover, he granted general amnesty to all Makkans, his brethren.
9. The exalted status of the Prophet Yusuf was realised by his father, the Prophet Yaqub; `Abbaas, uncle of Prophet Muhammad (SAW), gave allegiance to him on the Day of the Conquest of Makka. In a tradition of the Prophet, `Abbaas has been spoken of as 'like a father'.
10. The Prophet Yusuf forgave all the misdeeds of his brothers, and the Prophet Muhammad (SAW), likewise, absolved his

Rahma-tul-lil-`Aalamiin

brethren, the people of Makka, of all charges, in spite of their countless incriminating acts.

2. THE AFTERMATH OF THE OCCUPATION OF MAKKA

The occupation of Makka, glorified by the sublime example of the Prophet's forgiveness of his enemies, brought in its wake mass conversions. The following reasons accelerated the pace of conversions:

1. Many of the tribes had hesitated to convert to Islam openly, because they were allied to the Quraish and thought it would be a breach of that alliance.
2. Many others hesitated because they were weak and depended upon their relationship with the Quraish in one way or another. They did not want to break those ties and invite the wrath of the Quraish by their open profession of Islam.
3. Still other tribes believed that no man without the consent and help of God could conquer Makka. Such traditions had been treasured in their minds for centuries. They were prepared to accept the Prophet as the true and chosen one of God if he became master of Makka. They used to say, "Let him settle with his people. He is a True Prophet, if they yield to him."¹
4. There were still living scores of old men who had witnessed the destruction of Abraha. This conqueror of Yaman had sallied forth towards Makka with his elephants and forty thousand soldiers.² The elephant, which Abraha himself

1 Bukhaari from `Aamir b. Salma.

2 Abraha was the governor of Yaman on behalf of Negus, ruler of Abyssinia. He had built a Cathedral in Sana`, the like of which did not exist elsewhere. He desired all Arabs to assemble there for pilgrimage in place of the Ka`ba. When he failed in that purpose he marched forth with a huge army and encamped at the outskirts of Makka. His whole army was annihilated by birds from the sea. Each bird carried three stones like peas and pentils, one in its beak and two between its claws. (II -G - p-25).

`Abdullah b. al-Zibra poet of pre-Islamic Arabia says, "When God repulsed Abraha, Arabs held the Quraish as men of God, for whom God fought." A

mounted, was known as Mammoth.¹ There were old men² who, only sixty years before, had witnessed this abortive move and had also seen the Makkans fleeing from their homes, taking defensive positions in the peaks and in the passes of the mountain, for fear of the excesses of the soldiers. The city of Makka was left deserted. They had also seen the invading army crushed into dust, the leader of the army fleeing without his elephant or bodyguard, and the corpses of the invaders decomposing at a distance of four miles from Makka.

These old men also retained in their memories the conversation of `Abdul Muttalib and Abraha. Encamped on the outskirts of Makka, Abraha's army captured the cattle of the Quraish, including 100 camels belonging to `Abdul Muttalib, the grandfather of the Prophet and the distinguished Chief of Makka. He was a most impressive, handsome and dignified man. His pleasing manners reflected his nobility and grandeur. He himself contacted the army of the Africans and approached Abraha

translation of some of his verses is given: Let the sanctity of the Ka'ba be not underrated; God never allowed it to be violated. A miserably tragic death the ill-fated Abraha met; His army of thousands cordoned in God's net. Another poet, Qais b. Aslat, said:

The elephant of the Abyssinian was stuck on the ground it held. Rather moving forward it faced the way it had come. God sent birds which carried pebbles and they stoned the invaders. All the attackers were crushed to death. Abraha's death was more tragic. An evil sore was exuding pus and blood. (II - G - p-28) Ed.

- 1 This elephant belonged to an extinct race of elephants. The race is known in English as Mammoth. The Arabs have arabised this word as 'Mahmud' (Duwal-al-Arab).
- 2 The soldiers, who took part in the surrender of Delhi and Lucknow in the great uprising of 1857 and even a few of those Indian soldiers who fought in the Crimean War - 1854-56 were still alive, (i.e. by 1912 A.D.), when this Book in Urdu was first published. (The Indian soldiers were sent to fight in the Crimean war as Britain suspected that the Russians were seeking to break up the Turkish Empire and seize Constantinople - thus endangering British interests in the Middle East and indirectly threatening India) Ed.

through the Custodian of the Elephants. Abraha stood up to receive him, seated him by his side and asked the reason for his coming. `Abdul Muttalib requested him to release the cattle of the Quraish that his soldiers had captured.

Abraha observed, "I was impressed by your personality, but what you have just said has demolished my image of you."

`Abdul Muttalib said, "Why, what has led you to that conclusion?"

Abraha explained, "Look, I have come to demolish your House of prayer, which you esteem as most sacred. The cathedral I built carried no respect in your eyes. You seem to attach no importance to the safety of your sacred House and are only concerned about your cattle."

`Abdul Muttalib said, "No, that is not so. I do not value the cattle more. The truth is that I am the owner of my camels and I am anxious to get them back. The 'Owner' of that House is 'Another'. It is His concern and I need not worry about its safety." When Abraha replied that He (God) could not defend it against him, in reply `Abdul Muttalib said, "That remains to be seen."

Thus, when the Muslims took possession of Makka so easily, so comprehensively and so peacefully, the sanctity of the tribal pacts and their fear of the Quraish was gone. Divine Testimony appeared to be with the conquerors, so they rushed in great numbers to confess their faith in Islam.

Finally, the missionaries of Islam were free to impart the teachings of Islam and explain and exhibit its beauties to an audience rid of all fears and pressures. In these circumstances, Islam naturally drew people to itself in large numbers.

GREED UNIDID B. HAWAZIN AND B. THAQIF

The occupation of Makka led the tribes of Hawazin and Thaqif to a miscalculation. Their frontiers adjoined the boundaries

of Makka. They thought that if they could overrun the Muslims they could acquire gardens and properties of the Makkans in Ta`if and take revenge for the humiliation of their gods.¹

With this objective in view, they secured the alliance of B. Mudar and B. Hilaal tribes and moved with an army of 4000 men encamping in the valley of Hunain. Acting on their Chief, Maalik b. `Awf's advice, they had moved their families, cattle and all valuables with them, thus expecting them to fight bravely till death.

THE BATTLE OF HUNAIN

The Prophet deemed it inappropriate to fight within close proximity of the Ka`ba due to the sacrosanct nature of this area. After learning of his adversaries' move, he marched from Makka to face them.

Two thousand non-Muslims from Makka also joined the Muslim army. Their ranks were swelled by the new converts as well as unbelievers who were allies, to 12,000. Feeling proud of their larger force they failed to observe the normal precautions. Their advance guard was taken by surprise by a safely-entrenched enemy, and was totally routed. It fled back on its heels and held back the main army coming forward.² Only a hundred companions remained steadfast. When the Prophet saw his army fleeing and the enemy advancing, he set an unparalleled example of courage. He dismounted from his mule and proclaimed aloud, "I am in truth the Messenger of God and the son of `Abdul Muttalib!"³

He thus reminded his followers that the test of his Mission was neither victory nor defeat of an army; but that Truth was invested in his person.

1 Fatuh-al-Buldan - Baladhari. p-63

2 Muslim from Bara b. `Azib (Battle of Hunain).

3 Bukhaari from `Abbaas; and II - G - p-569.

Now `Abbaas began to recall the companions by their distinctive surnames. "You Muhajir! You Ansaar!" and in an instant, all returned and regrouped themselves. The Ansaar and Muhajirs advanced in formations. Splintering the enemy ranks into two, they forced them to flee.¹

Their leader, Maalik b. `Awf, with his men, took cover in the fort of Ta`if and their families, who had all provisions - money, cattle and valuables, took shelter in the valley of Autas.

The Prophet ordered the siege of the fort and commanded Abu `Aamir Asha`ri to blockade the valley of Autas. Abu `Aamir surrounded their families and took possession of all that they had. The plight of the women and children was too heavy a stroke for the besieged enemy. The Prophet ordered the siege to be lifted.

In Autas, the Muslims received a huge booty: 24,000 camels, 40,000 goats, 4,000 pieces of silver, and 6,000 women and children.²

The Prophet was still encamped on the battlefield with the undistributed rewards,³ when six Chieftains of the Hawazin approached him with an appeal for mercy. Among them were the very people of Ta`if who had rained stones on the Prophet eight years earlier when Zaid had to carry him on his back. The Prophet said, "I have been waiting for you for the last two weeks. I can forego the prisoners of my share and those of my own family. Had there been only the Muhajir and Ansaar with me, it would have been easy to release all prisoners, but you see that the army consists of even those who are not as yet Muslims. Some solution may yet be found. It would be better you come tomorrow after the morning prayers and lodge your appeal in the presence of all." He

1 Bukhaari - from Ibn `Abbaas.

2 Jeremiah. (49:28) Concerning Kedar, "Arise ye, go up to Kedar and spoil the men of the East (Hunain is in the East of Makka)." (49:29) "Their tents and their flocks shall they take away..."

3 Bukhaari from Musur and Marwaan (Battle of Hunain).

added, "You may either choose your families or your goods and cattle. It would be difficult to carry the army home empty-handed."

The next day the chiefs lodged an appeal for the release of their prisoners.

The Prophet announced that he had decided to free the prisoners of his share and that of B. `Abdul Muttalib. The Ansaar and Muhajir also made similar announcements.

Now remained B. Saliim and B. Fuzarah. They failed to understand that any consideration could be shown to an enemy, who had himself been the aggressor. They, therefore, did not give up their claim. However, on the Prophet's advice, six camels were determined as the ransom for one prisoner. The Prophet paid this price himself. He granted each one of them a garment and set them free.

Among the prisoners was Shaim`a d. al-Haarith and Haliima, the Prophet's nurse. The Prophet recognised his foster-sister and spread his mantle for her. He said to her, "It would be better for you to go with me, but if you prefer to be among your people, you are free to do so." She chose the latter course and was sent back to her people with grace and honour.

The booty was distributed there and then. The lion's share was given to the new converts, but the Ansaar were given nothing. The Prophet observed, "I am myself with the Ansaar. *People will return to their houses only with gold and silver but the Ansaar will go back to their homes under the blissful shadow of the Prophet.*"¹ The Ansaar were so delighted to hear those words, that those who had accepted a share of the booty must have felt somewhat crestfallen. A poet said:

*The battles of Khaibar and Hunain testify,
That the Prophet returned by way of charity,*

1 II - G - p-596-597.

What he had won and held in victory.

THE BREACH OF PACTS BY THE JEWS

Although only the children of Judah, son of the Prophet Ya`qub (Jacob), ought to be counted as Jews, all the twelve tribes of Israel are ordinarily taken together as Jews. In the earlier period of their history, the Israelites were indeed the chosen and favoured people of God, but gradually they drifted away from the path of God, and eventually earned His wrath.¹

THE EXPULSION OF B. QAINUQ`A

The Prophet had begun his mission in Madina with the characteristic teachings of Islam; pure, simple, sublime and yet practical. The Jews had no answer for such soul-soothing and confidence-building teachings.² They decided to make the Prophet as good a target of hostility and hatred as they had the Messiah, before him.

The Jews had entered into a treaty of friendship with the Prophet in 1 A.H. But they could not contain their inner-feelings, exposed within a year and a half of the signing of the treaty. When Muslims were engaged in the battle of Badr, a Muslim woman went into B. Qainuq`a quarters to sell milk. Some Jews molested her and stripped her nude in the open. She screamed for help. A Muslim responded to her call, and provoked by that ghastly scene, slew one of them. The Jews of the place rushed to the spot, killed the Muslim and took to rioting. On his return from Badr, the Prophet sent for the Jews. In answer to his call they returned to him the document bearing the terms of the Pact, and started preparations for a confrontation. Evidently, they had repudiated

1 St. Matthew. (21:43)

2 “I believe in one God and Muhammad is the Prophet of God”, is the simple and invariable profession of Islam.” Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire - Gibbon, p-693.

the Pact and they knew it. As a measure of punishment, B. Qainuq`a were made to quit Madina and settle in Khaibar.

Their first violation of the terms of the Pact has already been mentioned. The Quraish wrote to the idol-worshippers of Madina to wage a war against the Prophet but the designs of the Jews and the Quraish were foiled by the statesmanship of the Prophet. After their defeat at Badr, the Quraish again incited the Jews. "You own estates and forts. You must fight Muhammad, otherwise we will trample you down and divest your women of even their anklets." On receipt of that letter, their inherent malice boiled and they made a resolve to murder the Prophet.¹

THE DEPORTATION OF B. NAADIR

In 4 A.H. the Prophet went to the locality of the B. Naadir to raise funds for a national cause.² They made him sit by a wall and one of their own, `Amr b. Hajjash, was to hurl down a heavy stone on the Prophet's head. However, the Prophet was forewarned by a revelation and so left the place under Divine protection.³ For that heinous conspiracy the B. Naadir were expelled from Madina. They loaded their possessions on 600 camels,⁴ levelled their houses to the ground and left for Khaibar, singing and dancing as foretold in the Scriptures.

THE BATTLE OF THE TRENCH (AHZAAB)

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- 1 Abu Dawuud from `Abdul Rahmaan b. Ka`b b. Maalik (News about B. Naadir).
 - 2 B. `Aamir's two men were killed under mistaken identity. Blood-wit was to be paid to B. Kilaab. The Prophet had gone there to ask B. Naadir to contribute their share. II - G - p-437.
 - 3 II - G - p-437.
 - 4 Isaiah. (30:6), "They will carry their riches upon the shoulders of young asses and their treasures upon the hunches of camel, to a people that shall not profit them."

The important event of 5 A.H. was the battle of the Trench (*Khandaq*). The B. Naadir would not rest in peace at Khaibar. They worked for a united front of all the tribes against the Muslims. For that purpose the Jews deputed twenty chiefs to bring about the union of all clans of the Arabs. This united front raised an army of 10,000 well-equipped warriors comprising the Quraish and the Arab tribes. This Jewish-inspired army advanced under four different commands:

1. The Quraish, The B. Kinaana and the people of Tihama under Abu Sufyaan b. Harb.
2. The B. Fajaara under the command of `Uqba b. Hisin.
3. The B. Murra under Haarith b. `Awf.
4. The B. Ashj`a and the people of Najd under Mas`ud b. Rakhailah. (II -G - p-450)

The Muslims did not have enough men and arms to repulse the invaders in the open, so they decided to dig trenches around the town. Ten men dug out a trench of 40 yards each.¹ The companions of the Prophet chanted verses of dedication to the Prophet and the glory of Islam.² The Prophet himself took part in digging, breaking stones and lifting baskets of excavated earth. It was reported that his chest was covered by dust. He was heard reciting these verses of Ibn Rawaha:

O God, guidance is but from Thee,

We knew not to pray or dispense Zakaat.

O God, send unto us tranquillity,

And keep us steady when the enemy invades.

They are arrayed against us, without any cause,

1 Zad. (2:566)

2 Bukhaari from Bra`. (2:589)

*Only to shed blood, which we hate.*¹

A force of 3,000 Muslims, with their backs to Mt. Sal guarded the trench.²

The Prophet also pitched his camp there.³ The only barrier separating the Muslims from the invaders was the trench. Besides the terror of a formidable army lurking at the door-step of the Muslims, their allies, the Jews of B. Quraiza, decided to turn traitor. They lived in Madina and were treaty-bound to come to the help of Muslims. Huyayy b. Akhtab, the leader of the B. Naadir, met them under cover of night and won them over. The Prophet sent appeals to them to remain steadfast,⁴ but they were found openly siding with the invaders, disturbing the internal peace of the city and causing annoyance and injury to the women-folk and children. In consequence, a part of the Muslim force had to be detached to maintain peace and order within the city.⁵

B. Quraiza were under the delusion that by causing a riot in the city, they would drive the Muslims to a corner, and thus make them highly vulnerable to the invading army.

The Prophet desired his companions to make truce with the enemies by offering them a tribute of one-third of their produce, but Sa`d b. Mua`d and Sa`d b. `Ubaada, Chiefs of the Ansaar, submitted, "We did not give them a single date when we were sunk deep in the mire of polytheism; now when we have been refined by Islam, we can in no way give them one-third of our produce. We shall hold on to our weapons and fight."⁶

1 Bukhaari from Anas.

2 Ibn Qiyyim - d.367 A.H.

3 II - G - p-452-453.

4 Ibn Hisham. (2:271)

5 Zad. (1:367)

6 Ibn Hisham. (2:141)

THE BATTLE'S END RESULT

The invading enemy held their siege for 20 days. Now and then, a single combat did ensue. `Amr b. `Abdu Wud, who reckoned himself equal to one thousand warriors, was killed by a single stroke of the valiant `Ali, the Lion of God. Naufal b. `Abdullah b. Mughira was similarly killed in another duel. The Makkans offered 10,000 Dirhams as a ransom for his corpse. The Prophet allowed them to take away the dead body but refused to accept any money.¹ The besiegers failed to capture any strategic position. Stormy weather made the conditions worse for them. Their alliance and their resolve broke and they dispersed in the night pursued by sand-storms and strong gales.

B. QURAIZA'S TREACHERY

Relieved of that distress, the Prophet sent for B. Quraiza to explain their conduct but they shut themselves in their fort and seemed well-prepared for a war. Only then did the Muslims come to know that Huyayy b. Akhtab, the Chief of the B. Naadir, was also in the fort and that it was he, who had incited the B. Quraiza to break their Pact with the Muslims. The B. Quraiza had supplied arms to the Quraish before the battle of Badr but the Prophet had overlooked that unfriendly act. Since they refused to negotiate or explain their position, the Muslims were left with no alternative but to besiege the fort. The siege lasted for 25 days. The blockade tired the B. Quraiza, and they sought relief through the tribe of Aus, with whom they had friendly connections. They further requested the holy Prophet to appoint Sa`d b. Mua`d as an arbiter to judge their case. B. Quraiza's request was conceded and the case was passed on to Sa`d b. Mua`d as they so desired. After thorough investigation under the law of Torah, he delivered his judgement that the warriors of the B. Quraiza should be slain, their women and children made slaves and their wealth distributed

1 Zad. (1:367)

among the Muslims. In carrying out this judgement, the warriors were indeed executed as Bukhaari reports in his tradition, on the authority of Abu Sa`id Khudri, but he makes no mention of their women and children.

The Jews were judged by their own law¹ (as given in the Old Testament) and by their own choice of arbiter, who had publicly asked the Prophet if his arbitration would be accepted and had been told it would. Had they trusted to leave the case in the hands of the compassionate Prophet, he would have ordered their resettlement in Khaibar as was done in the case of B. Qainuq`a and B. Naadir. Still, the Prophet gave some of them the benefit of a pardon. Zubair was permitted to go off with his wives, children and all he could carry, and the death sentence of Rafa`a b. Samawa`l was overruled.²

ASSASSINATION OF THE PROPHET'S ENVOY

The Prophet's relation with the Christians were generally smooth. One or two high placed rulers bore him some grudge, but

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- 1 Numbers - 31:7 And they (the Jews) warred against the Midianites as the Lord commanded Moses; and they slew all the males.
- 31:9 And the children of Israel took all the women of Midian captives and their little ones and took the spoil of all their cattle, and all their flocks and all their goods.
- 31:10 And they burnt all their cities wherein they dwelt and all their goodly castles, with fire.
- 31:17 Now, therefore, kill every male among the little ones and kill every woman that hath known a man by lying with him.
- 31:18 But all the woman and children, that have not known a man by lying with him, keep alive for yourself.

2 II - G - p-466.

the Christian masses and the Muslims maintained friendly relations.

The major disruption in these mutually tolerant relations followed the senseless murder, ordered by Shurabil b. `Amr Ghassaani, governor of Mu`ta, of the envoy of the Prophet, Haarith b. `Umair. The envoy carried a letter explaining to him the teachings of Islam. Neither any explanation nor regret was offered for this offensive killing. This innocent murder of an envoy put the lives of all the envoys in danger, besides provoking the Muslims.

RETALIATORY WAR WITH THE CHRISTIANS

A retaliatory expedition was mounted and 3,000¹ soldiers were despatched to Mu`ta. The Governor for his part had already made preparations for the war. By coincidence, Heracles, the Emperor, was touring in that province with his legions in Ma`ab. The Christian Arab tribes of the desert viz. Lakhm, Judham, Bahra, Bali and al-Qain, numbering about 100,000 had also gathered there.² In all, an army of about 100,000 men was³ arrayed against the Muslim force of 3,000. Zaid b. Haaritha, once the adopted son of the Prophet and very dear to him, was the commander. He gave his life in the ensuing war.⁴

Ja`far Tayyaar (the Prophet's cousin and `Ali's elder brother) took the command. Only thirty three of age, he was also killed in action.⁵ He had received 90 wounds to his upper body. `Abdullah b. Rawaha, a distinguished companion of the Prophet took command and was also lost. Then Khaalid b. Waliid stepped into his place. He remmarshalled his troops and after a fierce battle

1 II - G - p-532.

2 II - G - p-533.

3 Ibid. p-534.

4 Ibid. p-534.

5 Ibid and Ibn Khaldun.

that raged for 36 hours, forced the heavily outnumbered enemy to beat an ignoble retreat. During this blistering combat, nine swords broke in the hands of General Khaalid.¹

The holy Prophet had foretold his companions in Madina of the martyrdom of the three commanders and the outcome of the battle. This victory against overwhelming odds earned for General Khaalid a spectacular honour, the title of 'The Sword of Allah'.

Soon after this war, a caravan returned from Syria and reported that Caesar's armies and the tribes of Lakhm, Judham, Amila, Ghassaan and others were amassing forces for an invasion of Madina.

AN EXPEDITION TO TABUK

It was obvious that this concentration of troops was in retaliation to counter the morale-destroying effects of the fierce battle at Mu`ta. The Prophet counselled repulsing the invaders before they entered the soil of Arabia, so as to ensure the internal peace of the country. It was a confrontation with an Empire, which swayed half the known world and had lately humbled the mighty Empire of Persia.

Above all, the savage heat of Arabia was at its fiercest. Fruits had ripened in Madina. People were enjoying their age-old habit of sitting in the shade and enjoying the fruits. In view of the gravity of the threat, the Prophet appealed for public contributions to meet the needs of a major war.

1 Bukhaari from Qais b. Abi Haddam (Battle of Mu`ta)

"Nine swords were broken in his hand, and his valour withstood and repulsed the superior numbers of the Christian and Caled (Khaalid) is renowned among his brethren and his enemies by the glorious appellation of the sword of God." (Decline and Fall of The Roman Empire - Gibbon, p-686)

`Uthmaan¹ (the future Caliph) donated 900 camels, 100 horses with full equipment and one thousand gold Dinaars. He earned the title of 'Knight Provident of the impoverished army'.² `Abdul Rahmaan b. `Awf contributed 40,000 Dirhams. `Umar Faaruq offered half of all his possessions. Abu Bakr Siddiq seemed to contribute comparatively little, but it was later discovered that he had donated everything and retained in his house 'only the love of God and His Prophet'. Abu `Uqail Ansaari, donated two and a quarter kilograms of dates. Said he, "For the whole night I irrigated a field. I retained half the earnings for my family and the other half, little as it is, I offer in all humility for the favour of acceptance." The benign Prophet spread the dates over all that had been gathered and observed, "It is the most valuable contribution." In short, all the companions volunteered as much as they could, demonstrating their sincerity and competing in excellence. About 82 men, who were not sincere Muslims, clung to their houses on one pretext or the other. `Abdullah b. Salul, the notorious hypocrite had assured them that now the Prophet Muhammad (SAW) and his followers would be finished and none would return to Madina. The mighty Caesar

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SAYYIDINA `UTHMAAN b. `AFFAAN

`Uthmaan was one of the earliest converts and embraced Islam through the persuasion and preachings of the venerable Abu Bakr. He was known for his frugality, hard work, business skills and piety. He was mercilessly persecuted by his uncle for having deserted his ancestral creed. He bore all that distress with courage and resignation. His piety, unassuming habits and simplicity of life endeared him to the holy Prophet. `Uthmaan's status was further enhanced when the holy Prophet gave him in marriage one of his daughters. On her premature death another of his daughters was married to him. Thus, he became known as 'blessed with two lights'. His outstanding contribution was his fabulous wealth, which he lavishly spent in the service of Islam. His migration to Abyssinia along with his wife was hailed by the holy Prophet as, "the first couple after the Prophets Ibrahiim and Lut (Blessings on them) to migrate in the cause of Allah." The Prophet said, "O God, be pleased with `Uthmaan for I am pleased with him." Ed.

2 Ibn Khaldun.

would make all of them prisoners of war and scatter them over his dominions.

The Prophet moved out with an army of thirty thousand. Siba b. `Urfaza¹ was left as his Deputy in Madina, and `Ali Murtaza² was commissioned to look after the family of the holy Prophet. Ed.

Means of conveyance were limited. One camel was assigned to 18 men to ride by rotation. Rations likewise were in short supply. In some places the army had to feed on the leaves of trees. Water was equally scarce. The soldiers had then to slay camels and drink water deposited in their veins but despite every discomfort, the army encamped at Tabuk, near Philadelphia, trusting entirely in God.

The Prophet was still on his way to Tabuk, when `Ali Murtaza, speeding on foot, caught up with him. He reported that the hypocrites had been annoying him by calling him a do-nothing and a coward and similar degrading remarks. The Lion of God had been provoked in the matter of his dignity and self-respect. He had visible swellings on his feet which had boiled up into tumours. The Prophet heard him and observed, "Are you not pleased to know, you are to me as Harun was to Musa, but beware, there is no Prophet to appear after me."³

With that honorific title added to his glorious history, the noble `Ali⁴ sped back to Madina well pleased and well composed.

1 Tabari. (3:103)

2 Bukhaari. (2:633)

3 The Prophet Musa had left Harun as his deputy among the B. Israel, when he went to Jaurus to spend his 40 days of thanks-giving. The Prophet Musa was succeeded by Joshua b. Nun

4 **SAYYIDINA `ALI MURTAZA**

`Ali Murtaza was the first cousin of the holy Prophet. He lived under the same roof along with the holy Prophet from a very early age. He embraced Islam when he was hardly eight years old. He enjoyed the distinction of receiving his training, moral and spiritual directly from the holy Prophet. He was married to the Prophet's most beloved daughter Sayyida Faatima-

The holy Prophet stayed for a month at Tabuk. His boldness and sheer conviction in leading an army in a forbidding season made fearful by the blistering heat, shattered the resolve of Caesar's armies and their principal supporters. They had not been prepared for such a full scale confrontation. At Tabuk, after the end of the congregational prayers, the Prophet delivered a short but comprehensive address. After offering the usual praise and thanks to God, the Prophet spoke thus:

1. Of all the words, the Book of God excels in Truth.
2. Of all the supports, Obedience to God is the best attitude.
3. Of all the creeds, the creed of Ibrahiim is the most chosen.
4. Of all the ways, the way of Muhammad is the most excellent.
5. Of all the speeches, the recital of Allah's name is the noblest.
6. Of all the discourses, the holiest is the Qur'aan.
7. Of all the actions, the one with a great purpose is the best.
8. Of all the reforms, the worst is an innovation.
9. The conduct of the Prophet is the best guidance.
10. The death of martyrs is the noblest model of death.

al-Zahra. On the sad end of... ..`Uthmaan, the third Caliph, he was accepted as his successor without any opposition. His bravery had won him the title of 'lion of God'; his learning, that of the 'Gate of Knowledge'. Chivalrous, humane and forbearing to the verge of weakness, as a ruler, he came before his time.

Thus died the "best hearted Muslim" to use Colonel Osborn's words "that ever lived." Mild, beneficent and humane, ready to help the weak and the distressed, his life had been devoted to the cause of Islam.

Had he possessed the sternness of `Umar's character, he would have been more successful in governing an unruly race like the Arabs. But his forbearance and magnanimity were misunderstood and his humanity and love of truth was turned by his enemies to their own advantage. History of the Saracens by Amir `Ali - p-52-53. Ed.

11. The worst blindness is that which befalls after guidance.
12. A practice, which brings good in return, is the best.
13. The finest code of behaviour is that which ordinary people can adopt.
14. The worst blindness is the blindness of the heart.
15. The upper hand (the giving or charitable) is better than the lower hand (the receiving hand).
16. Little but sufficient possession is more useful than the plenty which leads to indolence.
17. The worst apology is that which is offered during the pangs of death.
18. Worst is the repentance which is offered on the Day of Judgement.
19. Certain people are absent-minded when they come for the Friday congregation, and among them are those who remember God occasionally.
20. Of all the sins, the most sinful is that of the false tongue.
21. The noblest asset is a contented heart.
22. The choicest reserve is that which lends glamour to life in the Hereafter.
23. The wisest thing is to be conscious of God.
24. The best thing to be rooted in the heart is Faith.
25. Suspiciousness is a twig of unbelief.
26. Lamentations over the dead is a reversion to the era of ignorance (*Jahiliya*).
27. To steal is to pave the way to Hell.
28. To get drunk is to play with fire.

29. Aimless versifying is of the Devil.
30. Intoxication leads to all Evils.
31. The most filthy earning is the devouring of an orphan's heritage.
32. Fortunate is he, who gathers advice from the wrong-doers.
33. Unlucky is he, who was unlucky in the womb of his mother.
34. The essence of an action is judged by its end.
35. The ugliest dream is a dream, muddled with falsity.
36. That which is to happen is drawing nearer (i.e. the Day of Judgement).
37. To abuse a believer is a great evil.
38. To murder a believer is a denial of God (*Kufr*).
39. To eat the flesh of a believer (to speak behind his back) is insolence before God.
40. The extortion of a believer's property by another believer is a sacrilege, as is spilling his blood.
41. He, who shows independence of God, will be exposed in his falsehood.
42. He, who covers the faults of others, will have his faults covered by God.
43. He, who forgives, will be forgiven.
44. He, who overcomes his anger, is rewarded by God.
45. He, who calmly endures his loss, is comforted by God.
46. He, who carries tales, even his lapses are magnified.
47. God extols him who keeps patience.

48. God is offended with him who disobeys His commandments.

49. To take a word to heart is to believe in it.

Then the Prophet asked forgiveness of God three times and resumed his seat.¹

DEATH OF `ABDULLAH ZUL BIJADAIN

Zul Bijadain died during the Prophet's stay at Tabuk. His conduct exemplifies the peculiar quality of compassion and grace that the Prophet displayed in his relations with his sincere and impoverished followers. Zul Bijadain's name was `Abdullah. He was a child when his father died and so was brought up by his uncle. When he grew young, his uncle gave him flocks of goats and camels and made him a man of status. `Abdullah learnt some verses of the Qur'aan and a taste for the blessing of the Oneness of God stole his heart. Yet he was afraid of his uncle, and for a long time, dared not speak his mind. When the Prophet returned from Makka after its conquest, `Abdullah said to his uncle, "Dear uncle, I have waited for many years in the vain hope that love of Islam would find its way to your heart. However, you continue to follow the wrong path, and I can no longer wait. Permit me to confess my submission to Islam."

The uncle answered, "If you accept the creed of Muhammad, I will divest you of everything and force you out of the house naked." `Abdullah answered, "Uncle, I shall follow the way of the Prophet Muhammad (SAW). Idolatry has no attraction for me. Please take all the money and kind that I hold. I know that I must leave all that behind me in this world. For them I cannot give up the true faith."

1 Baihaqy from `Aqaba b. `Amr (quoted by Zad-1:462). Baihaqy died in 558 A.H.

`Abdullah, as good as his word, took off all his clothes and went to his mother as he was born of her. She was bewildered at the sight and said, "What has come over you?" `Abdullah said, "I have now become a believer in the Oneness of God. I wish to go to the Prophet. I need a cloth to cover my nakedness. Kindly spare me one." The mother gave him a blanket. `Abdullah tore it into two, wrapped one piece around his loins and the other half he put around his upper body and set off for Madina. He reached the mosque of the Prophet before dawn where he waited, resting his back against a wall. When the Prophet entered the mosque and beheld him, he asked, "Who are you?" `Abdullah answered, "'Abdul `Uzza, a mendicant and stranger. In fondness for your face and your faith, I have hastened to Madina."

The Prophet observed smilingly, "No, your name is `Abdullah, and your title Zul Bijadain. You shall stay near me and dwell in the mosque." `Abdullah joined the pious dwellers of the platform,¹ learnt the Qur'aan from the Prophet himself and spent his days in an ecstasy of fervour and conviction, the virtue of those who enter faith with sincerity.

Once, `Umar Faaruq observed, "This Arabian is reading so loud that he is causing disturbance to others in their prayers and concentration." The Prophet said, "'Umar, do not upset him. He has raced to God and His Prophet, leaving a world of comfort behind." Preparation for the battle of Tabuk was under way. He went up to the holy Prophet and submitted, "Pray to God, O Prophet of God, that I may also die a martyr in the Way of God." The Prophet said, "'Abdullah, go and bring some bark from a tree." He fetched some, and the Prophet tied it to his arm and prayed, "O God, I declare the spilling of his blood a sacrilege for the unbelievers." `Abdullah exclaimed, "But, O Prophet of God, I yearned for martyrdom." The Prophet answered, "Yes, when you go with the intention of martyrdom, and fever seizes you and you

1 It was a raised platform in the courtyard of the Mosque for homeless companions. II - G - p-783.

die thereof, you still earn the blessings of a martyr.” So did it happen with `Abdullah at Tabuk. Fever came upon him and he was taken to the Heavens. Hilaal b. Haarith Muzni relates the scene of his burial, “It was a dark night and a lamp was held by the noble Bilaal. Abu Bakr and `Umar lowered his body into the grave. The Prophet also graced his grave with his presence and instructed Abu Bakr and `Umar, “Bear in mind the respect your brother¹ deserves.” The Prophet placed bricks on his grave and prayed aloud, “O God, I have been pleased with him until this evening, thou also be pleased with him.” Ibn Mas`ud, a solid pillar of the jurists of Islam, said, “I wish I had been buried in that grave.” After this memorable burial, the Prophet returned to Madina safely.

THE THREE SINCERE DEFAULTERS

The hypocrites who had expected that the Prophet and his followers would be taken prisoner, were depressed by his safe return along with all his followers. They concocted lies and petty pretexts to justify their failure to go with the expedition. They were taken at their words and absolved of dereliction to duty. However, among those who did not join the expedition were also three sincere believers who had, nevertheless, defaulted but desisted from lying to save their reputation. Now their sincerity was tested. One of them was Ka`b b. Maalik, a knowledgeable Ansaar, one of the group of 73 who had sworn allegiance at the

1 I have been struck over again by this indivisible unity of Islam, that makes instinctively a Muslim, a brother. When you meet an Egyptian, an Algerian, an Indian and a Turk in London what matters if Egypt is the motherland of one and India is the motherland of another. Sarojini Naidu. *The Ideals of Islam*. Madras - p-167.

second `Aqaba pledge, and also one of the chief poets, who attended upon the Prophet.

Ka`b stated, "My lingering behind at home had no good reason. My kit for the expedition was in good shape. Besides, I had purchased two well-groomed camels. I had never before possessed two camels at any one time. People were busy in their preparations. But I had no problems. I was in a position to set out with the expedition at a moment's notice. But the day the army actually marched, something kept me occupied. I postponed my departure for the next day as I was confident that my well-cared camels would enable me to overtake my colleagues. Another three days passed in that complacent mood. By that time the army had moved far I was non-plussed. One day I went out of my house and saw only the hypocrites and the disabled going about. The sight overwhelmed me with grief and remorse, which continued till the Prophet got back to Madina. Now I was at my wits' end. Nothing could be done to escape the displeasure of the holy Prophet. My friends suggested various excuses. I was determined to stick to the truth and presented myself to the holy Prophet. He looked at me and his smile reflected his displeasure." He enquired, "Ka`b, why did you linger behind?" And I humbly replied, "O Prophet of God, I had all I needed. Procrastination and over-confidence let me down."

The Prophet said, "Stay in your house and wait to hear the commandment of God." Some people remarked, "You would have come out safe, if you had forged an excuse." I told them, "The Divine Revelation would have exposed me." Then the Prophet ordered that no Muslim should have any contact with me. Life thus became all the more miserable. The other two defaulters, Hilaal b. Ummaiya and Murra b. al-Rabi`, being aged, did not move out of their homes, while I was young and hardy. I went to the mosque and sat in a corner after the prayers were over.

"The Prophet cast a glance full of love at me and marked my distress. But he looked away when I raised my eyes towards him.

And none of my Muslim brothers talked to me. None returned my greetings. One day overwhelmed by grief and remorse, I went out of Madina. Abu Qatada was my cousin. And there were sincere ties of love between us. I made up my mind to see him in his garden. I saluted him, but he gave no response. Rather, he turned his face. I said, `Abu Qatada, you know full well that I do love God and His Prophet and there is no speck of hypocrisy in my heart. Then why don't you have a soft corner for me? Still Abu Qatada was unmoved. I repeated my submissions thrice. Then my cousin simply said, 'God and His Prophet know best'. I was further depressed and wept bitterly and returned in disgrace. A Christian had been looking for me in Madina. He had a letter for me from the ruler of Ghassaan. The letter said, 'We have heard that your master is offended with you, and has dropped you from his favour as also the people. We are fully aware of you services and status. Will you now hasten to me and see for yourself the esteem and honour we hold you in? I read the letter and felt as if another calamity had befallen me. I placed the letter in the oven and burnt it and told the messenger, 'Go and tell your master that the resentment and displeasure of my master is sweeter to me than your master's advances and favour.' I entered my house and saw a man from the Prophet with the message that I should live apart from my wife. I asked him whether the Prophet meant a divorce. He replied, 'You two should not live together.' Later on, I came to know that Hilaal and Muraara had been served with a similar order. In compliance, I sent my wife to her mother's house."

Hilaal's wife waited upon the Prophet to plead, "Hilaal is weak and old. There is no servant to attend upon him. May I continue to serve him?" The Prophet said, "Yes, but keep away from his bed." The women replied, "O Prophet, Hilaal has nothing in his memory but grief and sorrow." "Now certain people came to me and suggested that I should also obtain a similar comfort. I replied, I could never pluck up courage to do that. Only God knows, he may agree or may not but I am a young man and I need no attendant. Fifty days of such distress and lamentation seemed

bitter and hard. One night I was lying on the roof of my house and sorely crying over my predicament when Abu Bakr, the truthful, ascending Mt. Sal (which stood close to my house) called out, 'Congratulations to Ka`b. His penitence has been accepted.' Hearing that, I laid my forehead on dust in gratitude. Friends rushed from their houses to congratulate me. I hastened to present myself to the Prophet. He was sitting among the Muhajir and the Ansaar and observing silence. I went forward and greeted the Prophet. His face was beaming like the full moon. And it was peculiar with him that his face shone radiantly in a state of happiness. And he observed, 'Ka`b, I congratulate you on this day. No better day than today has dawned upon you since your mother bore you. The Lord of the Universe has accepted your penitence.'¹ I submitted, 'In gratitude I offer all I possess in the way of God.' The Prophet said, 'No.' I said, 'Then half.' He said, 'No.' Then I said, 'One-third.' He accepted that and remarked, 'One-third is good enough, and also considerable.'"

MADINA CLEARED OF MACHINATIONS

At last, in Madina, by the grace of God, all machinations and mischief were eliminated for ever. The Prophet was allowed a few years of peace and constructive work. Arabia was now a country rid of dissensions and internecine wars. The generosity, forbearance and compassion which the Prophet had shown to his enemies in their defeat, marked a new precedence for the world and laid the foundation of a refined system for civilised mankind to prosper in. All these wars, during his seven year's rule in Madina, were imposed on the Prophet although he did every thing to avoid them. The reader will have noticed that the Muslims were never aggressors. All the battles were fought in self-defence. In

1 a) (Qur'aan 9:118).
 b) II - G - p-610-13.

the entire career of his prophethood, not a single man was put to death for being an unbeliever, a Jew, a Christian or a fire worshipper. The Qur'aan laid down that differences of religion and creed would always remain. It was, therefore, unlawful to force anyone to change his creed. The following principles, derived directly from the Qur'aan, elaborate Islamic thought and practice on this issue:

1. *No violence is lawful in an invitation to religion. Guidance and non-guidance have been clearly distinguished by Us. (2:256)*
2. *If your Lord had wished it, He could make them all believers. Should you then apply force that they become believers? (10:99)*
3. *If your Lord had so wished it, He would have made them one community. They shall ever differ among themselves and for that He did create them except those on whom thy Lord has bestowed His mercy (in view of their righteousness, borne out of their love for God). (11:118)*
4. *You cannot guide whom you love, but God guides him whom He will. (18:56)*
5. *We know all they say; You cannot force anything upon them but preach unto them the Qur'aan. Let him fear God, who dreads His chastisement. (5:45)*
6. *Go on reminding, because you are only a warner, and not a warder over them. (88:21-22)*

PRISONERS OF WAR

Before this chapter is closed, it is worthwhile looking at the treatment the Prophet accorded to prisoners of war. It was a universal practice till the advent of Islam that prisoners of war, were treated savagely. The Prophet dealt with them in either of

two ways as laid down by the Qur'aan; set them free against a ransom, or set them free altogether. (47:4) The Muslims took 72 captives, all Makkans, in the battle of Badr. They were dreaded enemies of the Muslims. The Prophet invited the opinion of his companions on this matter. Abu Bakr Siddiq, the spokesman of his party, was in favour of setting them free against a ransom. He said:

1. We can equip ourselves with money received as ransom and thereby meet any future aggression.
2. Some of them by the grace of God may be guided to the path of Islam.

Another party led by `Umar Faaruq argued that vengeance for their martyrs should be taken. They felt these murderers and persecutors of innocent Muslims should be slain whilst in custody; these arch-devils of perfidy should not be trusted or shown lenience. The Prophet, however, approved Abu Bakr Siddiq's suggestion; those prisoners who could not secure a ransom, were required to teach ten children of the Ansaar¹ or discipline them in any craft they knew. Certain people still hold `Umar Faaruq's opinion to be superior, quoting from a tradition: "The next day, `Umar beheld the holy Prophet and Abu Bakr in tears." Nevertheless, most scholars still endorse Abu Bakr's views on the following grounds:

1. The holy Qur'aan finally approved that line of action;
2. That action speaks of mercy, which is the finest of all actions.

1 "The poorer captives taken at Badr were released on condition that they taught a certain number of Madina citizens to write." Sir W. Muir - Life of Muhammad - p-XIX. See also Briffault's: The Making of Humanity - p-268. Pakistan Edition.

3. The Prophet on hearing different opinions remarked, “Abu Bakr resembles Ibrahiim (Abraham) and `Isa (Jesus); `Umar is like Musa (Moses) and Dawuud (David).”
4. Abu Bakr’s opinion was agreeable to the Prophet’s own opinion.
5. As anticipated, a number of captives embraced Islam of their own will after they were freed, while arms and other requirements were acquired with the proceeds of the ransom money.

The prisoners were treated as guests¹ until their release (standard code of conduct² for Muslim governments). Only two prisoners, `Uqba b. Abi Mua`it and Nadar b. Haarith, were slain for their criminal acts perpetrated earlier.

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- 1 “Blessing be on the men of Madina”, said one of the prisoners of war in later days, “they made us ride while they themselves walked, they gave us wheaten bread to eat when there was little of it; contenting themselves with dates.” (The Life of Muhammad - Sir W. Muir, p-XIX, also quoted by Amir `Ali in his book ‘The Spirit of Islam’)
 - 2
 - a) The ruffianly crusaders were shamed by the grandeur of conduct and generosity of Saladin and his chivalry. Making of Humanity - Briffault, p-308.
 - b) Prisoners of war were massacred by Richard’s men but Saladin did not harm captives in his jurisdiction. Ibid.

3. INVITATIONS TO RULERS OF OTHER COUNTRIES

The message of the Prophet had the unique characteristic that it was addressed to the people of the whole world as the one way and was valid for all times.

Long before Hijra, invitations to Islam were sent beyond the soil of Arabia. It is significant that Bilaal of Abyssinia, Suhaib Rumi, Salmaan the Persian and `Addaas of Nineveh were non-Arabs and belonged to different races. All the same, the Arabs raised them to the highest pedestal of glory and honour (May God be pleased with them all).

The commandments of the Qur'aan are clear and explicit on this point:

1. *We have not sent you except as a bearer of good tidings and a warner to all mankind. (34:28)*
2. *It is God who has sent His messenger with the guidance and the religion of Truth that He may cause it to prevail over all religions. (61:9)*
3. *We have not sent thee save as a mercy to the whole of the universe. (21:107)*
4. *Say (O Muhammad) O mankind, I have come to you all as the Messenger of God. (7:158)*

In obedience to these and other similar commandments, the Prophet appointed missionaries to deliver his letters to the chiefs of all races and heads of religious institutions, explaining the teachings of Islam. He warned the recipients of the letters that if they rejected the invitation, they would not prosper and upon them would also fall the blame for non-guidance of their subjects.

This method of introducing and explaining the teachings of Islam has no precedent in the history of religions. The founders of other religions did not, in any case, include non-nationals in their blessings.

Since we hold the founders of the revealed religions in the highest reverence, we can only conclude that they themselves regarded the scope of their mission as restricted to specific people. If their followers themselves went against the instructions of their Prophet on political grounds, they acted against the will of God, resulting in the unfair division of Christians into two warring groups, the Whites and the Blacks, formed on racial grounds. Before God, however, all His creatures are equal and their gradation is made only on the grounds of good conduct and surrender to the Will of God.

On Muharram 1, 7 A.H. the Prophet sent missionaries with his letters of invitation to the rulers of different countries. The person chosen for a country knew its language. Until then the Prophet had no seal,¹ and so one was designed in silver for that purpose.

These letters carried the following verse,

“O people of the Book, come, let us agree on a principle equally binding on you and us. That we shall worship only God, and none else, and shall associate no partner with Him and nor set up lords besides Him.” (3:64)²

Here follows a brief description of all the missions:

1. `Amr b. Ummaiya took the Prophet’s letter to Asham b. Abjar known as the Negus, ruler of Abyssinia.

By the name of God, the Most Merciful and Compassionate.

“This letter is sent by Muhammad, the Messenger of God to the Negus Asham, King of Abyssinia. Peace be upon you. To begin with I praise Allah, Who is the Sovereign Lord, the holy

1 A seal was designed in silver for this purpose and it bore the name of Allah and Muhammad, the Messenger. This seal was later worn by Abu Bakr, `Umar and `Uthmaan. In the last phase of his rule this seal fell into a well and was lost. (Bukhaari from Anas) (2:78)

2 Isaiah. (42:8) “I am the Lord: and my glory will I not give to another, neither my praise to graven images.”

One, the Source of peace and perfection, the Guardian of faith, the Preserver of safety. And then I avow that Christ, son of Mary, was God's creation and His Word. The Word was sent to Mary the Virgin, chaste and pure. And Jesus Christ was conceived by her of that Word. God created Jesus Christ with His Spirit and inspiration, just as He created Adam with His Hand and Spirit. Now I invite you to place your faith only in Allah, Who has no co-sharer, and obey Him, and accept my teachings with a truthful heart and follow me in my Way, because verily I have come with a Message from Allah."¹

"Negus! relinquish your pride. I invite you and your countrymen to the path of God. Behold, I have but conveyed to you the commandments of God, and have made them clear to you. It will benefit you to accept my advice. My cousin Ja`far and a number of fear-driven Muslims are in your country. They expect from you their basic comforts. Salutations to him who takes to the straight path."

The Negus embraced Islam on reading that letter and replied,

"In the service of Muhammad, the Messenger of Allah from Asham b. Abjar, 'O Prophet, on you be the mercy and blessings of God, besides Whom none is worthy of worship, and Who has guided me unto Islam. I acknowledge that your letter has duly been delivered to me. And whatever you have written about Jesus Christ, I swear by God, the Creator of the Heavens and the Earth, that he does not excel that even by a particle of dust; you have stated exactly his rank (before God). We are acting on your teachings, and your cousin and the group of Muslims here with me are in comfort. I hereby declare that you are the Messenger of

1 "The creed of Muhammad is free from suspicion or ambiguity, and the Qur'aan is a glorious testimony to the Unity of God. The Prophet of Mecca rejected the worship of idols and men, of stars and planets, on the rational principle that whatever rises must set, that whatever is born must die, that whatever is corruptible must decay and perish." *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* - Gibbon, p-665

God, that you are Truthful, and that you are the exponent of the Truth of the Truthful. I swear allegiance to you, and I have testified my allegiance to God's commandments at the hands of your cousin. And I am deputing my son Arha to wait upon you in service. I am only the master of myself. And if you are pleased to command my personal presence, I shall hasten to your service. I believe that whatever you say is the Truth.¹ Salutations unto you O Prophet of God."

2. `Ala b. Hazrami took the Prophet's letter to Munzir b. Sawa, the King of Bahrain, and a tributary to the Emperor of Persia. He confessed Islam and most of his subjects joined him in the faith. In reply, he indicated that a number of his subjects had cherished Islam

as the fairest faith, while a few others disliked it, and expressed their disapproval. Of his subjects, a great number were Jews and Magians. He wrote that he would deal with them as instructed.

The Prophet answered that whoever took good counsel and was guided, would do so to his own benefit, and whoever remained a Jew or Magian, should pay a non-combatant tax.²

3. `Amr b. al-`Aas³ was deputed to take the message to Jaiffar, the King of Oman and his brother, `Abbad, sons of Julundi.

1 Tabari. (2:652), II - G - p-645-55

2 Zad. (3:692) - Such tax-payers could not be enlisted as soldiers and enjoyed full civil rights (like the Muslims).

3 "Amr b. al-`Aas as a conqueror and strategist:- `Amr, the son of al-`Aas, started with only 4000 men, and in the course of three weeks cleared the country of the Byzantines. The Romans, flying from other parts of Egypt, took refuge in Alexandria, which was well fortified. After a siege of some duration, the city capitulated on favourable terms. The whole of Egypt, up to the borders of Abyssinia on the South and Libya on the West, became subject to Moslem domination. As in other countries, immediately it was conquered, measures were taken to improve the condition of the peasantry." "The Egyptian Christians, who were called Copts and belonged to the Melchite sect, were treated with marked favour, in consequence of their good will towards the Moslems."

`Abbad was a chief and more polite and meeker than his brother. `Amr. b. al-`Aas reported, "I introduced myself as an ambassador of the Prophet of God."

`Abbad said, "Jaiffar is my elder brother and sovereign of this country. I will present you to him. But tell me what is that to which you invite us to!" `Amr said, "To the worship of the one Lord God Who has no partner; also to witness that Muhammad (SAW) is His servant and Messenger!"

`Abbad said, "Amr, you too are the son of a chief. Tell me how your father reacted, because we can take it as a precedent."

`Amr replied, "He is now dead. He had not put his faith in the Prophet. I wish he had become a believer and attested to the Prophet's truthfulness. I also held the opinion of my father, until God guided me into Islam."

`Abbad asked, "Since when have you been Muhammad's (SAW) follower?"

`Amr answered, "Since only a short time ago."

"Where?," inquired `Abbad.

"In the Court of the Negus who has also embraced Islam,"¹ replied `Amr.

"The story about the burning of the Alexandrian Library under the orders of the Caliph Omar is without any foundation. Such an act of vandalism was totally opposed to the tolerant and liberal spirit of that great ruler. As a matter of fact, a large part of this library was destroyed in the siege which Julius Caesar underwent in that city; and the remainder was lost in the reign of the Emperor Theodosius, in the fourth century of the Christian era. This Emperor, who was a devout Christian and hated works written by pagans, had ordered the destruction and dispersion of the splendid remnant of the Philadelphian Library, which order was so zealously carried out that little or nothing remained of it in the seventh century for the Moslems to destroy." History of the Saracen by Sir Sayyid Amir `Ali.

1 `Amr had embraced Islam on the advice of Khaalid b. Waliid while he was in Ethiopia. Later, he reaffirmed his faith before the Prophet. Zad. (3:62)

`Abbad then asked, "How did his subjects react?"

`Amr said, "They also accepted Islam."

`Abbad now asked, "Have the Bishops and the Priests too accepted Islam?"

"Yes", was `Amr's reply.

"What are you saying? Nothing is more demeaning for a nobleman than a lie!", `Abbad retorted.

"I have not told a lie; and lying is not permissible in Islam.", defended `Amr.

"How did Heracles respond? Does he know of the conversion of Negus to Islam?"

"Yes!", `Amr emphatically replied.

`Abbad questioned, "How can you say that?"

"The Negus used to pay tribute to Heracles. Since his conversion, he did not pay anything", answered `Amr.

"The news reached the ears of Heracles through his brother Nabok. He said, "Your Majesty's humble servant has refused to pay tribute and has also deserted your Majesty's faith." Heracles replied, "What then? He has chosen a religion for himself and cherished it. What am I to do? By God, if I did not have the worries of this imperial crown, I too would have acted as the Negus did."

"Are you fully aware of what you are saying?" questioned Abbad. "By God, I am only speaking the truth", replied `Amr.

"Well, then tell me what your Prophet commands you to do and what he forbids?" enquired `Abbad.

"He commands obedience to God, the Omnipotent, and forbids sinfulness, the ways of adultery, intoxicants, the worship of stones, idols and the Cross", answered `Amr.

“How beautiful these commandments are. I wish my brother would also accept them. I wish my brother would hold my opinion and both of us hasten to the service of the Prophet to confess our faith. I fear that if my brother prefers the ways of the world and rejects the invitation, he will invite disaster upon his sovereignty”.

`Amr said, “If your brother accepts Islam, the Prophet will sustain his rule over his country, and will only impose *Zakaat*, which he will collect from the well-to-do people and distribute the proceeds thereof among the poor of this place.”

“That is a good way. But what do you mean by *Zakaat*?” queried `Abbad.

`Amr explained to him the procedure of *Zakaat*. When he said that *Zakaat* was also leviable on camels, `Abbad asked, “Will the Prophet desire us to pay tax even on camels, though a camel feeds on the leaves of trees and manages water for himself by his own efforts? I do not see how the people of my community, who are scattered in distant camps, would react to this kind of taxation.”

`Amr halted there for a few days and `Abbad reported their day to day conversations to his brother. Finally, the King summoned `Amr to his presence. The officials of the King held him by both arms and led him to the King, who commanded his men to free him. “I wanted to sit down, but the staff-bearers again forbade me. I looked towards the King”, related `Amr. The King said, “Speak, why are you here?”

`Amr delivered to him a sealed letter. Jaiffar broke the seal, read the letter and passed it over to his brother who also read it. And `Amr b. `Aas observed that the younger brother was more yielding and affable in manners.

The King asked, “How do matters stand with the Quraish?”

“Willingly or unwillingly all have yielded obedience to him”, replied `Amr.

“Who are those that surround them?” Jaiffar asked.

“Those, who have consciously embraced Islam, have sacrificed everything in order to be ever at his service and men who have learned his teachings thoughtfully”, answered `Amr.

“Well, then see us again tomorrow”, said Jaiffar.

`Amr called on the younger brother the next day before his visit to the King. He told him that the King would become a Muslim, if the kingdom did not suffer thereby in any way. `Amr later approached the King. The King said, “I have given this matter my full consideration and if I were to yield obedience to a person whose army has not touched our country, then I would be regarded as a vulnerable ruler throughout Arabia. On the other hand, if your army marched this way, I would put up stiff resistance the like of which you might not have experienced before.”

`Amr said, “So be it, I shall leave tomorrow.”

The King said, “But do stay until tomorrow.”

The next day the King sent for him and both the brothers embraced Islam along with most of their subjects.¹

4. Al-Munzir b. al-Haarith b. Abu Thamiir was the ruler of Damascus and Governor of Syria. Shuj`a b. Wahb-al-Asadi was sent to him as an envoy of the Prophet. Munzir was to begin with, very angry and then observed, “I myself will lead an army to Madina.” Finally, however, he returned the envoy honourably, though he failed to confess faith in Islam.

5. Hauza b. `Ali, ruler of Yamaama and a Christian by faith, received the Prophet’s letter from Salit b. `Amr. He replied that if his sovereignty were accepted over half the Islamic dominions, he

1 Zad p-542.

was prepared to confess Islam. The Prophet's messenger returned and Hauza died a few days later.¹

6. Juraij b. Matthews, whose title was Muqauqis, was the King of Egypt and Alexandria, and a Christian by faith. Hatib b. Abu Balta`a delivered him the letter of the Prophet with the warning, "If you reject the faith, the sin of the non-acceptance of Islam by the Copts will also hang upon you."

The envoy delivered the letter. In addition, he made a short speech to help the King and the courtiers to grasp the sublime truths of Islam.

"Sir, there has gone before you a man (i.e. Pharoah) who said, 'I am the high Lord of you all.' And God confounded him and caused his ruin in this world and in the hereafter. And the flames of the wrath of God consumed everything he loved and cared for. Even his country passed over to the faithful. We can learn a lesson from this true story." The King said, "But we already have a religion and shall not leave it, unless we change over to a better one."

Hatib said, "Islam is a summation of all the revealed religions and has, therefore, been declared by Allah as the perfected Way of life." (5:3) He added, "By God, just as the Prophet Musa (Moses) foretold the advent of the Prophet Jesus Christ, the Prophet Jesus Christ (ʿIsa) conveyed the glad tidings of the Prophet Muhammad's (SAW) appearance.² Just as you invite the believers in the Old Testament to the New Gospel, we invite you to the refined and sublime teaching of the Qur'aan. The

1 Zad. (3:63) Some historians give his name as Benjamin. His mother was a Copt.

2 *And when Jesus Christ, son of Mary, said, "O children of Israel! Lo, I am the messenger of Allah unto you confirming that which was revealed before me in the Torah and bringing good tidings of a Messenger who comes after me and whose name is Ahmad (i.e. one who praises Allah most)." (Qur'aan 61:6)*

people among whom a Prophet appears are understood to be his *Umma* (community). It therefore becomes obligatory on those invited to accept the teachings of the Prophet. And it should further be understood that we are only inviting you to the revived teachings of the Messiah.”

Muqauqis replied, “I have given much consideration to the teachings of this Prophet. Still I find no attraction in him; albeit he does not forbid the use of agreeable things. I know he is neither a Magian, who will do harm, nor a soothsayer, who will tell lies. Rather, traces of prophethood are perceived in him. Anyhow, I will give more consideration to the matter.”

Then he commanded safe-keeping of the letter in an ivory box under his seal in his treasury and sent presents for the Prophet. Also, he sent a written reply, “I knew this much that a Prophet was to appear; but I always expected his appearance from Syria.”

‘Duldul’, the famous steed was among the presents from Muqauqis to the Prophet.¹

7. Heracles, the Emperor of the Eastern Roman Empire,² was a Christian. Diayah b. Khalifa-al-Kalbi,³ the Prophet’s envoy, called upon him in Jerusalem. Heracles held a splendid reception in his honour, received the Prophet’s letter,⁴ and put to him many queries about the Prophet. He desired to make further inquiries and commanded that someone from Makka be presented before him. By coincidence, Abu Sufyaan was there along with his Syrian caravan.⁵

He was taken to Jerusalem and presented before the full court of the Emperor. The Emperor instructed the companions of

1 Zad. (3:61)

2 Its capital was Constantinople.

3 A well known companion from the tribe of Khuza`a. He participated in all major events.

4 Bukhaari. (1:4)

5 Bukhaari: from Ibn `Abbaas, Chapter - Battles (1:4).

Abu Sufyaan to check him if he spoke any untruth in answer to the queries put to him. Abu Sufyaan was in those days a deadly enemy of the Prophet and himself later stated that if he had not been in fear of exposure by his companions, he would have forged many lies about the Prophet. As it was, he was obliged to speak the truth. He was questioned by the Emperor himself.

Caesar: "What is his family and pedigree?"

Abu Sufyaan: Noble and exalted.

Caesar: Prophets always come of a noble race, so that none may feel a reproach in obeying them. Has anyone among the Quraish or in Arabia put forward such a claim before he declared himself to be a Prophet?

Abu Sufyaan: No!

Caesar: If it had been so, I would have taken him to be an imitator of his fore-runners. Did he ever tell a lie before he claimed to be a Prophet? Was he ever reproached with such an allegation?

Abu Sufyaan: No!

Caesar: "It can never be that a person who has not imposed a lie on men, may impose a lie upon God. And was there anyone among his ancestors, a king?"

Abu Sufyaan: No!

Caesar: If it had been so, I would have thought him to be a pretender in the hope of regaining a lost kingdom. Are believers in him the poor and humble, or chiefs and powerful persons?

Abu Sufyaan: The humble and lowly.

Caesar: Indeed, the foremost believers in Prophets have ordinarily been the humble and the lowly. Is the number of his believers growing day by day or dwindling?

Abu Sufyaan: It is on the increase.

Caesar: That is a peculiar phenomenon with every true faith. It yields its fruits in small numbers at the beginning, but gradually it grows to its full harvest. And does any one leave his creed in distaste?

Abu Sufyaan: No!

Caesar: That is the effect of tasting a true faith. Once its flavour gets into the heart and possesses the soul, it is ever agreeable. And does this person break his truces and treaties?

Abu Sufyaan: No, but this year we have entered into an agreement with him. Let us see how it goes.

Abu Sufyaan stated that he could manipulate only that one insinuation against the Prophet but Caesar paid no heed to it. Rather, Caesar observed, Yes, Prophets never violate their pacts. Only a worldly man chews up his words, and Prophets are not worldly men. Have you had to fight him in battle?

Abu Sufyaan: Yes!

Caesar: What was the result?

Abu Sufyaan: Once he defeated us (at Badr) and once we defeated him in the battle of Uhad.

Caesar: It goes that way with the Prophets of God. But at the end, God's help and victory are opened to them. Well, what are his teachings?

Abu Sufyaan: "Worship only the One God. Get rid of the idol-worshipping ways of our forefathers. And establish prayers, truthfulness, purity, cleanliness (of mind and body), and act charitably to your kith and kin."

Caesar: These very things have been told to us of the Promised Prophet. I knew that a Prophet was to appear, but I did not realise that he was to be raised from Arabia. Abu Sufyaan, if your answers are all true, then I believe that one day he will be the sovereign of this place (i.e. Jerusalem and Syria). I wish I could keep close contact with him and serve him to the best of my ability.

Then the Prophet's letter was read out aloud in the open court. The courtiers began screaming when they heard its contents and Abu Sufyaan and his men were ousted from the court. Abu Sufyaan confessed that since that day, engraved on his heart was his own 'wretchedness' and the great glory of the Prophet.

8. Chosroes, the emperor of Persia, held sway over half the Eastern world. He followed the creed of Zarathushtra. `Abdullah b. Khudama delivered the Prophet's letter to him.

"By the name of Allah, the Most Merciful and Compassionate. From Muhammad (SAW), the Messenger of God to Chosroes, the Chief of Persia. Salutations to him who walks the straight path, puts his faith in God and His Message-Bearer, and witnesses that none but God alone, is worthy of worship and that Muhammad (SAW) is His Servant and Messenger. I invite you to the Message of God and I am His Messenger. I have been sent to all mankind, the seed of Adam, so that a warning of the chastisement of God be conveyed to him who is alive, and that the Word of God be fulfilled in them who disbelieve. Be a Muslim and you will go in peace; otherwise the sin of the Magian's disbelief will also hang over you."

Chosroes went wild on reading these words and tore the letter into pieces, exclaiming in his fury, "A humble person from among my subjects addresses a letter to me and writes his name before mine!"

Then Chosroes sent a command to his Viceroy, Badhan, in Yaman, that he should arrest and produce this man (the Prophet) before him.

Badhan dispatched a military contingent under an officer named Khar Khusru. He also deputed a civil officer, Babwaih, to investigate into the ways of the Prophet.

The people of Ta`if were delighted to see a military contingent proceeding to Madina with the purpose of punishing the Prophet for his insolence to the Emperor.

When Babwaih reached Madina along with his companions, the Prophet desired them to see him the next day. The following morning the Prophet told them, "Last night, God put your King to death. Go and make enquiries." The officers returned to Yaman and found the news to be correct. Official information had already been received by the Viceroy. Shirawaih, the Emperor's son, had murdered his father and seized the throne.

In the meantime, Badhan made full enquiries into the character, habits, morals and teachings of the holy Prophet. His research guided him, his entire court and most of the people, to embrace Islam.¹

The Prophet's envoy to Chosroes returned to report that the Emperor had torn his letter to pieces. The Prophet calmly observed, "He has only torn his kingdom to pieces" - *'Mazzaqa Mulkahu'*.

Chosroes's dynasty had reigned over half the civilised world for five thousand years, and on several occasions inflicted heavy defeats on the Greeks and the Romans, but today there remains not a single trace of the Magian kingdom anywhere in the world.

Other rulers or chieftains who embraced Islam were:

1. Thumaama, the ruler of Najd, who embraced Islam in 6 A.H.²
2. Jablah, King of the ancient kingdom of Ghassaan.
3. Farwa b. `Amr of Khuza`a (The Governor of Syria on behalf of the Emperor in Constantinople). The Emperor summoned him to his court and commanded him to forego Islam. He refused and was hanged. This noble servant of God

¹ II - G - p-658.

² Thumaama rendered meritorious services in the ugly disturbances caused by Musailama, the Pretender.

sacrificed everything - power, honour, wealth, life and a devoted wife for his all-conquering love for Islam.¹

4. Ukaidir, the ruler of Dumatul-Jandal. He embraced Islam in 9 A.H.
5. Zul Kala Himyary held sway over certain districts of Yaman and Ta`if and was also the King of a powerful tribe of Himyar. He had fashioned himself to be a god and his people believed him to be so and prostrated before him. He confessed Islam and freed 18,000 slaves in one day in thanksgiving. He divested himself of his kingly robes during the Caliphate of `Umar and led a monastic life in Madina.

1 When the Byzantines decided to crucify Farwa by the side of a pool, called Afra in Palestine, he said, "Has Salma heard that her husband is by the water of `Afra raised on a riding camel (i.e. Scaffold). A camel whose mother no stallion e'er mounted. Its branches shorn with sickles?"

Imaam-al-Zuhri (a great scholar of Madina) added Farwa's following verses:

Tell the chiefs of the Muslims that I surrender to my Lord, my body and my bones. Then they beheaded him and hung him up by that (pool of) water. May God have mercy on him and his blessed wife. II - G - p-645.

A Persian poet says:

"The Lovers of the Lord founded a custom venerable,
By sacrificing their lives in a way admirable." Ed.

4. DEPUTATIONS

There was a great thirst in the desert land of Arabia for the teachings of Islam. Deputations called upon the Prophet from every corner of the peninsula, to know Islam, and be quenched of their thirst. On their way they met several tribes and other peoples and thus acquainted them of Islam and the holy Prophet. All those people who met them learnt something about the new religion. The tribes who called upon the Prophet were: the Daus, Sauda, Thaqif, B. Hanifa, Tayy`i, Asha`riyin, Azd, Farwa, Juzami, Hamdaan, Taariq b. `Abdullah, Tajiib, B. Sa`d Hudhaim, B. Asad, Bahra, `Uzra, Khaulan, Muharib, (Ghassaan B. al-Haarith), B. `Ayyaash, Ghaamid, B. Fajaara, Salamaan, Najraan and Nakhaa. Most of these called upon the Prophet only in their eagerness to learn and believe. However a few of them were already Muslims and intended to know more and be blessed.

THE DEPUTATION OF DAUS

It has already been mentioned that Tufail, having confessed Islam in Makka, carried the message to his people. He had asked when going back, "O Prophet of God, kindly pray that my people may also avail themselves of this light." The Prophet there and then prayed, "O God, render Tufail a sign of Thee." Returning to his country, Tufail entered his house and his aged father rushed to meet him, but was told, "Father, henceforth I am not yours and you are not mine." The old man in surprise asked, "But why, what has happened?" Tufail explained, "I have accepted the faith of Muhammad (SAW), and have come back to you as a Muslim." The affectionate father simply said, "My faith also goes with yours." "Well, Father, then take a bath and put on clean clothes, so that I may initiate you in the Truth of Islam." Then followed his wife and to her he repeated the same warning and when she embraced him, she did so after having confessed Islam. Tufail made his preaching public, but he met with little success.

He returned to the Prophet and submitted, "My people are steeped in adultery and Islam strictly forbids it. They are thus afraid of Islam. Kindly pray for them." The Prophet said, "O God, guide the Daus to the straight path." He then instructed Tufail to go back and invite his people to the path of God, with tact and grace. This time the Daus cherished the message in their souls. In 5 A.H., with 70 to 80 families, as fresh fruits of Islam, Tufail travelled to Madina. There he came to know that the Prophet was at Khaibar. He moved there with his caravan and received the blessings of the Prophet. Also, the noble Ja'far, the Prophet's cousin, reached Khaibar with a host of Abyssinian Muslims. Such large numbers from the Daus and Abyssinia were a frightening sight to the Jews, for how could their forts of brick and stone withstand the march of Islam, which could make its way into human hearts, hundreds and thousands of miles away?

THE DEPUTATION OF SAUDA

Zaid b. Haaritha of the Sauda had called upon the Prophet once before. The next time he came with a group of fifteen of the leading men of his tribe. They waited upon the Prophet in 8 A.H. The Prophet deputed Sa'd b. `Ubaada to entertain them. One day Ziyad said to the Prophet, "We have only one well for all of us. In winter it runs full, but it dries up in summer. Our people spend the season in scattered tents. Kindly pray to God that the well may serve us well all the year round."

"Our tribe is made up of new Muslims who need further teaching and also encouragement."

The Prophet asked them to bring seven pieces of brick. He held them in his hands and giving them to Ziyad said, "Well, throw them one by one into the well while chanting Allah, Allah over each one." Ziyad reported, "I did so and the water swelled to such a level that we could not fathom its bed."

THE DEPUTATION OF THAQIF

`Urwa b. Mas`ud was the first man who came from the tribe of Thaqif to learn the basics of Islam. He was the chief of his tribe and had been a representative of the Quraish in the signing of the truce of Hudaibiya. He fought against the Prophet in the battle of Hawazin and Thaqif. Then the Grace of God guided him to the straight path and he confessed Islam at Madina. He had ten wives. The Prophet desired him to retain four and divorce the other six. `Urwa complied with this injunction of Islam. After he had learnt more of the teachings of Islam, he requested the Prophet to permit him to preach among his people. The Prophet observed, "Your people will slay you." `Urwa submitted, "O Prophet of God, my people love me as they love their first-born." This saintly person returned to his people and started preaching Islam. One day he was offering prayers in the upper storey of his house, when some fanatic idol-worshipper aimed an arrow which pierced his body and so it was that he was martyred.¹

Although `Urwa himself could not raise his voice again, the sweet note that he had sounded pierced the hearts of his people. Little time had passed when they sent a deputation of their leaders to call on the Prophet in 9 A.H. under the leadership of `Abdu Yalail. When the Prophet had travelled to Ta`if eleven years earlier it was that very same man whom he had first addressed and it was he who had also instigated the irresponsible children of the place to stone the holy visitor. Now, in exchange for those insults and injuries, `Abdu received the beneficence and blessings of the Prophet. While returning from Ta`if, (eleven years earlier) the Prophet had remarked, "I shall not pray for their ruin, if they do not come over to Islam, God will endow their children with its blessings." However, Almighty God was pleased to guide even such hardened persecutors into preachers of Islam in the very lifetime of the holy Prophet.

1 II - G - p-614.

Mughira b. Shu`ba submitted to the Prophet, “These people are of my tribe. May I have your permission to entertain them as my guests?” The Prophet said, “I do not deny you that honour, but let them stay at a place where the sound of the Qur’aan may reach their ears.” With this consideration in view, their tents were pitched in the compound of the mosque. There they beheld the Muslims at prayer, and heard the soul-stirring chanting of the Qur’aan. Thus, the truth of Islam prevailed over their hearts, and they swore allegiance to Islam at the hands of the holy teacher. Before doing so, they requested the Prophet that they might be permitted to forego prayers. But he told them, “There is no good in a religion which absolves its devotees of the immense blessings of prayers.” Then they requested that they might not be summoned for *Jihad* (striving in the cause of Allah), nor be desired to pay *Zakaat* (a mandatory tax due for the poor). To this the Prophet assented, and comforted his companions by saying, “They will come to do all, of their own will, in the love of Islam.”

`Abdu Yalail had an interesting discourse with the Prophet on certain questions of Islamic Law:

1. “O Prophet of God, what do you say of adultery? Our men often remain away from homes on business and they have no alternative but to indulge in fornication.” The Prophet told him, “It is forbidden in Islam. Allah says: Do not approach fornication. Verily it is an indecency and an evil way of life.” (17:32)
2. “O Prophet of God, how do you instruct us on usury? It is only a form of investment with our capital.” The Prophet replied, “You can receive back the amount loaned. Allah says: *Ye believers fear God and forego all outstanding interest.*” (2:278)
3. “O Prophet of God, what do you command in respect of wine? It is only a juice and a produce of our country. We cannot go without the pleasure of it.” The Prophet answered, “Behold, God has forbidden the use of all intoxicants and He

commands: You who have put faith in God, know that strong drinks, all games of chance and worship of statues and divination by arrows are unholy and wicked acts of Satan. Avoid them, so that you may prosper.” (5:90)

On the following day, `Abdu Yalail submitted that his people would accept all the teachings of the Prophet but asked what they should do with the Rabbah (an idol) that the people adored and believed to be a goddess. The Prophet declared, “Demolish it!”

The members of the deputation said, “Ah, but if Rabbah comes to know of it, she will presently ruin us all.” `Umar (the future Caliph) interposing, said, “O son of `Abdu Yalail, you do not even comprehend that it is only a stone!” Ibn `Abdu Yalail feeling put out said, “We have not come to talk to you.” Then he requested the Prophet to take on the responsibility of undoing the goddess, because they believed that by destroying the idol with their own hands, they would only be inviting some kind of disaster. The Prophet said, “Very well, I will depute someone to demolish it.” One of them said, “Kindly let him not accompany us.” Then all of them confessed Islam and asked for the appointment of an Imaam to lead them in prayers and teach them Islam. `Uthmaan b. Abul-`Aas, the youngest among them, had been learning, apart from them, the Qur’aan and the doctrines and practices of Islam, sometimes from the Prophet himself, and sometimes from Abu Bakr Siddiq. The Prophet appointed him to be their Imaam.

The group resolved on their way back, to initially conceal their confession of Islam from their people and thus see their reaction. The people assembled immediately. They told them, “We met with a person who was very stiff and blunt. He ordered us to do things which are not to be done - break the idols, Laatt and `Uzza; abandon usury, even interest already due; give up drinking and adultery.” The people said, “But we shall never yield to any of these conditions.” In that case, they advised their people

to make preparations for war, burnish their swords, mend their weapons and repair their forts. For two days, the people of Ta`if stood firm in their resolve. On the third day, they confessed of their own accord, "How can we lead a war against Muhammad (SAW)? All the Arabs have signalled their submission to him. Let us accept whatever he commands us to do."

It was then that they were told, "In truth, we found the holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW) most excellent in piety, fidelity, compassion and truthfulness. We all have gathered a wealth of blessings from him."

"But why did you cover up these facts from us?" asked their people. "We simply wished that God might purge you of your arrogance" replied the group of new converts. Consequently, all the people of Ta`if confessed their belief in Islam. After a few days, the emissaries of the Prophet reached Ta`if under the command of Khaalid b. Waliid.¹ He was instructed to destroy Rabbah, the goddess. However, the residents of Ta`if, old and young, men and women, still apprehended that this daring step might end in some disaster for them. These fears were supposedly confirmed when Mughira b. Shu`ba aimed an arrow at the idol, and collapsed as he drew. The crowd of Thaqif exclaimed, "Behold, the Rabbah has undone him."

Mughira rose to his feet and shouted back, "Ye of Thaqif, you are nothing but simpletons. This piece of stone, what can it do or undo? O you people, seek the protection of God and worship Him Alone." With this he shut himself up in the temple and demolished the idol. He climbed up the walls and began to fell them brick by brick. Other Muslims also joined him and soon no trace of the temple was left. Its helpless priest shouted, "The foundations of the temple shall not fail to devastate you." Mughira then dug out the foundations as well, and in their place were laid

1 Zad. (3:601-602)

foundations of the true faith laid where they could not be dug out
- in the hearts of the people of the town.

THE DEPUTATION OF `ABDUL QAIS

Welcoming the deputation, the Prophet asked, “Of what people are you?” They told him, “Of the people of Rabi’a. Between you, O Prophet of God and us stands the infidel tribe of Mudar. Hence, we are restricted to call upon you only in the sacred months. We therefore request you to make us understand clearly all that is basic and essential in Islam for our purposes. We shall abide by these instructions.” The Prophet told them, “I command you to go by four ways and keep away from four. The four you must go by are: To believe in the One and only God; that Muhammad is His Apostle; Salaat (the five obligatory prayers); and *Zakaat*. The four you will keep away from are: Dubba (i.e. the flask); Hantam (i.e. the laced utensil); Naqir (i.e. the wooden wine vessel); and Muzat (i.e. the galvanised vessel). Remember these things and convey these instructions to those who follow you.”

They asked in amazement, “O Prophet of Allah, how could you know what Naqir is?” The Prophet answered, “Indeed, I know. You pierce a date-tree to breed its juice, and put dates into the juice and pour water over them. Then the mixture ferments, and when the fermentation settles down, you drink it. Know that all intoxicants breed crime and one of you may kill his own cousin under its influence.” Strangely it was indeed the case that one of the members among them had actually killed his cousin in such a state of intoxication. They further asked, “What vessels shall we use for drinking water?” He said, “The leather bags whose mouths are tied.” They said, “But there are very many rats in our land. They shall nibble the leather.” “Yes, it may be so,” replied the Prophet.

With this deputation had also come one Jarud b. `Alaa`, a Christian. He said, “O Apostle of God, even now I hold a religion. If I part with it and join yours, will you ensure my salvation?” The

Prophet said, "Yes, I assure you, the religion I invite you to is the refined form of religion you hold now." Some other Christians who were with the deputation also confessed Islam.¹

THE DEPUTATION OF B. HANIFA

The deputation of the B. Hanifa² confessed Islam in Madina. Among them was Musailima, the Pretender. He began to go about in the town saying, "I will swear allegiance to Muhammad (SAW), if he confirms my succession to him." The Prophet received a report of him, and holding a stick of the date-tree, observed "Behold, I would not care to accept his allegiance, if I was asked to make a gift of this cane to him. And if he does not bear allegiance, God will destroy him. God has shown to me his ignominious end in a vision. I had two bangles of gold on my arms. I felt their abomination and in my dream, a revelation guided me to blow them off with my breath. I did that and the bangles were blown off. I comprehend that the two bangles denote Musailima of Yamaama and `Ansi of Sana."³ Though Musailima, the Pretender, claimed to be an Apostle, he accepted all the same the Apostleship of the Prophet. By that ploy, he probably wanted to undermine the opposition of the Muslims of that territory. In 10 A.H. correspondence was exchanged between him and the Prophet.

Thus wrote Musailima: "From Musailima, the Apostle of God to Muhammad (SAW), the Apostle of God, "I may make it clear that half the land is ours, and the other half will go to the Quraish; but the Quraish do not divide in equity. And salutations to you." The Prophet wrote back: "By the name of Allah, the Most Merciful and Compassionate. From Muhammad (SAW), the

1 Sahihain from `Abbaas.

2 Islam was spread in this area with the active co-operation of Thumaama b. Athal.

3 Sahihain: Naf`i b. Jubair from Ibn `Abbaas.

Prophet, to Musailima, the Pretender. "I want to make it very clear that the land belongs to God. He bestows it to whom He will, out of his servants. But the welfare is only in the Hereafter for the righteous. And salute to him who goes by the way of Guidance." The letter was carried by Habiib b. Zaid b. `Aasim. The 'Pretender' in his rage chopped off the hands and feet of the envoy.¹ *Fatuh-ul-Buldan - Baladhari - p-95.*

THE DEPUTATION OF TAYYI

The chief of this deputation was Zaid-al-Khail, a noble-hearted poet and scholar. The Prophet observed of him, "All the reports about the Arabs brought to me, turned out to be somewhat exaggerated. But Zaid-al-Khail is an exception." He, therefore, changed his name from Zaid-al-Khail to Zaid-al-Khair (i.e. Zaid the noble). The deputation confessed Islam after making the necessary enquiries.²

THE DEPUTATION OF ASHA`RIYIN

The Prophet said of them, "The people of Yaman have come. Their hearts are tender and meek. Faith is their prerogative and wisdom is their mate; humility is among the goat-tenders; pride and conceit flourish among the cameleers, who dwell in the East." They entered Madina singing verses about friends they would meet and their fondness for the blessings of the holy Prophet.³

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- 1 In Abu Bakr Siddiq's Caliphate, General Khaalid b. Waliid over-powered Musailima, who was killed by Wahshi. Thus, Wahshi claimed that he made amends of his earlier misconduct, whereby he had killed Amiir Hamza by deceit.
 - 2 Zaid-al-Khair's two sons Muknaf and Haarith were companions of the Prophet.
 - 3 Zad. (3:619)

THE DEPUTATION OF AZD

This deputation was made up of seven men. The Prophet approved their deputation. He asked them, "What are you?" They answered, "We are faithful." The Prophet remarked, "Every word has its particular meaning. Tell me how that word agrees with its sense in your case?"

They explained that they held fifteen habits. Five pertained to faith and the rest were a guide to action. They received these guidelines from the Prophet's missionaries and cultivated them in themselves. They were as follows:

"Faith in God, in His angels, in His Books, in His Prophets and in the resurrection after death."

The five they were told to act upon were:

(i) To say, there is no deity but God; (ii) to offer the five obligatory prayers; (iii) to contribute to charities (Zakaat); (iv) to fast in the month of Ramzaan and (v) to make the pilgrimage to Makka, if one has the means.

The five which they already practised were:

(i) To be grateful in peace and plenty; (ii) to show fortitude in the face of distress; (iii) to be resigned to the will of God; (iv) to speak the truth in times of trial and (v) not to rejoice in the affliction of their enemies.

The Prophet observed: Those who gave that teaching were men of wisdom as if they were Prophets. Well, I shall tell you five more to make full the score:

(i) Do not store things which you will not eat; (ii) do not build a house, which you will not dwell in; (iii) do not try to vie with each other in things which you are to leave tomorrow; (iv) observe fear of God, to whom you are to return and in whose Presence you shall stand for judgement and (v) incline towards

those things that will serve you in the Hereafter, where your abode will be eternal.

With this they carried out the commands of the Prophet in letter and spirit.

THE BLESSED FARWA b. `AMR-AL-JUDHAMY

All the Northern territory of Arabia, with its capital at Ma`an, was under the jurisdiction of the Roman Empire, under the governorship of Farwa. The Prophet had sent him a letter of invitation. He accepted Islam, returning a gift of a white mule of great value to the Prophet. When the Imperial court heard this news he was summoned and offered inducements to quit Islam. Farwa remained firm and was thrown behind bars. Finally, the ill-advised council decided to hang him by the water tank of `Afra (may God bless him and his wife Salma for an unparalleled sacrifice).

THE DEPUTATION OF HAMDAAN

This tribe dwelt in Yaman. Khaalid b. Waliid was deputed to preach Islam to them. He lived amongst them for a long time, but the hearts of the people did not open to Islam. The Prophet then sent `Ali Murtaza on the same mission. Impressed by his wisdom, eloquence and simplicity of style, the whole tribe accepted the faith in one day. On receipt of this delightful news, the Prophet laid his forehead in gratitude before Allah and sought blessings for the people of Hamdaan.

This deputation was composed of men, who had confessed Islam at the hands of `Ali Murtaza. They had travelled just to have a glimpse of the hallowed countenance of the Prophet. Maalik b. Namat recited the following couplet on the occasion,

“Tomorrow we shall be in the blissful surroundings of Madina, the abode of the holy Prophet and his devoted companions.” (Zad-493)

THE DEPUTATION OF TAARIQ b.`ABDULLAH

Taariq was standing in a market of Makka, when a man appeared saying, “O you people, say there is no deity save God, and prosper.” Another man following him, hurled bricks against the first and said, “O you people, do not believe him, he is a liar.”

Taariq asked a bystander who these men were. He was told, “The first is a person of the B. Haashim. He believes himself to be the Messenger of God and the other at his heels is his uncle `Abdul `Uzza (his title was Abu Lahab).” Taariq himself related what followed:

Years rolled by since that incident. The Prophet had migrated to Madina by then. Some people of my tribe were going to Madina to buy dates and I was one of them. We halted at the outskirts of Madina to change clothes. Presently a man appeared. He had two old mantles on him. He saluted us and asked, “Whence and whither?” We answered, “We are here to buy dates.” We had a red camel, which had a string in its nose. He asked, “Will you sell this camel?” We said, “Yes, in exchange for so many dates.” He did not ask to reduce the price, took hold of the nose-string, and went away with the camel. We had hardly entered the city, when we began to reproach ourselves. We had handed over the camel to a person whom we did not know and did nothing to make sure that the stipulated price would be obtained without any fuss.

With us was our Chief’s lady resting in her bower. She interposed, “I chanced to see the man’s gracious face. It was radiant like the bright side of the full moon. If a person having such an impressive face holds back your price, I will pay for him.” We were still talking over the subject when a man appeared, “I

have been sent here by the Messenger of God. Here are the agreed dates in exchange for the camel, and these by way of your entertainment. Please measure your dates.”

We entered the city in a cheerful frame of mind and beheld the same person standing on the pulpit in the mosque and preaching, “O people, be charitable, for truly charity will ensure prosperity for you. The upper hand is nobler than the lower one. Be charitable particularly to your mother, your father, your sisters and brothers, and to persons nearer to you in the first and second degree.”

THE DEPUTATION OF TUJIB

Thirteen people of the clan of Tujib approached the Prophet, bringing with them a fair amount of money as ‘*Zakaat*’ on their savings and cattle. The Prophet instructed them to take it back and distribute it to the needy of their own tribe. They submitted, “We have offered only the surplus. The needy of our place have already been fully cared for and served.”

Abu Bakr Siddiq remarked, “O Messenger of God, no nobler deputation has visited us yet.” The Prophet observed, “Guidance but proceeds from Allah the Great and the Exalted. He enlightens his heart for the Faith, whose prosperity He wills.”

These people seemed earnestly inclined to learn the Qur’aan and the traditions of the Prophet. Therefore, Bilaal was particularly chosen to look after their entertainment and welfare. However, they indicated a certain restlessness to hurry back. The companions of the Prophet enquired of them, “Are you not well-looked after here?” They answered, “The heavenly light that we have seen in the Prophet’s face, the Divine guidance we have picked up from his speech and the outpouring of blessings we have had here, make us eager to go back as soon as possible so as to share our unique experience with our people.”

The Prophet bade them farewell, honouring and gracing them with presents. He asked them, "If there was anyone who had not received his share? They said, "Yes, a youth, whom we left to watch over our belongings." The Prophet said, "Ask him to have his share." The boy came and submitted, "O Prophet of God, you have honoured my people with gifts and presents. Endow me as well."

The Prophet asked, "What do you long for?" He said, "O Prophet, my desire is different from my elders. I know that they came here in the love of Islam and also brought money and kind in charity." The Prophet said, "So it was, but what is your desire?" He said, "I only came here in the hope that you might pray to God for the enlightenment of my heart and the forgiving of my sins." The Prophet prayed for him what he cherished.

Later on, when the Prophet performed his pilgrimage in 10 A.H., the people of that clan again waited upon him at Makka and he asked of the boy. He was told, "O Messenger of God, we have never seen a person so contented. He would not raise an eyebrow, though goods were being distributed lavishly in his presence."

THE DEPUTATION OF B. SA'D HUDHAIM

This tribe was an offshoot of the tribe of Khuza`a. The Prophet was leading prayers for a funeral, when they entered the mosque and settled in a corner. On finishing the prayers, he asked them, "Are you Muslims?" They confessed they were. "Then why did you not join us in prayer for your brother?" They said, "We thought we had no license to act of our own until we had borne allegiance to the Prophet of God." The Prophet said, "You become a Muslim the very moment you confess Islam."

There presently appeared a man whom they had left behind to keep watch over their camels. They said, "Being the youngest of us, he serves us." The Prophet observed, "Yes, youngsters do serve their elders. May God bless him." This blessing did indeed

bear fruits; he became the most learned *Imaam* in the Qur'aan and their leader in prayers. When the deputation returned to their home, the whole tribe confessed Islam.

THE DEPUTATION OF B. ASA`D

This deputation consisted of ten men including Wabisa b. Ma`bad and Talha b. Khawailid. The Prophet was among his companions when they entered the mosque. One of them spoke, "Behold, O Messenger of God, we bear witness that God is one and that you are His servant and Prophet. O Prophet of God! We have come of our own accord. You never sent anyone to invite us." On that occasion, a revelation was received,

"They lay an obligation on you (Muhammad) that they confessed Islam. Say, deem not your surrender a favour to me; rather Allah confers a favour on you, in as much as He guided you to the Faith; if you are truthful." (49:17)

These people asked about divination from birds' chirping and other signs. The Prophet advised them to take no heed of such things.

They further submitted, "One thing more, O Prophet of God, what do you say of palmistry or ramal?" The Prophet told them, "A Prophet of God had taught that science to his people. If anyone holds it intact he does hold a science."

THE DEPUTATION OF BAHRA

These people entered Madina and seated their camels before the house of Mikdad b. `Amr.¹ He asked his wife to prepare a supper for them and himself went to welcome them. Hais² was

1 Mikdad was from the tribe of Kinda. He was adopted by the B. Zuhra (a tribe of the Quraish). He was a distinguished companion and died in 35 A.H. at the age of seventy and was buried at Madina.

2 A preparation of oat meals and dates baked in butter.

served to the guests. A portion of it was also sent to the Prophet, who took a little of it and sent back the rest. Mikdad placed the same vessel before them for breakfast and they ate it to their fill and with ever-increasing relish. Amazed, they observed that the quantity in the dish never seemed to have diminished. One day they said to their host, "Mikdad, we had heard that the people of Madina ate only oatmeal and barley. But you served us a dish which we cannot afford very often. Besides, we have never tasted such a delicious flavour before." Mikdad explained, "Gentlemen! It bore a reflection of the blessings of the Prophet, for his holy fingers had touched that preparation."

Hearing this, their faith was deepened and they declared with one voice, "Truly, he is the Messenger of God." They stayed in Madina for a few days, learned the Qur'aan and the commandments, and then returned to their homes.

THE DEPUTATION OF `UZRA

This deputation of nineteen men, including Hamza b. Nu`man, came in the 9th year of the Hijra. The Prophet asked them, "How do you introduce yourself?" They said, "We are the B. `Uzra and brothers of Qussay (on his mother's side). We helped him to regain his footing in the land and in the expulsion of Khuza`a and the B. Bakr from Makka. As such, we have an affinity in lineage, a distinction of our family." The Prophet gave them a warm welcome and cheered them by saying, "Shortly Syria will be conquered and Heracles will fly out from your territory."

The Prophet forbade them to have any recourse to soothsayers and prohibited all the sacrifices they used to observe. Only the sacrifice at the time of Pilgrimage (*Id-al-Aza*), remained obligatory. When they left, they were honoured with presents.¹

1 Zad. (3:657)

THE DEPUTATION OF KHAULAN

Ten men of the Khaulan visited the Prophet in the month of Sha`baan, 10 A.H.

They submitted, “We have come to receive direct blessings from you, to acknowledge your great favours and express our gratitude to God in your presence. We have travelled this long distance for the joy of seeking your blessings.”

The Prophet said, “Whoever has visited me in Madina will be my neighbour on the Day of Judgement.” Then he asked them, “What about `Amm Anas?” (a deity of those people). They answered, “Thanks to God, that He showed us guidance in your teaching, our most high and noble asset. Yet there are some old men and women, who still adore it. Now by the Grace of God, we will level it to the ground. We have long been under the spell of error and misguidance.”

The Prophet asked them to tell him more about the deity. They said, “O Prophet of God, once we collected a hundred bulls and sacrificed them in one day to obtain her favour. All the meat was eaten away by beasts and vultures though we needed the cattle most in those days.” They also narrated, “We set apart an equal share from the cattle and the best growth of the soil for `Amm Anas but only the produce of one corner was set apart for God. And if the harvest suffered from hurricanes, God’s share was transferred to `Amm Anas but the share of `Amm Anas was never allotted to God.”

The Prophet then instructed them in the duties and doctrines of Islam and laid particular stress on the following injunctions:

1. To carry out faithfully one’s pledge (given to any one);
2. To return things deposited as a trust;
3. To treat neighbours kindly (irrespective of their creed);

4. To do no injustice. He warned that acts of injustice would take the shape of a gloom on the Day of Judgement.¹

THE DEPUTATION OF MUHARIB

This deputation of ten members came in 10 A.H. The noble Bilaal catered for their needs and entertainment. One day the Prophet instructed them in faith from Zuhr to `Asr (i.e. for about 3 hours).

The Prophet was closely marking one of them and said, "I have seen you once before." The man replied, "Yes, by God, you saw me and talked to me as well, but I reacted in a foolish way and spurned your holy words. This incident happened in the Market of `Ukaz, where you were preaching." The Prophet said, "Yes now I recollect all that." Then the man confessed, "That day, O Prophet, none of my companions was more bitterly opposed to you than myself. But they all died in their forefathers' heathenism. And I owe boundless gratitude to God that he kept me alive to this day to be able to cherish the good luck of putting my faith in Islam."

The Prophet simply remarked, "The changing of hearts from vice to virtue is in the hands of God, the most High and the Exalted." Then the man asked for the expiation of his earlier sins. The Prophet comforted him, saying, "Conversion to Islam extirpates all earlier lapses."

THE DEPUTATION OF GHASSAAN

This deputation of three people came in 10 A.H. They swore allegiance and went back determined to guide their people to Islam. It appears that they did not achieve their objective. Two of them had died by the time General Abu `Ubaida b. al-Jarrah conquered Syria.

1 Zad. (3:659)

THE DEPUTATION OF B. AL-HAARITH

They approached the Prophet in the month of Shawwaal, 10 A.H. Khaalid b. Waliid was deputed to preach Islam among them. They were converted to Islam by his teaching. He sent the good news to the Prophet and himself stayed among them to continue his job. The Prophet sent for him along with the leaders of the tribe, Qais b. al-Husain and `Abdullah b. Furad. The Prophet asked them, “Why were all who invaded your country in the period of the *‘jahiliyya’* crushed and defeated?”

They said, “O Prophet of God, we never initiated mischief nor went on the offensive. When attacked, we stood united.” The Prophet remarked, “Yes, that was the key to your success.”

THE DEPUTATION OF B. `AYYAASH

This deputation from Najraan visited the Prophet four months before his death. They had already confessed Islam. They said, “We have heard the preachers of Islam saying that he who has not migrated, carries no Islam. We have money and also cattle by which we can earn our living. If our confession is still not good, what shall we gain by our gold and cattle? Will it not be better for us to come over here to be ever at your service?”

The Prophet answered, “No, stay where you are, but in piety. Nothing shall be reduced from your reward.”¹

1 Muslims should not limit the scope of their missionary activities by huddling together at the centre. They are required to carry forward the mission of Islam to every nook and corner of the earth. Those who abandon their homes without a solid cause, to seek a dwelling in Muslim countries, are acting against the injunctions of the Prophet, and undermine the principal function of the Islamic mission.

THE DEPUTATION OF GHAAMID

This deputation consisting of ten men, called on the Prophet in 10 A.H. They stopped outside Madina, leaving behind a boy to watch over their goods. The Prophet asked them, “Whom did you leave by your goods?” They said, “A boy.” The Prophet told them, “The boy fell asleep; a thief took off with a bag.” One of them said, “O Prophet of God, that bag was mine.” The Prophet comforted them, “The boy awoke in time, caught hold of the thief and recovered the bag.”

On return to their halting place, they learnt that everything had happened exactly as the Prophet told them. That very event led to their confession of Islam. The Prophet deputed Ubayy b. Ka`b to teach them the Qur’aan by heart and other commandments. A written copy of the relevant rules for their guidance was also given to them.¹

THE DEPUTATION OF B. FAJAARA

This deputation of ten Muslims waited upon the Prophet on his return from Tabuk. Their camels looked lean. The Prophet asked them, “How are your households?”

They said, “O Messenger of God, our households are in a very bad way. Our cattle have died, our gardens dried, and our families are starving to death. Pray to God that He may relieve us of our distress. Commend us to God, that He may commend us to you.”

The Prophet said, “May God save you from destruction, for what you have said. I will intercede for you with God, but for whom will God intercede? He is the Most High and Exalted. There is none worthy of worship but He alone. His commands sway over the heavens and the earth.” Then the Prophet prayed

1 Zad. (3:671)

for an outpouring of rain for them. The exact words of the prayers were,

“O God, bestow all living creatures with rain. May your mercy revitalise their barren earth. O God, send rains to bring to us comfort and cheer, let it yield all good and cause no havoc. O God shower on us your compassion, and grant us victory over evildoers.”¹

THE DEPUTATION OF SALAMAAN

A delegation of seventeen persons from the Salamaan reached Madina in 10 A.H., and embraced Islam before the holy Prophet. Among them was Habiib b. `Amr. They asked what the ‘most excellent of acts was.’ The Prophet replied, “An offering of sincere prayer in time.”

They submitted, “We have had no rain, pray for us.” With that the Prophet solicited for them in these words, “O Allah, bestow rain upon their dwellings.” Habiib said, “O Messenger of God, kindly seek Allah’s favour by raising your blessed hands.” The Prophet smiled and lifted his hands to pray for them.²

On his return home, Habiib found that rain had indeed come the very day the Prophet had prayed.

THE DEPUTATION OF NAJRAAN

Taking into consideration all the reports given in the Books of Traditions under the heading ‘the Najraan’, it appears that two deputations proceeded from the Najraan in the following order:

Abu `Abdullah Hakim learnt from Unais b. Bukair that the holy Prophet had sent a letter inviting the people of the Najraan to

1 Zad. (3:653)

2 Zad. (3:669)

Islam. The Patriarch read the letter and tremors seized his body. He instantly sent for Sharjiil b. Vedaah of Hamdaan. He was an advisor to the Governor, the Council and the priesthood.

The Patriarch gave him the letter and asked his opinion. Sharjiil read it through, and said, "Sir, you know that God had made a covenant with the Prophet Ibrahiim that prophethood would also be conferred to the descendants of Ismaa'il (Ishmael). It may be that he is the Promised Man."

The Patriarch then sent for `Abdullah b. Sharjiil, who came of the clan of Humair, and sought his opinion. He also gave a similar reply. The Patriarch then summoned Jabbar b. Qais of the tribe of the B. al-Haarith b. Ka`b, who also endorsed the other man's views.

When the Patriarch saw that none of them gave a decisive answer, he ordered the ringing of church-bells and the covering of the church with curtains of jute. It was a custom there to do so in moments of vital importance. At night they rang the bells and made fires high up on a hill. Seventy-three villages were affiliated to that church. They had a force of one hundred thousand men. The distance from the top of the valley to its base was a day's ride on a horse. When the people, all Christians, had assembled, the letter was read out to them and their opinion invited. It was resolved unanimously that Sharjiil, `Abdullah and Jabbar should be despatched to call on the alleged Prophet.

The delegation came to Madina and stayed there for a few days. During that time they had discussions with the Prophet on Jesus Christ. The following verse was revealed on the occasion:

"The similitude of Jesus before Allah is as that of Adam. God created Adam of dust and then said to him, 'Be' and he was. It is a truth from your Lord, and anyone who debates with you after this knowledge, say to him: Let us gather together our children, your children, our womenfolk, your womenfolk, ourselves and

yourselves, and then pray humbly unto God and invoke His curse on those who lie.” (3:61)

Following the revelation, the Prophet sent for his grandsons, Hasan and Husain, accompanied by Sayyida Faatima and her husband, `Ali, who all stood behind him.

On this development, the members of the delegation held a private council. Sharjiil said, “It is not easy to form any final opinion about this person. We have got to be careful. As I understand it, even if he is only a king, it would not be wise to accept his challenge, because we alone among all Arabs, will be singled out in his sight. And if he is the Prophet duly sent, then his curse shall destroy all of us. Therefore, it is better and wiser in my opinion to accept his sovereignty and leave the amount of tribute to be paid to his determination. Of what I have observed, he does not seem to be a hard task-master.”

Both of his colleagues agreed to his counsel. They went back to the Prophet and submitted that the better course for them was to accept his overlordship and that a tribute deemed proper be imposed on them. The next day the Prophet fixed a nominal amount as ‘*jazyā*’ (non-combatant tax)¹ and gave them a letter of authority written on his behalf by his companion Mughira. Abu Sufyaan b. Harb, Ghailan b. `Amr, Maalik b. `Awf. and Aqra` b. Habis witnessed it.

1 Initially the Romans levied this tax. The Persians adopted it from them and named it Gaziya. The Arabs took it from the Persians and Arabised the word Gaziya into Jazyā. They refined it so well that it became logically acceptable and popular among the non-Muslim subjects “The Muhammadan law which is binding on all from the crowned head to the meanest subject is a law interwoven with a system of the wisest, the most learned, and the most enlightened jurisprudence that ever existed in the world.” Ed. Burke - Impeachment of Warren Hasting (second viceroy of India). Those who pay ‘Jazyā’ are not enlisted in the army and enjoy full civil rights like the Muslims. ‘Hedaya’ - an authoritative book of Jurisprudence, translated into English by Charles Hamilton Vol-II, p-142, (Calcutta).

This letter of authority 'is a monument of enlightened tolerance',¹ granted by the gracious Prophet to the Christians:

"To the people of the Najraan will be obtained the protection of God and His Prophet and Messenger, Muhammad (SAW). In their lives, faith, lands and estates and other privileges, no change will be effected. And whatever small or much is in their possession, shall not be altered. The accusations of murders of the past shall not be reopened against them; they shall not be asked to do a wageless job, nor will tithe be received of them, nor will the Islamic army pass through areas under their jurisdiction..."²

The deputation hurried back to the Najraan. The Patriarch and other leaders met them a stage in advance. The Prophet's edict was handed over to Bishop al-Haarith and he began reading it. His cousin Bishr b. Muaa`wiya, known as Abu-al-Qama, was by his side. Bishr was so engrossed in reading the letter that he lost his balance and slipped to the ground, exclaiming, "Woe to the man, who has placed us in such distress." The Patriarch said, "I warn you, by God, he is the Promised Prophet." Bishr replied, "Then, by God, I will unburden the camel only at Madina." The Bishop spurred his camel after him and cried aloud, "Stop and listen to me. I said so simply to comfort the tribe, that they might not presume we acted foolishly, hurting our self-respect, in accepting allegiance or seeking concessions, which tribes of lesser stature than ours have not so far done." Yet Bishr retorted, "No, by God I shall now hold up my reins towards Madina. Your mind cannot divulge anything but truth." Bishr then recited verses expressing his eagerness to find guidance and truth, and to be rid of error and ungodliness. He called upon the Prophet and did not part from his faith, finally dying as a martyr for Islam. Let us now resume the rest of the story.

The Patriarch and the members of the deputation entered Najraan. A monk living in the cathedral heard from someone the complete incident of Bishr's dialogue with the Patriarch and his

1 Sayyid Amir `Ali. Ed.

2 Fatuh-al-Buldan - Baladhari.

recourse to Madina. He then gathered further information about the appearance of the Prophet in Tehama, his invitation to the Christians of Najraan, and in consequence, the sending of the deputation to Madina and now, their return with the letter of authority. The monk began to cry aloud from the upper storey of the Chapel, "Get me down, get me down or I shall jump down headlong, even at the risk of my life." Then he too hastened to the Prophet with a few presents, namely a cup, a staff and a mantle. Of these three presents, the mantle was intact until the dawn of the Abbaside reign. The monk stayed for a time in Madina, learnt the teachings of Islam and with the Prophet's permission, left, promising to return to Madina soon. However, he did not return during the lifetime of the Prophet.

A PATRIARCH'S DELEGATION

The Patriarch of the Cathedral, Abul Haarith, was held in great reverence by the kings of Constantinople and many miracles were reported of him by the people. He led another deputation to the Prophet. Also with him was Aiham, the chief administrator of the territory, and addressed as Sayyid, the Governor `Abdul-Masih, entitled Aqib, and thirty-four other leaders. In all, the deputation consisted of sixty people.¹ They entered Madina between afternoon and dusk, the time of the Christian's prayer. The Prophet permitted them to offer their Mass in his mosque² and they did so, praying with their faces turned to the East. Certain Muslims wanted to obstruct them from their worship but the Prophet overruled them. The Jews also came to visit them and a discussion ensued. The Jews said in the presence of the Prophet, that the Prophet Abraham was a Jew, whereas the Christians claimed him to be a Christian. These divergent views were silenced by a revelation,

1 II - G - p-270-71.

2 II - G - p-271.

“Say, ye of the Scriptures, why do you wrangle about Ibrahiim, while the Law and the Gospel were not sent down till after him. Why do you not then comprehend? You do dispute in matters you know, but why do you dispute over a matter of which you have no knowledge? Ibrahiim was neither a Jew nor yet a Nazarite. He was a confirmed Unitarian, and a Muslim, (i.e. one who is surrendered to God) and not of those who add gods to God. Among all mankind the nearest to Ibrahiim are those who followed him, and Muhammad, the Prophet and those who believe in him. Aye, God is friendly to the believers.” (3:67)

The Jews intending thereby to reprove both the Muslims and the Christians said, “Revered Muhammad (SAW), do you intend for us to worship you, just as the Christians worship Jesus?” A Christian of Najraan interposed, “Yes, revered Muhammad (SAW), tell us if you invite us unto that creed.” The Prophet observed, “I seek refuge in God that I would worship anyone else than God, or command to worship someone else but God.” This dialogue was highlighted by the following revelation,

“It is not possible for any man, whom God has endowed with the Book, the wisdom and prophethood, that he should say unto men, Be you Servants unto me, apart from God. He only says, learn the Divine Book, get lessons in the Law and become righteous. He would never say, take the Angels and Prophets as Lords. What! Would he command you to betray into infidelity after you have surrendered to God?” (3:79-80)

Muhammad b. Suhail reports in his traditions that the first eighty verses of *Aal-e-`Imraan* were revealed during the visit of this deputation.¹ They obtained another document of authority before their departure. Its full text, dictated by Mughira b. Shu`ba, reads thus, “This writ is granted by Muhammad (SAW), the Prophet, to the Patriarch Abul Haarith for the benefit of other clergies, divines and monks and their disciples and slaves in

1 II - G - p-272.

Najraan and to the benefit of their friends, co-religionists and administrators and in regard to all their possessions, little or much, shall be protected by God and his Prophet. The petty or chief office holders of the Church, their privileges or powers will not be interfered with, nor any change will be effected in their existing status; provided that they continue to be the well-wishers and benefactors of the people and show no aggression nor side with the aggressor.” The deputation requested for the appointment of an honest officer to collect *jazyā*¹ from them. The Prophet appointed Abu `Ubaida b. al-Jarrah, and introducing him said, “He is one of my most trusted followers.”² As a result of the wholesome and saintly personality of Abu `Ubaida, Islam made rapid strides throughout the territory.

THE DEPUTATION OF NAKHAW

This deputation of 200 men called upon the Prophet towards the middle of Muharram, 11 A.H. It was the last deputation. They confessed Islam at the hands of Mua`d b. Jabal. They were made at home in the guest house. One of them was Zurara b. `Amr, who had some strange dreams during the journey, which he recounted before the Prophet:

1. “I saw a goat, which gave birth to a spotted kid.” The holy Prophet asked him, “Was your wife expecting a child?” He said, “Yes!” Then the Prophet said, “She has given birth to a son, who is thy son.” He asked, “What is the import of the spots?” The Prophet beckoned him to draw nearer and in a low tone said to him, “You have spots of leprosy on your body which you have been hiding.” Zurara said, “By God,

1 In an authoritative book of Jurisprudence ‘Hedaya’, the Caliph `Ali says, “*Those who accept this non-combatant tax (Jazyā), their life and property will be protected as those of the Muslims. Further they will not be enlisted in the army.*” English translation by C. Hamilton, (2:142), Calcutta.

2 II - G - p-277.

who sent you as His Messenger, no one knew of this disease?" The Prophet added, "The child has inherited similar marks."

2. "I saw Nu`man b. Munzir¹ wearing ear-rings, bangles and foot ornaments." Said Zurara. The Prophet said, "The dream implies the glory of Arabia which will soon be developing into a prosperous state."
3. Zurara then said, "I saw an old woman. Some of her hair was white, and some black, and she came out of the earth." The Prophet replied, "This refers to this world, which has to complete its remaining cycle of rotations."
4. Then Zurara spoke of another vision, "I saw a fire flashing out of the earth. It grew high between myself and my son. And the fire was shouting: Burn, burn the blind or the seeing. O you people, give me your food, your families and your possessions to consume." The Prophet said, "It will be a turbulent period which will manifest itself in the near future." Zurara said, "What sort of upheaval or commotion will it be?" The Prophet answered, "People will kill their Imaam (leader or commander). Dissensions will loom large. People will be embroiled with one another. The evil-doer will pose as virtuous. The blood of the faithful will be deemed more palatable than water. If your son dies by that time, you will witness the bloodbath and if you die, your son will know it." Zurara said, "Pray to God, O Apostle of God, that I may not live to see that carnage." Then the Prophet prayed, "O God, let him not know that fratricide." And so it happened. Zurara died before those bloody wars and his son survived. He had retracted on his allegiance to `Uthmaan, the third Caliph.²

1 An ancient king of Arabia, reputed for being just and wise. II - G - p-30.

2 Zad. (3:518)

BUILDING OF THE PROPHET'S MOSQUE

The Prophet entered Madina mounted on a camel. The camel sat of her own accord¹ on the ground where the mosque stands today. The land belonged to two orphans, who were under the supervision of Asa'd b. Zurara,² one of the Prophet's Naqiib (representative of the holy Prophet). Asa'd had already specified a part of it for offering prayers. However, when the holy Prophet chose that site for his mosque, the boys dedicated it to God and refused to accept any price, while the tribe of B. Najjar were eager to put up a price for it. The Prophet accepted neither of the offers. Instead, he asked Abu Bakr Siddiq to pay its price, then valued at ten Dinaars. The mosque built on it measured 300 feet in length.

The Prophet took part in the construction, lifting up bricks and mortar, along with his companions, chanting,

*“O God! Life is but the Life to come (i.e. the hereafter),
So forgive the sins of the Ansaar and the Muhajir.”*³

The companions sang,

*“The Prophet labours hard all day,
If we follow him not, we go astray.”*

The walls of the mosque were raised of mud to the height of nine feet. The stems of date trees were used as pillars, and the roof was a covering of twigs and foliage of the trees. The Companions suggested a solid roofing, but the Prophet told them, “No, the Arish⁴ of Musa is good enough.” Rain dripped through the roof

1 Under Divine inspiration. II - G - p-228. Ed.

2 A distinguished Companion appointed by the Prophet to expound the elementary teachings of Islam and other co-related issues and a zealous `Aqabi (one who took part in the allegiance at `Aqaba).

3 Bukhaari from Anas. (chapter Prayers)

4 Arish means a hutment - Zad. (3:53)

onto the floor, making it somewhat slushy but the faithful kneeled and prostrated there without grumbling.¹

A LEARNED RABBI EMBRACES ISLAM

`Abdullah b. Salaam was one of the leading Jewish scholars of Madina and a learned rabbi. He traced his lineage to the Prophet Yusuf (Joseph), the Truthful. One day, passing by, he heard the Prophet saying in his sermon,

“O people, greet everybody, strangers as well as kin, feed the poor and the needy, treat your kith and kin charitably, and worship God in the night, when others are asleep.”

The sense and expression of these phrases so possessed `Abdullah's heart that he returned to his house, consulted and reviewed the prophecies of the former Prophets over and over again and found them relating to 'that Prophet', frequently mentioned in the Scriptures. Then he called upon the Prophet and put certain questions which, in his judgement, only a Prophet of God could answer. He was given answers he knew to be correct. His heart became aglow with the light of faith. He straight away renounced Judaism and accepted Islam but he prayed, "Before my confession of Islam is made public, I wish my people to be summoned so as to elicit opinion they hold of me." So it was that they were sent for, while `Abdullah hid himself. The Prophet asked them, "What is `Abdullah b. Salaam amongst you?" They all said with one voice, "He is a learned man, son of a learned man. He is our chief and the son of a chief, the noblest of us all."² The Jews were still showering praise on him when `Abdullah b. Salaam appeared chanting aloud,

"La Ilah ha Il-Lal Laah, Muhammad-ur-Rasuul-ul-Laah."
(There is no god but Allah, and Muhammad is His Messenger).

1 Later alterations in the mosque. (see Appendix - p-2)

2 Bukhaari from Anas b. Maalik. (chapter Hijra) (1:556)

Hearing the confession, they started reviling and accusing him of lying. Unmindful of these anticipated accusations, `Abdullah b. Salaam proclaimed his own conversion, that of his household and his aunt Khaalida.¹

CONVERSION OF A SCHOLARLY MONK

Abu Qais Sirma b. Abu Anas was a pious Christian well-versed in the Scriptures. He was a poet of the first rank, a lucid preacher and a profound scholar of Divine teachings and Scriptures. He embraced Islam of his own accord.²

CONVERSION OF SALMAAN THE PERSIAN

In 2 A.H. this saintly man confessed Islam. He was a native of Isphahan, where the spotted horse was worshipped. In quest of a truthful religion, he left his house and underwent the privations of a 'seeker after Truth'. He entered into more than ten religions but remained unsatisfied. He moved to Arabia, was captured on the way, enslaved, sold and resold to different masters until he came into the possession of a Jew of the B. Quraiza, where he finally settled into Judaism at Madina. There he frequently heard of the coming of the Promised Prophet and of his unique attributes.

Once he beheld the Prophet and recognised him by the signs and definitions he had learnt from his Jewish master, he confessed Islam.³ He was the first fruit from the land of Persia for Islam.

1 II - G - p-241. Ed.

2 He lived the life-style of a monk, wrapping himself with a black blanket of camel-hair. His selected verses were: Piety and fear of God preserve honour, but the priority goes to piety. Especially praise God early in the morn, and on the appearance of the new moon. Do not misuse the wealth of the orphans, the Almighty watches over the same. II - G - p-256. Ed.

3 II - G - p-95.

THE FIVE PRAYERS

An addition of two more mandatory prayers was commanded in the first year of the Hijra. Praying half the number was permitted to travellers. In Makka, and for that matter anywhere in Arabia, except Madina, converts to Islam became 'sojourners' the moment they confessed Islam. Family members became strangers, friends became enemies and neighbours became besiegers; their homes were denied to them, their dignity abused and their comforts refused. So long as they dwelt amongst non-Muslims they were like sojourners amid hostile people, living in fear and suspense. That was why God also regarded them as 'wayfarers'. Only when they had found a refuge in Madina, were they acknowledged (confirmed) as settlers.

Prayer constitutes a pillar of Islam and the foremost duty of a Muslim. It is desirable for a child of seven, but in the tenth year, it becomes compulsory for every boy and girl, and continues to be a duty until death. It remains a duty in health and disease, in times of hardship or ease, at home or abroad, in peace or war, in short, in any state and in any plight. Seasons and circumstances cannot afford an excuse for the Muslims to go without fulfilling this duty but how excellent are the fruits it bears!

1. To continue in worship of Allah, throughout life, strengthens perseverance in intent and in soul.
2. It is an inspiring lesson in self-discipline. The habit of praying five times a day at appointed hours develops a sense of punctuality. It becomes second nature to oneself.
3. It teaches the dutiful to keep their houses and all things therein clean and to wear clean clothes. *Wuzu* (ablution) five times a day keeps the mouth, the nose, the eyes and the head immune from all particles of dust (doctors and dentists in the West have also confirmed this view). These habits help maintain excellent health. The heart and the soul glow with

the glory and greatness of God; lips are busy glorifying His name, and limbs drilled and disciplined in the parade of His exalted Majesty. Also, sincerity in prayer opens the soul to spiritual light, and to serenity of heart and mind. Almost imperceptibly salaah (Prayer) keeps the dutiful person in his home, secure from all temptations and lustful desires. Wanton, irresponsible gaiety as an attitude to life perishes.

Congregational prayer is the decor of a mosque and its simplicity and frugality leads to a harmonious and civilised social structure. It fosters self-respect and self-confidence and forges the *Umma* into a unit of brotherhood and equality of a pious and noble order. The poor, humble Muslim in his coarse garments stands shoulder to shoulder with a lord in his finer raiments and yet both shed their inferior and superior complexes.¹ They bow, they prostrate and they sit together in one spirit and one accord. They feel that they are all equals and well-pleased with Divine justice. Contented souls, they carry to their homes, to mosques, down to their graves and up above to the Celestial Majesty of their God, their Lord.

Those who neglect the observance of daily prayers or regular attendance at mosques go more or less without these excellent benefits. The Muslims of today can now fully appreciate the causes of their degeneration, most of them living and working ungraced by those high credentials and unsuccoured by those noble guidelines. God, the Munificent, teaches us,

1 "It was the first religion that preached and practised democracy; for in the mosque, when the call from the minaret sounds and the worshippers are gathered together, the democracy of Islam is embodied five times a day when a peasant and a prince kneel side by side and proclaim, 'God alone is great'. I have been struck over again by this indivisible unity of Islam that makes a man instinctively a brother." The ideals of Islam - Sarojini Naidu, Madras, p-169.

“Verily prayer preserves from lewdness and iniquity, and verily remembrance of Allah holds immense benefits and Allah knows what you do.” (29:45)

ISLAMIC BROTHERHOOD - ALL ARE EQUAL

God, the Glorious, has made Muslims brothers to each other and lends the authority to each Muslim in the following writ,

“O believers in Islam, you have been projected into a fraternity. Heretofore you were standing over a pit of fire, but He delivered you from it (by reconciling your hearts).” (3:103)

The feeling and commitment of brotherhood developed to a very high degree during the Madinite period:

“Take away that black man! I can have no discussion with him”, exclaimed the Christian archbishop Cyrus when the Arab conquerors sent a deputation of their ablest men to discuss terms of surrender of the capital of Egypt, headed by the Negro, `Ubaada, as the ablest of them all.

“To the sacred archbishop’s astonishment, he was told that `Ubaada was commissioned by General `Amr; as the Muslims hold negroes and white men in equal respect - judging a man by his character and not by his colour.”

“Well, if the negro must lead, he must speak gently, desired the prelate, so as not to frighten his white auditors.”

“Such a spirit of class distinction is certainly the greatest hindrance to missionary work in the East, as every impartial observer has noted. How, for instance, can any other appeal stand against that of the Moslem who, in approaching the pagan, says to him, however obscure or degraded he may be, ‘Embrace the faith;

and you are at once an equal and a brother.' Islam knows no colour line."¹

"The Islamic brotherhood which they proclaimed was a real thing, and a new thing among Eastern nations. It is doubtful whether Christian Syrians ever felt the same sense of brotherhood with Christian Persians as Muslim Syrians did with Muslim Persians."²

"The great Muslim communities of Africa, India and Indonesia, perhaps also the small Muslim community in Japan, show that Islam has still the power to reconcile apparently irreconcilable elements of race and tradition. If ever the opposition of the great societies of the East and West is to be replaced by co-operation, the mediation of Islam is an indispensable condition."³

Islam ordains a yearly gathering of believers, of all nations and languages, brought together from all parts of the world, to pray in that sacred place towards which their faces are set in every hour of private worship in their distant homes. No stretch of religious genius could have conceived a better expedient for impressing on the minds of the faithful a sense of their common life and brotherhood in the bonds of faith. Here, in a supreme act of common worship, the Negro of the West coast of Africa meets the Chinaman from the distant East; the courtly and polished Ottoman recognises his Muslim brother in the wild islander from the farthest end of the Malayan Sea. "Algerian, an Indian and a Turk in London, what matters that Egypt was the Motherland of one and India the Motherland of another."⁴

"The extinction of race consciousness among the Muslims is one of the outstanding achievements of Islam, and in the

1 Veiled Mysteries of Egypt by S. S. Leeder (London 1912), p-332-335.

2 The Prospects of Islam by Lawrence E. Browne (London 1944), p-12.

3 Whither Islam by H. A. R. Gibb (London 1932), p-379.

4 Ideals of Islam by Sirojini Naidu (Madras 1918), p-169.

contemporary world there is, as it happens, a crying need for the propagation of this Islamic virtue...”

“Though in certain other respects the triumph of the English-speaking people may be judged in retrospect, to have been a blessing to mankind, in this perilous matter of race feeling, it can hardly be denied that it has been a misfortune.”¹

“For the first three centuries of its existence (650-1000 A.D.) the realm of Islam was the most civilised and progressive portion of the world. Studded with splendid cities, gracious mosques, and quiet universities where the wisdom of the ancient world was preserved and appreciated, the Moslem world offered a striking contrast to the Christian West, then sunk in the night of the Dark Ages.”²

1. So firmly rooted is the spirit of brotherhood and historically true to the astonishment of the heralds of modern civilisation and historians that the entire Muslim nation honoured the word of a single Muslim, if he gave it even to an enemy or an alien.
2. If a Muslim travelled abroad, the entire nation was anxious to have news of his welfare and safety. Furthermore, if he unfortunately became the victim of any tyrant, the nation rose to a man to obtain justice for him.
3. Providing for orphans, widows and students was a collective responsibility. Every Muslim took it upon himself to look after their need and comforts, just as he looked after his own children or his own brothers and sisters. Thus, every Muslim in need, no matter where he may be, was fully conscious that all the forces and resources of the *Umma* were available to him.

1 Civilisation on Trial by Prof. A.J. Toynbee (New York 1948), p-205.

2 The New World of Islam by A. M. Lothrop Stoddard, PhD. (London - 1932), p-1-3.

Rahma-tul-lil-`Aalamiin

4. There was a more formal and deeper brotherhood instituted by the Prophet between the Emigrants and the Helpers. Said he, "Let each of you take a brother in the name of God." These are some of the prominent names of the brothers of that order:

THE MUHAJIR	THE ANSAAR
1. Muhammad (SAW), the holy Prophet	1. `Ali Murtaza
2. Abu Bakr Siddiq	2. Kharija b. Zuhair `Aqabi Badri
3. `Umar Faaruq	3. `Itban b. Maalik Badri
4. `Uthmaan b. `Affaan	4. Aus b. Thaabit `Aqabi Badri
5. Ja`far b. Abu Taalib Hashmi	5. Mua`d b. Jabal Badri
6. Abu `Ubaida b. al-Jarrah	6. Sa`d b. Mua`d Badri
7. `Abdul Rahmaan b. `Awf	7. Sa`d b. al-Rabi` `Aqabi Badri
8. Zubair b. al-`Awwaam	8. Salaama b Salaama `Aqabi
9. Talha b. `Ubaidullah	9. Ka`b b. Maalik `Aqabi
10. Sa`d b. Zaid	10. Ubayy b. Ka`b `Aqabi Badri
11. Musa`b b. `Umair	11. Abu Ayyub Khaalid b. Zaid `Aqabi Badri
12. Abu Hudhaifa b. `Utba	12. `Abbad b. Bishr
13. `Ammaar b. Yaasir	13. Hudhaifa b. al-Yaman
14. Salmaan, the Persian	14. Abul Dard`a
15. Abu Zar b. Junada-al-Ghifaari	15. Al-Munzir b. `Amr ¹

(May God be pleased with them all)

From the first dawn of that day, each brother became by law an inheritor of the other.² The rich well-provided brother shared half of his movable and immovable possessions with the poorer one. Some, if they had more than one wife, even offered to divorce

¹ II - G - p-234.

² This law remained in force only until the emigrants had become self-supporting.

so that their brothers might be provided with wives. Nothing like this degree of commitment in brotherhood has ever been known.¹ Besides this order of brotherhood, instituted by the Prophet himself, others like it were set up in Makka and Madina.

THE CALL TO PRAYERS - AAZAN

The *aazan*, or call to prayer, was adopted in 2 A.H. The need was felt for some way to assemble the faithful by a fixed hour in the mosque, so that the benefit of a collective prayer could be available to the faithful whose *taqwa* (piety) made them conscious that prayer was the most precious blessing of all. One suggestion was to light fires on a high place so that all might know the time of prayer. This was the practice of the Magians. Another proposal was the blowing of a horn, as the Jews did. The third option was to ring bells as adopted by the Christians. However, none of these appealed to the Prophet. The following day `Abdullah b. Zaid Ansaari reported his dream in which he had heard certain phrases. Then `Umar b. Khattaab told of his dream, in which he, too, had heard the same phrases of the *aazan*. The Prophet accepted that method. Since then these words have been carried all over the world from minarets of every mosque.²

Quite distinct from the existing modes, and peculiar to Islam, the *aazan* was accepted as the Islamic way of summoning Muslims to prayers. Its inspiring words raise aloud the Glory and the name of Allah and reflect perfectly the principal responsibility of the Prophet.

1 II - G - p-236.

2 Allah alone is Great; Allah alone is Great; Allah alone is Great; Allah alone is Great. I testify that there is no god but Allah; I testify that there is no god but Allah. I testify that Muhammad is His Messenger; I testify that Muhammad is His Messenger. Hasten towards mosque for prayer; Hasten towards mosque for prayer. Hasten towards Salvation; Hasten towards Deliverance. Allah is the Greatest; Allah is the Greatest.

1. The *aazan* is the simplest and easiest means of broadcasting Islam, without running any expense. Such an instrument was befitting for an international religion to regenerate in human hearts the desire to turn to God.
2. In essence, the *aazan* is a succinct expression and enunciation of the fundamentals of Islam relayed five times a day. All the people of habitation, which may include people of different beliefs, are able to hear the freshest and purest medium of communion with their Lord. It must be borne in mind that there were no printing presses in those times, nor was there radio or other such mediums.

Christian and other missions now issue tracts lead processions, having to power all such movements through organisations backed by considerable funds. However, a Muslim in a city, town, village and even in the wilderness can broadcast the Oneness of God and the message of the Prophet to resound for ever, on the waves of the air. This method of calling to prayer is the simplest and the noblest.

It was demonstrated by angels in visions and inspired human beings during their sleep or other preoccupations with the sheer force of its simplicity, beauty and melody.

THE CHANGE OF THE QIBLA

It was the Prophet's noble practice to follow the old Scriptures until a Divine Guidance was revealed, to direct him otherwise.¹ Prayer was enjoined as a duty the moment he was chosen as a Prophet; but no command was received regarding the *qibla*. Therefore, during his thirteen years in Makka he had faced towards the Sacred Mosque of Jerusalem for his *qibla*. This continued in Madina for a year and a half. In 2 A.H., seventeen

1 Ibn Athir from Ibn `Abbaas.

months after his emigration, the Divine command was received.¹ The Commandment fulfilled his inward desire; for he wished that the First House of God, built by the Prophet Ibrahiim and his son, the Prophet Ismaa`il, be restored to its pristine importance. On account of its shape, the building had acquired the name '*Al Ka`ba*' It was also called, the House of God, *Bait-Ullah*, because it was dedicated solely to the worship of God, and also reputed as *Masjid-ul-Haram* (the Hallowed Mosque).

The Divine guidance revealed for the occasion in the Qur'aan is,

"God, the Immaculate, has an equal relation to all sides (of space)." (2:115)

"Unto Allah belong the East and the West, and whither soever you turn, there is Allah's countenance." (2:115)

"And each one has a goal towards which he turns; so vie with one another in good deeds. Wheresoever you may be, Allah will bring you all together." (2:148)

The *qibla* has no relative value to the principle of worship.

"Virtue is not particular to the East or the West." (2:177)

"The motive in fixing the qibla is to distinguish the followers of the Prophet from others." (2:143)

With that motive, the Prophet had adopted the Sacred Mosque of Jerusalem as his *qibla* during his stay in Makka, for the unbelievers of Makka did not acknowledge the nobility of that Mosque, the *Ka`ba* being their place of worship. Thus, when any person worshipped facing the *qibla* of Jerusalem, it was an open declaration that he had escaped from heathenism to Islam.

In Madina dwelt an appreciable number of Jews and Christians. They did not acknowledge the glory and sanctity of the House of God at Makka, and looked upon Solomon's Temple as

1 Ibn Khaldun. (2:19)

the Sacred House of God. In Madina, therefore, facing towards Makka was a sign that the worshiper had left his forefathers' religion and entered the fold of Islam. Furthermore, in pursuance of the Divine commandment, the first House of God was declared to be the permanent *qibla* for the Muslims. The Qur'aan directs,

"Lo! the first sanctuary appointed for mankind was that at Becca,¹ a blessed place, a guidance (perpetual) to the peoples; and it is blessed for the dwellers of the universe." (3:96)

"Ibrahiim (along with Ismaa'il) raised the foundations of the sacred house of God (i.e. the Ka'ba)." (2:127)

In as much as the Prophet Ibrahiim was the founder of this mosque, he is the Patriarch of the Jews, Christians and Muslims. The Muslim's choice of *qibla* is an implied but clear invitation to all the followers of the three great religions to remind them of their common spiritual heritage, and to reunite them in that common origin and common spiritual and moral purpose. In this way alone all may avail themselves of the benediction,

"Enter, all ye people into the dwelling of Peace and Protection." (2:208)

No religion can deny the Ka'ba its pre-eminence as being the primordial 'House of God', spiritually as well as historically. The Jews and the Christians agree that the Prophet David laid the foundations of the Sacred House in Jerusalem and that the Prophet Solomon completed it. Thus, the building of the Ka'ba by the Prophets Ibrahiim and Ismaa'il was 921 years prior to the building at Jerusalem and 1921 years before Christ.

Sir R.C. Dutt in his 'Civilization of Ancient India' says, on the authority of various scholars, that the first era or Vedic cycle

1 Mecca, sometimes also called Becca, which words are synonymous and signify great concourse, is certainly one of the most ancient cities of the world. It is by some thought to be the Mesa of the Scripture, supposed to be one of Ishmael's' son. George Sale. Translation of the Qur'aan - p-3. Genesis (25:14) - 'Massa is one of Ishmael's sons. Ed.

of the civilization of India lasted from 2000 to 1400 B.C. He has also explicitly stated that there was no temple in India during that Cycle. As such, at the time of the foundation of the Ka`ba, there existed no temple in Arya Wart (India).

The Old Testament had already warned the Israelites that the mosque, which was to become the last and constant focal point, would be more sublime in Glory and Guidance than their place of worship.¹

The following verses from Chapter 60 of Isaiah, in praise of Makka, are quoted in support of the above contention.

- V.2 For, behold, the darkness shall *cover the earth, and gross darkness the people: but the Lord shall arise upon thee (i.e. Makka), and his glory shall be seen upon thee.*
- V.3 And the Gentiles (descendants of the Patriarch Abraham from his wife Keturah and the Prophet Ishmael's descendants - vide Genesis 25:2 and 4), shall come to thy light and kings to the brightness of thy arising.
- V.5 Then thou shalt see, and flow together, and thine heart shall fear, and be enlarged; because the abundance of the sea shall be converted unto thee, the forces of the Gentiles shall come unto thee.
- V.6 The multitude of camels shall cover thee, the dromedaries of Midian and Ephah; all they from Sheba (Yaman), shall come: they shall bring gold and incense, and they shall shew forth the praises of the Lord.
- V.7 All the flocks of Kedar shall be gathered together unto thee, the rams of Nebaijoth shall minister unto thee; they shall

1 Prophet Haggai (520 B.C.) says, "The glory of this latter house shall be greater than the former, Saith the Lord of hosts; and in this place will I give peace." (2:9) Peace at Makka has always remained supreme.

come up with acceptance on mine altar,¹ and I will glorify the house of my glory.

V.10 And the sons of strangers² shall build up thy walls, and their kings shall minister unto thee.

V.11 Therefore, thy gates shall be open continually; they shall not be shut day nor night; that men may bring unto thee the forces of the Gentiles and that their kings may be brought.

V.12 For the nation and kingdom that will not serve thee shall perish; yea, those nations shall be utterly wasted.

V.15 Whereas thou hast been forsaken and hated, so that no man went through thee, I will make thee an eternal excellency, a joy of many generations (a historical fact borne out by the pre-Islamic era and the current history of the Bait-Ullah).

V.18 Violence shall no more be heard in thy land, wasting nor destruction within thy borders; but thou shall call thy walls and thy gates praise (These are the names of the several gates of the Bait-Ullah).

In the Qur'aan, the name of the qibla is Bait-ul-Haram. 'The house of my glory' is the exact translation of Bait-ul-Haram. The previous Scriptures have foretold it. To give glory to the house means to make it the permanent direction (qibla) for prayers. The mention of the names of Midian, Ephah, Kedar and Nebaijoth (Gen. 25:2-3), grandsons or great grandsons of the Prophet Ibrahiim who had settled in Arabia and made the ritual of sacrifice, lends further weight to our contention. The Quraish and

1 i.e. Mina, now joined with Makka by an air-conditioned tunnel.

2 Muslim engineers from all over the world voluntarily participated in the huge expansion, reconstruction and renovation of Bait-Ullah (city of the Lord).

A prediction - Thy people also shall be all righteous; they shall inherit the land forever that I (God) may be glorified. (V.19 Isaiah)

the Ansaar who embraced Islam were their descendants. They were neither Jews nor Christians (i.e. *Gentiles*).

They all assembled at Mina, adjoining Makka for the ritual of sacrifices. The words: ‘dromedaries’, ‘flocks of Kedar’, ‘rams of Nebaijoth’, all prove that they went there for the ritual of annual sacrifices, which pilgrims have continued to this day without any break. All other Muslims the world over do it in their respective places. The appointed altar (i.e. Mina) and the names of the people who gathered there at the time of pilgrimage allow us to conclude that what Isaiah chapter 60 has said above is a correct historical and factual record. Kedar and Nebaijoth are sons of the Prophet Ismaa`il. (Genesis 25:13)

The book of Prophet Haggai (520 B.C.) states,

“The glory of this latter house shall be greater than of the former, saith the Lord of Hosts; and in this place will I give peace.” (2:12)

Here, the latter house is Makka and the former house is Jerusalem.

The Revelation of St. John in chapter IV, verse 12 says,

“Him that overcomes will I make a pillar in the temple of my God and he shall go no more out; and I will write upon him the name of my God and the Name of the city of my Lord, which is New Jerusalem, which comes down out of heaven from my God; and I write my new name upon him.” (4:12)

John has mentioned here New Jerusalem and a new name. The New Jerusalem is obviously the Ka`ba (Makka), and the new name is Rahmaan which for the first time was mentioned by the Qur’aan. The coming down of New Jerusalem means that the command shall come from Lord God that qibla be treated as the God’s house of glory as previously the command was for Jerusalem. The Qur’aan also mentions it, “We see thee turning of

thy face (for guidance) to the heaven. Now shall we turn thee to a qibla that shall please thee.” (2:144)

In the Arabic, Urdu and English Bible, Psalm 84 Says:

- V.4 Pleased are they that dwell in thy house; they will be still pleasing thee.
- V.5 Blessed is the man whose strength is in thee; in whose heart are the ways of them.
- V.6 Who passing through the valley of Becca, make it a well; the rain also filleth the pools.

From the above three verses it is clear:

That Lord God has a house of worship and the inhabitants thereof are blessed. Their sign is that they will always be praising God.

That these people will derive strength only from Lord God and not from worldly means.

Verse six clearly gives the name of Baca or Becca in all the three languages i.e. Urdu, Arabic and English and not baca or becca. The first alphabet, it being a proper noun, is always capital.

It is stated in Verse six that they will make a well in the valley of Becca. The people of the house (Verse four) are the children of the Prophet Ismaa`il. The prayer of the Prophet Ibrahiim is in the Qur’aan, “O my Lord God, I have settled my children in a valley near your house of glory, which does not grow anything.”

The valley which has been defined as ‘unproductive’ is named in Psalms and in the Qur’aan as Baca: The first house of worship made for people is that which is in Baca. We find now complete concurrence in the Qur’aan and Verse 84 of Psalms quoted above.

Now we have only to give proof of the well, mentioned in Verse six. In the book of Prophets (p-3), Ibn `Abbaas in Bukhaari

states that when Haajira reached that valley, she ran to and fro in search of water. Then, incidentally, Ismaa`il struck his heel on the ground and water gushed forth out of it. His mother was struck with wonder. Then she made the spot into a well. Now all the four links (i.e. the name Bacca - the house of worship, Bait-Ullah - the well and those people who remembered God were blessed), have been conclusively traced. The Bible in Verse six, gives the word, 'well'.

For the establishment of the qibla in Bacca, the above proof is sufficient.

It should be mentioned that Verse five in Arabic is clearer than the English or Urdu verse.

The Arabic verse says, "In their hearts are the ways to your house."

The Urdu verse says, "In their hearts are your ways."

Whereas the English verse says, "In whose hearts are the ways of them."

The Urdu and the English verses have omitted the word, house (Bait). Secondly, in Urdu, the words are 'your ways' and in English only the word 'them' has been used. The Qur'aan is clearer in this respect:

"O our Lord! I have made some of my offspring to dwell in a valley without cultivation, by thy sacred house; O our Lord that they may establish regular prayer; So fill the hearts of some among men with love towards them and feed them with fruits; so that they may give thanks." (14:37)

Now we point to another omission. In Arabic verse, the word 'people' and the pronoun for it is in plural. In Urdu it is in singular i.e. 'blessed is the man' and the same singular is in the English word and so are the pronouns in singular, in both. But, this omission becomes transparent in the second part of V.5, the pronoun them, is in plural in both the languages. In short from

these three verses Bacca as house of Worship for Lord God; the well later known as Zamzam; the offspring's of the Prophet Ismaa'il have been squarely established. Verses 4 and 5 have blessed the people living around the house of worship for God as this house unlike Jerusalem has never been possessed or molested.

The truth is that Islam was designed to supercede all religions, and thus needed an immaculate *qibla*. Secondly, Jerusalem had always been a bone of contention among the races, demolished by many conquerors, laid waste to and reduced to uncleanness. Its inhabitants were again and again made slaves or prisoners or sent into exile. The *qibla* for the Muslims was, therefore, the rightful House, the Ka'ba.

Psalms¹ declared the dwellers of the valley to be the 'blessed ones'. That blessing has continued to this day and no foreign power has ever been allowed to possess that 'House of Glory in the valley of Baca.'

ZAKAAT

It has forever been a knotty problem for economists and statesmen to find an equitable relationship between the rich and the poor.

From at least the time of Solon to the present, it has become increasingly more difficult to find a solution to this problem.

In Europe, the anarchists advocated the total destruction of existing social, political and economic institutions to make way for reforms. The communists believed that private ownership of the means of production and distribution must be eliminated. The advocates of nationalisation desired to transfer ownership and control of land, resources and industries to the State. None of these

1 Blessed is the man whose strength is in thee; Who passing through the valley of Baca (Makka) make it a well. (Psalm 5-6)

schools or ideologies has succeeded in minimising social disparities. Often the very opposite has happened.

About 1400 years ago, Islam cut the knot and solved the problem once and for all.

To dispossess mankind of all rights in land and property is practically impossible. The Qur'aan, the word of God, lays down that He makes some men rich and some poor,

“God has given preference in the means of living to one over another; and those who have earned that preference shall not be willing to render their possessions, to the non-preferred that they all may become the co-equals.” (16:71)

Islam, which aims to unite its followers in the noblest civilisation, has answered the question, and laid down a law which has amply succeeded in the doctrine of *Zakaat*.

Zakaat was enjoined on Muslims in 2 A.H. The Prophet's heart was always compassionate for the needy, the impoverished and the afflicted. From the very beginning, his teachings persuaded the rich to feed and nurture the poor from their surplus. The sympathies of the rich were always roused by the teachings and examples of the Prophet, to the needs of the poor, and, to earn the pleasure of God, they yielded the fruits of their labours to those who could not raise a harvest. Yet there was no law to determine the flow in a certain measure. Whatever the man of wealth did, therefore, he did by way of charity not by way of legal obligation. As such, the man in want could not claim it as his right without some kind of exchange.

Allah, the Moulder of Destinies, ordained *Zakaat* as the third fundamental of Islam, close to confession of the Faith and the five prayers. *Zakaat*, in reality, is the title of a procedure by which a man practises the charity and sympathy for mankind that God has placed in his nature. The payment of *Zakaat* delivers the wealthy man from the blind love of wealth, so that he is never a slave of his good fortune and remains free of the affliction of miserliness.

Rather, he realises that the poor of his nation are as the poor of his own household, whom he feeds and supports for his own benefit. Thus, the productive use and distribution of his surplus arrests the growth of pride or conceit in him. He sees that the poor and needy begin to love him and recognise a definite share for themselves in his surplus. They do not envy nor begrudge him, for they have a right to know their own definite share in his profits and savings. His surplus is then a sort of limited company in which the poor have their own shares, for which the rich have to pay them the dividends as a statutory provision of law. The only distinction is that the rich man holds a multitude of shares, and that he is the managing director, and the poor are his 'sleeping partners'.

The rich have their investments in land, cattle, farms, and factories. The state must see to it that dividends are duly paid to the 'sleeping partners'. They hold shares in all wealth-producing concerns; the law covers all trades, agriculture, property and land, flocks and herds of sheep, goat, cow and camel, all cash deposits, all proceeds of mines and treasure troves. They have their definite claim on everything that is productive of surplus wealth. The list of those entitled to the proceeds of *Zakaat* are derived from the Qur'aan 60:9

The proceeds of *Zakaat* and other charities are for:
(i) Mendicants; (ii) the poor; (iii) tax gatherers;
(iv) converts; (v) the obtaining of full freedom for slaves; (vi) the relief of debtors who cannot repay their debts; (vii) other needs e.g. education, defence and general uplift; and (viii) for travellers. Details of the collection and distribution of *Zakaat* may be studied in the books of Islamic jurisprudence.

THE FIFTH CLAUSE - EMANCIPATION OF SLAVES

The eight heads of expenditure amply cover all the individual and collective needs of a people. The fifth clause draws particular attention to the plight of slaves. It is earmarked for

obtaining their emancipation. Slavery was a widespread humiliation of human values in all the known civilised regions of the world - India, China, Rome, Egypt and Persia, in fact in all continents.¹ It is nowhere recorded that the Prophet `Isa gave any instruction on this subject. St. Paul rather encourages acceptance of the chains of slavery, for example in Ephesians VI:5, "Servants, be obedient to them that are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in singleness of your heart, as unto Christ." Also, Timothy VI:1, "Let as many servants as are under the yoke count their own masters worthy of all honour, that the name of God and His doctrine be not blasphemed." Likewise, Titus II:9, "Exhort servants to be obedient unto their own masters, and to please them well in all things not answering again," and finally, I Peter II:18, "Servants, be subjects to your masters with all fear, not only to the good and gentle, but also to the arrogant."²

Islam, foremost of all religions, preached in favour of the emancipation of slaves and serfs and encouraged practical measures to achieve that end,

"Islam taught its believers to accept emancipation of slaves as a means of obtaining virtue." (2:177)

"Freeing a slave was a way to finding absolution." (90:13-16)

Remission for certain sins may be obtained through the emancipation of a slave. This is so in the case of manslaughter where the victim was a Muslim, but the enemy is an ally or a foe,

1 "Sunday by Sunday they are told how Christianity abolished slavery and serfdom; how nobles fraternised with commoners in the ages of faith; how Christ was the first to talk of social justice in a grim capitalist world. These monstrous untruths should be nailed definitely to the counter." Joseph McCabe - Literary guide.

2 If a free woman married a slave, she was to be put to death and the slave burnt alive. Latin Christianity. Vol-II.

or a non-Muslim but allied to the Muslims (Summary drawn from 4:92).

Free a slave to make up for a broken pledge; to make up for knowingly breaking a fast of Ramzaan before time; to make up for harshly beating a slave.

UNIQUE RELIEF FOR DEBTORS

Of the eight categories of *Zakaat* expenditure, the sixth exhorts one to '*Spend it on the insolvent debtors*'.¹ In our age, banks are willing enough to lend on interest, and have no compunction in seizing the assets or property if the debtor is unable to pay. Banks usually help the rich to become richer, and make the poor poorer. It could only be Divine compassion, that not only bans interest, but also provides that debtors be helped out of their unfortunate plight. Says the Qur'aan,

“If the debtor be in straits, grant him a delay, until he is in a position to discharge his debt. But if the amount due is waived as an act of piety it will be much better for the creditor, if he but knew it.”² (-Qur'aan 2:278)

THE MONTH OF FASTING

Fasting during the month of Ramzaan, the fourth pillar of Islam, was commanded in the second year of the Hijra. A month of fasting in every year has several benefits; fasting tones up the physique; the well-fed are reminded of the condition of the under-

1 (2:177)

2 In all eras, the collecting and distributing of funds like *Zakaat* has raised questions and suspicions about their proper use. All such misgivings were silenced for all times by this well-known tradition of the holy Prophet, “The use of all contributions towards charities is banned for the holy Prophet, his descendants and all his near and distant relatives including their slaves and slave girls till eternity.” (Muslim 1:754)

fed; it encourages social equality in a nation where have and have-nots obey the rules of fasting and the animal lust in men is weakened and the urge for self-restraint is invigorated. The Qur'aan has specified that fasting enables a person to develop his power of being mindful of Allah. By mindfulness of Allah is meant awareness that He sees and hears, though there may seem to be no one present. For example, in hot weather the fasting individual is thirsty, a cold drink is before him and no one is watching, but he is mindful of Allah! The fasting Muslim is alone with his beloved spouse and both desire to express their love for each other. Yet they exhibit restraint because they are mindful of Allah!

The awesome glory of the Divine command to fast, binds the heart to overrule all other passions and appetites. One cannot sustain a fast otherwise. When a believer is thus habituated to shun the permitted acts for the fasting hours, he has prepared himself to resist the forbidden acts for good. The object of fasting is thus to instil in a believer a consciousness of the strength of his will, in the service of a high moral and spiritual purpose.¹ Another tradition tells us that it is enjoined upon a fasting person not to utter an indecent word, nor to shout and even if some one abuses him or quarrels with him, to simply state the fact that he is fasting (which prevents him from reacting to provocation).²

The month of Ramzaan is determined by a lunar calendar. Lunar months rotate over all the seasons and so ensure a degree of equality among the Muslims living in different parts of the world. There is little hardship in fasting except for one who is infatuated by some passion or vice, who is habituated to easy

1 "If a fasting person does not refrain from telling lies, speaking nonsense and doing indecent acts then God would not care less if he has remained hungry and thirsty." (Muslim - 1:754).

2 Bukhaari. (2:238)

living, or whose living is oriented to luxury.¹ Fasting is not only enjoined as a duty but is regarded as one of the five pillars of Islam. Islam, as a religion, encourages the development of virtue and spiritual enlightenment, and discourages immoderate living and self-indulgence.

BIRTH OF IMAAM HASAN

One significant event of the third year of A.H. was the auspicious birth of Hasan Mujtaba (in the month of Ramzaan). He was the first-born of his illustrious parents - `Ali Murtaza and Sayyida Faatima Zahra (may Allah's salutations be upon them).

ALCOHOLIC DRINKS PROHIBITED

Among several blessings of the fourth year, the most significant was the prohibition of alcoholic drinks. It is stated by Anas that some people had gathered in Abu Talha's house and he was serving them with drinks. Then they heard a crier announcing the prohibition and Abu Talha promptly ordered all bottles to be drained out. On that day wine was flowing in the streets of Madina.

In our times there are 'temperance societies' in several countries dedicated to the eradication of or limitations on intoxicants. Such societies owe a debt to Islam which prohibited the imbibing of alcohol in whatever form or quantity fourteen centuries ago.

A tradition brands wine as the 'mother of all evils'. The evil effects of intoxicants can be observed in a person's health, ethics,

1 St. Matthew (6:16), "When you are fasting, stop becoming sad-faced like the hypocrites, for they disfigure their faces that they may appear to men to be fasting."
(6:17), "But when you are fasting, grease your head and wash your face."
Ed.

attitude, on the state of law and order in the country, on the community's ethos and on the discipline and performance of soldiers in the battlefield. Some critics of Islam had contended that converts were cajoled into the fold of Islam by the permissiveness of its culture. Historically this is a blatant untruth and the passage of time has exposed this and all other lies about Islam. Even the orientalist concede all such remarks as 'literary curiosities' and 'deliberate distortions'.¹ Let them ponder that the Prophet completely forbade the use of all intoxicants. The Prophet was an uncompromising enemy of permissive society. People given to drinking and those who do not relish fasting will always hesitate to embrace the fold of Islam.

THE BIRTH OF IMAAM HUSAIN

Imaam Husain, the grandson of the holy Prophet, was born in the month of Sha`baan. He was killed under the most tragic circumstances in 61 A.H. His martyrdom, alongwith his seventy-two devoted companions in the burning sands and scorching heat of Karbala shakes every human heart to this day. Only the scion of an inspired sage could display such feats of courage and conviction when, in front of his eyes, dearest and nearest members of his family and devout followers were speared to death. Such lasting acts of chivalry, resignation and inflexibility of faith are a lesson for the faint-hearted in our society. The blessings of the holy Prophet and the training of his celebrated parents gave the world models of dedication and sacrifice (may they all rest in peace).

1 For many centuries the acquaintance which the majority of Europeans possessed of Islam was based almost entirely on distorted reports of fanatical Christians which led to the dissemination of multitude of gross calumnies. What was good in Islam was entirely ignored and what was not good, in the eyes of Europe, was exaggerated or misinterpreted. Sir E. Ross. Sale's translation of the Qur'aan p-VII.

THE CHIEF OF NAJD EMBRACES ISLAM

In 6 A.H., a few cavaliers of the Muslim army were carrying routine reconnaissance exercises near the borders of Najd when they confronted Thumaama,¹ the Chief of Najd. He was produced before the Prophet who inquired why he was there and what he had to say.

He replied, “O Muhammad (SAW), if you order my killing it would be what I deserve in accordance with the law. But if you condone my misdeeds, I shall be grateful. I am prepared to pay any amount as compensation.” On the second and third day of his detention, he was asked the same question and he gave the same reply.

The Prophet ordered his unconditional release. Thumaama went to al-Baqi`, a nearby garden, took bath and returned to the Prophet’s mosque and embraced Islam, proclaiming, “O Prophet! In the whole world, I hated you most. But today, you are the noblest and most loved person to me and your city, the most attractive, and your Way (religion) the most inspiring.”

The Prophet felicitated him on his conversion to Islam. Thumaama then stated that at the time of his capture, he was on his way to Makka to perform *Umra*. He enquired of the Prophet what he should do now?

The Prophet advised him to go for Umra. On his arrival at Makka, some men of the Quraish derisively asked him, “Have you turned into a Sabi?” He replied that he had not but that he had embraced Islam and believed Sayyidina Muhammad (SAW) to be the Prophet of God. As a rebuff, he warned the Quraish that from

1 On receiving the Prophet’s letter of invitation to Islam, Thumaama felt insulted and outraged. He made abortive attempts to kill the Prophet, and continued raiding the Muslims here and there. Ed.

then on they would not get a grain of wheat from his country. After reaching Najd, he banned all export of wheat to them.¹

The Makkans were greatly upset and called upon the Prophet to relieve them from their distress. The ever compassionate Prophet never hesitated to oblige his arch enemies in their hour of despair, although the tragic memories of the battles of Badr, Uhud, and Khandaq (The Ditch) were still fresh in the minds of Muslims. Yet again the architects of perfidy and unforgivable machinations were paid back in grace. The Prophet never desired anybody to be humiliated or starved and thus forced into submission. He always worked to win over hearts by upholding and refining human values.

THE ARMISTICE OF HUDAIBIYA

In 6 A.H., the Prophet narrated a vision in which he led the Muslims to Makka, for circumambulation of the Ka'ba. The Prophet's inspiration intensified the emigrants desire to return to their native land and make a pilgrimage. They urged the Prophet to undertake a journey to Makka that year.

The Muslims did not carry weapons of battle but camels for the rituals of sacrifice. They set out in the month of Zul Qa'ada, traditionally a sacred month in which war was forbidden, according to ancient Arab custom, so that even an enemy could travel unrestricted for the pilgrimage. Makka was nineteen miles away from the town of Hudaibiya. The Prophet sent word of his arrival to the Quraish and sought formal permission to complete the last trek of their journey. The Prophet's emissary was his son-in-law, `Uthmaan b. `Affaan. Soon after, a rumour spread in the Muslim camp that `Uthmaan had been assassinated or made captive by the Quraish.² On receipt of this information the holy

1 Bukhaari - from Abu Huraira (Battles).

2 Bukhaari from Zaid and Salma.

Prophet took an oath of allegiance (*baya`t*) from the pilgrims, unequipped for battle though they were to lay down their lives if need be and to remain steadfast if there were a conflict.¹ The companions numbered fourteen hundred.² Allah was pleased with the 'oath', "*Allah granted His approval to the believers who took an oath of allegiance under the tree.*" (48:18) While accepting the hand of allegiance, the Prophet declared that his left hand was the right hand of `Uthmaan and he accepted the oath, on behalf of `Uthmaan.

The Quraish were frightened when they heard of the *Baya`t* (vow to death). Their chiefs followed one another to Hudaibiya, to calm the situation. `Urwa b. Mas`ud, who represented the Quraish, reported thus on his return, "O my people! I have often been to the courts of Negus of Abyssinia, Caesar, the Emperor of Constantinople, and Chosroes, the Emperor of Persia. No emperor can match the grace and reverence which Muhammad (SAW) inspires in his companions. If he spat, the Companions would wish to extend their palms to smear it on their faces. When he gives an instruction, the companions vie among themselves to be the first to carry it out. When he takes water for ablution, they rush, struggling to grab the unused water as a holy souvenir. When he speaks, silence reigns absolute among the listeners. The Companions respect him so much that no one would raise his eyes to look straight into his face! It is my considered opinion," `Urwa added, "that we should enter into a truce of armistice with Muhammad (SAW)."³

The Quraish accepted his suggestion and the terms of the armistice were agreed upon:

1 Bukhaari from Ibn `Umar. (2:601)

2 Ibid from Bra` and Jabbar. (2:599)

3 A few years later, `Urwa embraced Islam and became a zealous missionary.

1. There would be no war between the parties for ten years, and no restrictions on travel in each other's territory.
2. The tribes would be free to accept the friendship of the Quraish or the Muslims. The tribes-in-friendship would share the terms of the armistice.
3. The Muslims would have free passage for pilgrimage to the Ka`ba from the next year onwards. They could carry weapons on the journey but not on their person while performing pilgrimage.
4. If a member of the Quraish embraced Islam and deserted the Quraish, the holy Prophet would extradite him. The extradition clause would not be applicable to a Muslim deserting Islam to join the Quraish.

The Companions, except Abu Bakr, felt humiliated and perturbed over the last condition; `Umar Faaruq felt particularly uneasy. The Prophet consented to the condition smilingly.

The document of the armistice was to be written down by `Ali Murtaza who began with the traditional '*Bismilla hir-Rahmaan nir-Rahim*' - (In the name of Allah the Compassionate, the Merciful). Suhail, representing the Quraish, objected, saying, "By God, we do not know the Rahmaan (the Compassionate)." The Prophet agreed to delete the word 'Rahmaan'. `Ali then wrote, "The armistice is agreed upon between Muhammad, the Messenger of Allah, and the Quraish." Suhail objected to the word 'Messenger'. At his request the Prophet had it amended to 'Muhammad, son of `Abdullah'.¹

The Quraish were optimistic that out of fear of the fourth condition of the truce being invoked, no one would thenceforth dare accept Islam.

The agreement was being written, the ink had hardly dried, the signatures were yet to be made when Abu Jandal b. Suhail, a

1 Bukhaari - Masur b. Makharama. (1:378)

Muslim escaping from the captivity of the Quraish, and still in fetters, walked into the Muslim's camp. Suhail (father of Abu Jandal and the representative of the Quraish) demanded the person of his son, Abu Jandal. The Prophet said that the agreement had yet to be concluded to be acted upon but Suhail expressed his bitterness and threatened to walk out. Thus the Prophet ordered that Abu Jandal be handed over to the Quraish.

The Quraish tied up Abu Jandal in the Muslim's camp, put his fetters back on, and escorted him out. The Prophet saw him departing and blessed him, "O Abu Jandal, Allah will have His way to your rescue."¹ The humiliation of Abu Jandal incited the Muslims to retaliation but the Prophet's command calmed them.² The Prophet was still encamped at Hudaibiya when eighty men descended from the hill of Tani`m with the intention of massacring the Muslims during their congregational prayers. All of them were captured, but released on compassionate grounds. This act was graced in the words of Allah, *"And He it is who has withheld men's hands from you, and has withheld your hands from them in the valley of Makka, after He had made you victors over them. Allah is watching of what you do,"* (48:24). Auspicious events followed the journey to Hudaibiya. The Prophet had shown flexibility, vigilance and farsightedness in concluding the truce with his foes and had displayed his charitable disposition in granting pardon to the aggressive enemy, true to his Divinely bestowed title 'Mercy unto all beings' (*Rahma-tul-lil-`Aalamiin*).

On his return to Madina from Hudaibiya, the Divine words of '*Sura Al-Fath*' (Victory: Qur'aan V.48) were revealed, "We granted you manifest victory." `Umar Faaruq who had remained upset by the one-sidedness of the 4th clause asked whether it had really been a victory! The Prophet replied, "Yes!"³

1 Bukhaari. (1:380)

2 II - G - p-505.

3 Bukhaari from Abi Vail. (2:600)

Let us now return to the story of Abu Jandal. He was brought back to his prison-cell in Makka, where he began preaching the Oneness of God to his guards. His exhortations stirred their hearts. One guard after another declared his faith. They too were imprisoned by the Quraish. In this way, Abu Jandal, in one year, as God willed, converted an astonishing three hundred people to the faith. The Quraish would now reflect on the terms of the truce and admit that it was imprudent on their part to insist on the fourth clause pertaining to the extradition of believers. They appointed emissaries, who waited upon the Prophet at Madina, pleading for a revision of the clause, and asking for his consent to accept the converts into Madina. The Prophet would not agree to dishonouring an agreement. His word was given and not only he, but all Muslims, were bound by it.¹ The petition of the Quraish convinced the Muslims that the truce had indeed been a victory and that the seemingly disagreeable clauses were proven the most beneficial. For the discerning, the moral of the story of Abu Jandal must lie in seeking the force which spread Islam! How the seeker's hearts were drawn to, and then fixed upon the Truth! Emigration, exile, separation from family and friends, humiliation, imprisonment, and even the threat of death, in fact any trial and tribulation however demanding, could not deter the seeker from abandoning the path of truth, salvation and peace.

THE SEVENTH YEAR OF HIJRA

Khaibar was situated at the third stage of the journey to Syria. It was an exclusively Jewish settlement, surrounded by fortifications. About a month after the return from Hudaibiya, the Prophet was informed of the Jew's preparation to invade Madina again to avenge their defeat in the battle of Ahzaab (the battle of the Ditch), and restore their pride in their martial spirit. They had formed an alliance with the tribe of the B. Ghatafaan, who offered to raise 4,000 warriors on the understanding that each year, half

1 II - G - p-508.

of the produce of Khaibar was to be paid in tribute to them, if Madina was captured.

The vicissitudes of the previous year's siege (in the battle of the Ditch) were fresh in their memory so the consensus of the Muslims was to initiate an offensive. The Prophet admitted only those of his companions to march with him, who were blessed with Allah's pleasure during his stop-over at Hudaibiya. In the words of the Qur'aan, "*Allah was pleased with the believers when they swore allegiance unto thee (O Prophet) beneath the tree...*"(48:8) The Muslim army had been assured of reward, "*Allah promises you many victories that will come your way.*"(48:20)

The Muslims numbered 1400, out of whom 200 were mounted. The commanders of the flanks included `Ukkaasha b. Mihsan Asadi,¹ and `Umar b. Khattaab for the middle and right flanks respectively. The left flank was commanded by someone else. The contingent included twenty women, who volunteered as nurses. The Muslim army arrived at Khaibar by nightfall. The merciful Prophet would never lead his men to attack by surprise or at night,² so the army had to camp till dawn. The site selected by Hubab b. al-Munzir, a veteran commander, separated the territory of Khaibar from the B. Ghatafaan, who found their passage blocked when they turned up to help their allies.³ The Prophet's strategy was to let the main camp remain at the site and to despatch detachments for the initial fight. A mosque was raised in the camp and preaching continued side by side with fighting.⁴ The commanding officer for the camp was `Uthmaan b. `Affaan.

1 Tabaqat Kabir - Ibn Sa'd, (2:106). `Ukkaasha was given the glad tidings of his entry to paradise without any accountability. He participated in all the battles and died as a martyr in the Caliphate of Abu Bakr Siddiq at the age of 45.

2 Bukhaari from Anas. (2:603)

3 Tabari. (3:9)

4 Bukhaari from Su`waid b. Nu`man. (2:603)

The Khaibar settlement of Jews, surrounded by ten forts and manned by 10,000 soldiers,¹ was divided in three groups:²

1. The Nata group: The Na`im, Nata, Sa`b and Alzubair.
2. The Al-Shaqq group: The Shaqq, al-Birr and Ubayy.
3. The Al-Katiba group: The Alqamus, al-Watih and al-Sulalim.

THE BATTLE OF KHAIBAR

The vanguard was commanded by Mahmud b. Maslama, who launched the attack on Fort Nata. The Prophet joined the attack. The rest of the army remained under the command of `Uthmaan b. `Affaan. Mahmud b. Maslama kept up the attack for five days but the fort seemed invincible. The commander (may Allah be pleased with him) was resting awhile near the perimeter of the fort when Kinaana b. al-Huqaiq, a Jew, killed him with a millstone. The command passed to his brother Muhammad b. Maslama,³ who kept up the battle fiercely until dusk. Muhammad b. Maslama suggested that the oasis of the Jews be destroyed because each tree was as dear to them as a child, and they would be forced out of the fort. The suggestion was hardly acted upon when Abu Bakr made a petition to the holy Prophet, praying therein that ultimate victory being assured, the Muslims should capture the place intact. The Prophet approved the suggestion and conveyed a directive to the commanders accordingly.

In the evening, Muhammad b. Maslama himself came to report the martyrdom of his brother Mahmud. The Prophet said, "The standard-bearer tomorrow shall be a person whom Allah and His Messenger love, and he shall secure the victory." On hearing such a sublime blessing, the chiefs of the army desired and prayed to be granted the standard on the following day. That night the

1 Fatheh-ul-Bari.

2 Sirat Muhammadia - Karamat `Ali.

3 II - G - p-513.

vigil was supervised by `Umar b. Khattaab. During his rounds, he arrested a Jew and produced him before the Prophet, who was in *sajdah* in his midnight prayer (*Tahajjud*). On interrogation, the Jew begged for his safety and that of his family who were in the fort. On being granted his request he revealed that the besieged Jews were sending their women and children that night to the fort of the Shaqq, and burying their treasure in the fort of the Nata. He could point out the treasure, and the secret cellars of the fort of the Shaqq which were stockpiled with catapults. The Prophet sent for `Ali the next morning. He was suffering from ophthalmia. The Prophet touched `Ali's eyes with his lips and he was instantly relieved of the pain. The Prophet said, "Ali, go and join the *jihad* in the name of Allah; preach to them first; then fight; even if one of them submits to Islam on your preaching then that conversion shall be a greater prize than loads of booty."¹

The valiant `Ali challenged the besieged in the fort of the Na'im. The challenge was responded by a notable Chief named Marhab. He considered himself equal to 1000 soldiers. He chanted his war-song,

*"Khaibar knows me. I am the Marhab,
Decorated with arms, a seasoned battler;
My feats of bravery outwit my opponents."*

`Aamir b. al-Akw`a accepted his challenge. He chanted, "Khaibar knows I am an experienced warrior." Marhab swung his sword. `Aamir b. al-Akw`a stopped it on his shield and attacked the lower limbs of Marhab. His sword rebounded and `Aamir struck himself on the knee, the wound proving fatal. Then `Ali, may Allah be pleased with him, entered the arena for the duel, chanting his awe-inspiring war-song,

"I am the one whose mother named him,

1 Bukhaari. (Battle of Khaibar) (2:605)

The Lion¹ that is ferocious and roaring.”

His very first blow of the sword was so mightily delivered that it cut through his adversary's iron helmet, turban and skull, reaching down to the neck. Yaasir, brother of Marhab, appeared to avenge his kin but he too was quickly disposed of by Zubair b. al-`Awwaam. The duels were followed by a general advance of battalion led by the valiant `Ali, and the besieged fort of the Na`im fell into Muslim hands.

On the same day, another battalion, under the command of Hubab b. al-Munzir, had conquered the fort of the al-Sa`b, after a three day siege. A large booty of oats, dates, butter, olive oil, lard, cloth and fabrics, besides arms, was captured from the fort, and this eased the logistic difficulties of the Muslims as predicted by the Qur'aan.² The information revealed by the Jewish prisoner (captured by `Umar) proved correct as the fort did indeed have a large store of armaments and implements used for destroying fortifications.

The fort of the Nata was captured on the following day. The next target was the fort of the al-Zubair built on a lofty hillock. Two days of effort were proved to be in vain. Then a Jew who had deserted his lines, reported in the Muslim camp that the fort could not be taken even after months of such efforts. He disclosed that the fort was served with an underground water channel. If the mouth of the channel were closed then a victory would be possible. The source of the water channel was promptly occupied and besieged forces were forced to fight out in the open. The battle resulted in defeat for the Jews.

Later, the fort of the Ubayy was attacked. The Jews defended it very well. One of them, named Ghazwan, came out for single combat. Hubab b. al-Munzir accepted his challenge and cut his right arm, and chasing him towards the fort, killed him with a

1 Tabari. (3:12)

2 And much booty that they will capture. (48:19)

further blow of his sword. Another fighter came out of the fort and killed his Muslim opponent. Abu Dujaana came forward to avenge that death, cut the feet of his Jewish opponent as soon as the encounter began and then killed him. This terrified the Jews and they did not send any one else for further duels. Abu Dujaana and a host of Muslim soldiers, all crying '*Allahu Akbar*', scaled the walls of the fort, their opponents fleeing in panic. The booty provided herds of goats, fabrics and general stores.

The next assault was on the fort of the al-Birr. The defendants made liberal use of catapults to hurl darts and stones and bombarded the Muslims heavily. The Muslims retaliated using the catapults captured from the fort of al-the Sa`b, shelled the ramparts successfully, and the fort was taken over.¹ Thus, the battle of Khaibar² ended in victory for the Muslims.

THE EIGHT YEAR OF HIJRA - SIGNIFICANT CONFESSIONS

This year was marked by some very notable converts to the fold of Islam. Among them was Khaalid b. Waliid, the officer-in-command of the cavalry of the Quraish. A gifted soldier, known for strategy on the battlefield, he had inflicted severe losses upon the Muslims in the battle of Uhad. After accepting the faith of his own accord, the same Khaalid as a Muslim general, enthused by the inspiration of his new faith, defeated Musailma the Liar,

1 Zad. (2:136)

2 Al-Aswad, a Jew's shepherd, embraced Islam. "*How should I dispose of the flock of sheep?*" he asked. The Prophet advised him, "Hit them on their face saying go to your master." The shepherd did that and the sheep in a body went off. Al-Aswad participated in Jihad, and was martyred (II - G - p-519). Without practising a single article of faith he went straight to paradise. Another striking feature is the observance of highest moral standards even when a battle was raging between the parties; the Prophet instructed the shepherd to return the flock of sheep to their master. Only a prophet could think that way. "Keep your pledges." (Qur'aan 5:1 and 74:38) Ed.

conquered all of Iraq and half of Syria. A hardened foe of Islam turned out to be the ablest of its defenders, a shining instance of the truth of Islam.

`Amr b. al-`Aas embraced Islam in that year. His notoriety as an enemy to Islam led to his selection as the emissary of the Quraish to the court of Negus - there he was expected to give proof of his skills in diplomatic negotiations by securing the extradition of Muslim emigrants, though he failed in that mission. The Negus was so offended with him that he declined to accept the gifts, presented by him. After becoming a Muslim, however, `Amr b. al-`Aas converted the King and people of Oman, conquered Egypt in the Caliphate of `Umar the great and laid the foundations of the city of Fustat.

`Uthmaan b. Talha, the custodian, administrator and key-bearer of the holy Ka`ba, and a scholar, also accepted Islam. When such noble people and chiefs arrived in Madina to pay homage to the truth of Islam, the Prophet remarked, "Makka has offered, today, the best of their men - the shining stars of its body-politic."

THE NINTH YEAR OF HIJRA - `ADIY b. HAATIM'S STORY

`Adiy was a famous chief of the tribe of the Tayy`i in Yaman. The story of his conversion is an interesting one. The tribe rebelled in 9 A.H. against the Muslim governor of the territory, `Ali Murtaza. He arrested the mischief-makers and sent the prisoners to Madina. Among them was Safana, the daughter of Haatim Tayy`i, the generous. She introduced herself to the Prophet in this way, "I am the daughter of a chief. My father was reputed for generosity and kindness. He would feed the hungry and show mercy to the poor. He is not alive now. My brother fled for fear of the Muslim troops. Now, I beg of you to be considerate to me." The Prophet remarked, "Yes, your great father had the qualities of a believer." She was freed along with her relatives.

The Prophet granted her money, clothes and provisions and put her on a camel for her onward journey.¹

`Adiy b. Haatim Tayy`i narrates his own story as follows:

"I used to abhor the Messenger of God because I professed a different faith. I was the ruler of my tribe and would collect a fourth of the revenue and the booty. I believed that I was on a straight path. Why should I, therefore, think of Islam? I had ordered the keeper of my camels that two well-fed camels be kept ready for a long journey. and that I be informed immediately of the arrival of the Muslim forces in my territory. One day, the keeper informed me that he could guess from the standard of a distant caravan that the Muslims were approaching. On hearing that, I collected my family and other valuable goods and set out for Syria. On obtaining her release from the Prophet, Safana, my sister, joined me there. She was a mature and sensible lady. She recounted her impressions about the Prophet, and advised me to call upon him. So it was that I travelled to Madina and contacted the Prophet, in the Masjid. I greeted him and introduced myself as `Adiy b. Haatim. The Prophet asked me to follow him to his house. On the way, a feeble old woman stopped the Prophet who had the patience to listen to her for a long time. "He could not be a king", I resolved.

The Prophet, on reaching his house, threw a cushion filled with palm leaves towards me, to sit on. I said, "No, your honour, you must sit on the cushion." He said, "No, it is your privilege." I sat on the cushion and the Prophet sat on the floor. "He could not be a king", I resolved again.

The Prophet addressed me, "You are a Christian of the Rakosian sect." I affirmed that. He went on, "You collect one fourth as your share from your people." I also confirmed that. "But your Christian faith does not permit this." "It is true," I answered. And I resolved finally, "He must be a Prophet. He knows all!" The

1 II - G - p-638.

Prophet then said to me, “`Adiy, your hesitation to accept Islam is based on your observation of poverty among Muslims! By God! The Muslim community will soon be so prosperous that you will not find a beggar among them. `Adiy, you are hesitating because the Muslims are few in number and their opponents are many. By God! The time is about to come when an unaccompanied woman will travel from Qadisiya to perform Hajj at Makka and she will have no anxiety or fear. `Adiy, you hesitate perhaps, that there are other nations who boast of empires and their well-organised systems of government. By God! The time is at hand when the white house of the land of Babylon (i.e. the palace of Nausherwan, the Emperor of Persia) will be captured by the Muslims. `Adiy, say what holds you back from declaring ‘*La Ilah ha Il-Lal Laah*’? Who else could be worshipped except Allah? Do you hesitate to declare ‘*Allahu Akbar*’! Who could be greater than God?”

The Prophet’s words penetrated my heart and purged me of all apprehensions and I declared my submission to the faith. My declaration was received by the Prophet with an instant glow of joy and contentment that beamed on his face on such occasions.

Hardly two years had elapsed from the day of the prophecies when I witnessed the occupation of the palaces of the Emperor of Persia by Muslims and an old woman travelling alone from Qadisiya to Makka, on Hajj pilgrimage. I am certain that the third prophecy shall follow."

HAJJ - THE FIFTH PILLAR OF ISLAM

Hajj (the pilgrimage to the Ka`ba in Makka) is the fifth pillar of Islam. Islam is that message of universal love and concord which aims to convert foreigners into friends, and elevates friends to the grade of Siddiq (the truthful). The Divine commandments of Islam aim to unite the people of the earth into a general harmony bonded to the Unitarian Creed, ‘*La Ilah ha Il-Lal Laah*’ which is interpreted thus into deeds: (i) within the wards of a town

the dwellers are to become understanding neighbours and well-wishers of each other and all should assemble five times a day, for the obligatory prayers, in the mosque of the ward; (ii) to develop perfect citizenship, it is ordained that the weekly prayers, on Friday, be offered in the principal mosque of the town; (iii) to unite the people of the town with the adjoining people of the countryside, it is laid down that, twice in a year, the prayer on the two festivals of `Id be held at a larger and wider place, preferably an open ground accessible to all; (iv) to draw the different ethnic and multilingual groups in Islam into one harmonious entity, it is decreed that all those who can afford should go for Hajj to Makka once during their lifetime. The pilgrims, by meeting each other, create and sustain international affinity and understanding so that every Muslim's heart vibrates with the feelings transcending all geographical and political barriers. A Muslim belongs to one global brotherhood.¹

To link and to represent the inward and the outward, it was ordained that all pilgrims to the Ka`ba should wear a uniform dress (*Ihram*) - two simple, clean, white unsewn sheets, the dress which adorned the father of all nations, Adam, the first man and also the first holy Prophet (peace be upon him). The uniformity of dress compliments the unity of faith in One God, one Qur'aan, one House of God and one holy Prophet (the last). The place for pilgrimage is the one built as the first house of worship by the father of Sabeans, Jews, Christians and Muslims - the Patriarch Abraham / Ibrahiim (peace be upon him)!

The annual Hajj displays the glory of the magnitude of the world of Islam. The pilgrims also derive advantages which are

1 No stretch of religious genius could have conceived a better expedient for impressing on the minds of the faithful a sense of their common life and of brotherhood in the bonds of faith. Here, in a supreme act of common worship, the Negro of the West coast of Africa meets the Chinaman from the distant East; and the courtly and polished Ottoman recognises his brother Muslim in the wild islander from the farthest end of the Malayan Sea. The Preaching of Islam by T. W. Arnold, Lahore 1956 - p-415.

inherent in a long journey over land or sea. The Hajj incorporates, in one gathering, all the purposes that are comparable to a great and grand public occasion; it expresses, creates, and justifies community of interest, purpose and cause, in this event the noblest of all causes, the glorifying of the One God.

The Hajj was made an obligatory duty (*farz*) in the year 9 A.H. In the same year, the Prophet appointed Abu Bakr Siddiq as leader (*Amir*) of the Hajj-caravan of three hundred companions in the pilgrim rites. `Ali Murtaza was deputed soon thereafter to announce the revelation of Sura Bara't (IX Immunity, also called Repentance). Abu Bakr led the companions in the rites. `Ali announced the first forty verses of the Revelation which decreed that, from then on, the entry of the idolators to the house of God was forbidden, and the circumambulation of the Ka`ba was not permitted to the naked.

THE TENTH YEAR OF HIJRA - FAREWELL PILGRIMAGE

In the tenth year of the Hijra, the Prophet announced his intention to perform Hajj. As the word spread, large groups of the Believers from every corner of the country began thronging to Madina to accompany him. On the appointed day, the Prophet set out at the head of a caravan of thousands. At Zu-al-Halifa he donned the *Ihram* (pilgrim's garb) and continued his journey towards Makka reciting the *talbiyah*, "At your call, my Lord! I am at your call, none are co-sharers with you, I am at your call. Indeed, all praise belongs to you, and the Bounty and the Kingdom; None, indeed, are co-partners with you!"

As the august caravan progressed, more and more groups flocked to its ranks all the way. Every time they passed by a rock

or cliff,¹ the Prophet would call out the glorification (*takbir*), 'Allahu Akbar' (God is great).

On sighting Makka the Pilgrims camped at Zu-Tuwa and then descended to the city. As daylight spread, the *tawaf* or circumambulation of the Ka`ba was performed, pronouncing and glorifying the Majesty of the Most High.

This done, the Prophet, leading the pilgrims, headed for the historic hills of Safa and Marwa. On arriving at their summit and facing in the direction of the Ka`ba, he again exclaimed the Glory and Unity of Allah.

“There is no god but Allah. He is one and has no partner. He is the Sovereign of all and everything and to Him alone is all praise due. He has absolute control over all things. There is no god but Allah. He has fulfilled His promises and helped His servant all through the way, and humiliated the hordes of His enemies.”

On the eighth day of Zil Hajj, the Prophet set out from Makka for Mina, where he encamped until the next morning, conducting the obligatory prayers, at mid-day, afternoon, sunset, early night and twilight of the new day.

After sunrise of the ninth day, the Prophet arrived at the valley which lies between Nimrah, Arafat and Mazdalifa.

In the afternoon he left the valley for Arafat with 144,000 pilgrims, all with one voice glorifying the Majesty of God.²

Here, the Prophet mounted his favourite camel Qaswa, went up the hill (named thereafter Jabal-al-Noor or the Hill of Light) and delivered his historic Farewell Sermon.

1 Jabar b. `Abdullah-Bukhaari - (chapter Testimony). Let the wilderness and the cities thereof lift up their voice, the villages that Kedar doth inhabit. Let them shout (*takbir*) from the top of the mountains. (Isaiah - 42:11). (Kedar was the son of the Prophet Ismaa`il. His family settled in and around Makka).

2 Another report says - 124,000 but the Qur'aan does not support it.

VALEDICTION AT THE FAREWELL PILGRIMAGE

The Prophet praised and glorified Allah, and then said:

"O my men! Listen to my words. I feel, you and I shall not meet again in this place after this year.¹

Your blood, your possessions and your honour are sacrosanct upon one another until you meet your Lord as hallowed as this day, this city and this month. You will be questioned there.

Keep scrupulously the sanctity of your pledges.²

Beware! Do not be misled and cut each others throats when I am not here.³

O people! I hereby annihilate all foul and filthy customs, traditions and usages, that you adhered to, in the era of ignorance (Jahliya).⁴

Abolished are all blood-claims of the time of ignorance. I hereby renounce the vengeance for the first claim of blood; that of Ibn Rabi`a b. al-Haarith, of my family, who was fostered by the B. Sa`d, and killed by Hudhail.⁵

Abolished are all transactions of usury. *'Deal not unjustly and you shall not be dealt with unjustly'*.⁶ I hereby waive altogether the first claim of usury that of `Abbaas b. `Abdul Muttalib (`Abbaas was the uncle of the Prophet).

Remain God-fearing in regard to your wives. You entered into wedlock as a trust from God and made their person lawful to yourself by sanctifying holy words. You have this right over them that they will not let your bed be defiled and behave with open

1 Ma`dan-ul-`Amaal Hadith No: 1107 from Wabisa (also quoted by Ibn `Asaakar).

2 II - G - p-651.

3 Bukhaari from Abu Bakr. (2:632)

4 II - G - p-651.

5 Ibid.

6 (2:279) - II - G - p-652.

unseemliness. If they do so God allows you to put them in separate rooms and to beat them but not severely; thus causing no marks. Your women have a right over you that they are fed, clothed well and treated with kindness and love.

I am leaving a legacy which, if you hold fast to, you will not go astray. That legacy is the Book of God¹ (and the practices of His Prophet).²

O people, there shall be no Messenger after me, nor a new Umma after you.³

Listen carefully! Worship your Lord; offer the five daily prayers; keep a fast for a month (during Ramzaan); give Zakaat; perform the pilgrimage of Hajj; and obey your elders in authority; (and as a reward for all this) be admitted to the Paradise of your Lord!

O my people, you should carry forward (what you have heard) to those who are not here. Maybe some of those who learn from you will prove better recipients of 'the message' than those who teach them."

To this sermon two more pieces of address have been added for the convenience of the reader; thereby consolidating and elaborating the full concept of the Prophet's message about human values, rights and universal brotherhood of all mankind. Ed.

1. "O you Quraish! God has crushed your pride and condemned men who believed in gloating over the vainglorious traditions of their ancestors, who were ignorant and self-indulgent. The truth is that all of us are the descendants of Adam who was made of clay" - which indicates inborn humility of mankind. Says the Qur'aan:

"O people, We have created you from one man and woman, your clans and your tribes are only for your identification.

1 Muslim (Chapter Pilgrimage). (1:397)

2 II - G - p-61. Ed.

3 Madan-al-Aamal from Wabisa.

He alone is honourable in the record of God, who is God-conscious and excels others in good deeds."¹ (49:13)

2. "An Arab has no excellence over a non-Arab; nor a non-Arab over an Arab; nor a white man over a black nor a black man over a white."²

"O my followers, you will be questioned about me, so what will you say then?" They all answered in one voice, "We attest that you (the holy Prophet) have transmitted to us the dictates of God; you have carried the mission to its sweetest end, you have made clear the good from the bad."

With each testimony, the Prophet would raise his index finger towards the sky, then toward the assembly, and would say, "Be my witness, O God! Be my witness, their testimony is beyond doubt."

The sermon is a charter of human rights, a monument of an enlightened mind and declaration of the equality of mankind ungrudgingly observed till today. It provides a base for the solution of our socio-economic problems and also caters for our spiritual needs. What was preached, was practised day and night for 23 years, without ever resorting to double standards - a dismal and recurring characteristic of our present day leaders, reformers and institutions, which we and the whole world know and bewail. The almost infallible followers of the Prophet kept alive those glorious traditions in all parts of the world for centuries, as all independent historians have testified and continue to reaffirm.

After the conclusion of the Address, the Prophet received this revelation, chronologically the last verse of the Qur'aan: "This day have I perfected³ your religion for you and showered

1 Address to the Quraish after the conquest of Makka - p-101.

2 A tradition of the Prophet (SAW). Ed.

3 **FINALITY OF THE PROPHETHOOD**

The verse (5:3) quoted above has a special bearing on the tradition quoted below, from the farewell address, "There will be no Prophet after me and

no Umma after you” (as the way to Allah has been perfected), is a well known tradition. Although its language and its meaning are very simple, yet for the wavering minds its interpretation, made immediately after the death of the Prophet by his successors and in particular by `Ali Murtaza, the intellectual giant of Islam while bathing the body of the Prophet, was as follows, “Your death has meant the termination of the prophethood, prophecy and revelation of God’s words.” This interpretation has remained an integral part of the faith of all the scholars of the world of Islam to this day. The tradition, “There would be no prophet after me”, is a reflection of the Qur’aanic verse, “Muhammad (SAW), is the messenger of Allah, and the seal of the Prophets.” (33:40) Since the prophethood was sealed by God, there can be no prophet appearing thereafter except pretenders as also predicted by the holy Prophet. Two of them appeared in his lifetime.

Secondly, the verse (5:3), “This day have I perfected your religion,” further confirms verse 33:40, “Muhammad is the seal of the Prophets.” There is no stage after perfection of a thing. And there can certainly be no stage after something has been perfected by God Himself. The sun, the moon, the earth, the sky, and oceans, and the mountains are some of the signs of God and their perfection has never been (even academically) questioned.

Now we refer to various other traditions that appear to be the reflections of the above Qur’aanic verses. The Prophet, holding the hand of `Ali, announced, “You are to me as Aaron (Harun) was to Moses (Musa) but beware there would be no prophet after me.” (Aaron or Harun was the brother of Moses (Musa) and acted as his deputy on one or two occasions) Another tradition says, “‘Umar b. Khattaab would have been a prophet if the prophethood was to be continued.” And yet another tradition says, “There is a beautiful and majestic building, but in one of its corners a brick is missing. I am that brick.”

From verses of the Qur’aan and traditions, it is clear that the finality of prophethood is a natural sequence of the perfected religion in accordance with the designs of *Allah Tabarak wa Ta`ala*.

It may also be added here for the benefit of wavering minds that four traditions quoted above have all along remained unimpeached, undebated and immune of all controversies throughout the fourteen centuries among all the Muhaddiths (traditionalists or scholars or researchers of traditions) of the world of Islam and there have never been two opinions about the finality of the prophethood. There were pretenders in the lifetime of the holy Prophet and there will be pretenders thereafter. They can be distinguished by their untruths, conceit, arrogance, vindictive nature, pompous lifestyle, and greed for money, offensively opposite to the lifestyle and

my full blessings and bounties upon you, and chosen Islam as your way of life.” (5:3)

Here the Prophet sacrificed sixty-three animals by his own hand, and thirty-seven by `Ali on his behalf. This ceremony of sacrifice was conducted at Mina, the acceptable altar for such sacrifices from the times of Prophet Ibrahiim, the patriarch. Later, the Prophet returned to the sacred house of God (Ka`ba) and performed the circumambulation of the Ka`ba (*tawaf*), the pilgrims following him in all the rituals.

OBJECTIVES OF THE LAST PILGRIMAGE

The Prophet’s objectives in the (last) pilgrimage were: veneration of the holy signs; revival of the traditions of Prophets Ibrahiim and Ismaa`il; denunciation of the unbeliever’s polytheistic rites; the proclamation of Tawhiid; and preaching of the creed of Islam. The Pilgrimage is remembered by the biographers as Hajj-al-Balagh (Pilgrimage of preaching and proclamations). It is also remembered as the Farewell Pilgrimage because of the holy Prophet’s proclamation of his last public message. The Prophet had attained complete success in his mission of preaching the Oneness¹ of Allah (Tawhiid) and seeing

characteristics of the last string of major prophets e.g. Abraham, Moses, Joseph, Christ and Muhammad (Peace and blessings be on them). Such pretenders will be exposed to the public eye by their long and painful pangs of death. Says the Qur’aan, “Who can be more wicked than one who invents a lie against Allah, or says: I have received inspiration, when he had received none, or again who says: I will reveal the like of that Allah has revealed? If you could see how the wicked (do fare) in the flood of confusion at death! The angels stretch forth their hands, (saying): Yield up your souls. This day shall you receive your reward, a penalty of shame (doom of degradation), for that you used to tell lies against Allah, and scornfully rejected His signs.” (6:94) The Muslims and the world can easily pinpoint a pretender in the light of the Qur’aanic verse. Ed.

1 “Christianity was never sufficiently strong to destroy its antagonist, ‘Paganism’. In this, Christianity differed from Islam which absolutely annihilated its antagonist (Paganism), and spread its own doctrine (of unity

it observed sincerely and vocally. This achievement has been acknowledged even by unfriendly critics like Gibbon. He observes, "In the Author of 'The Universe' his (the Prophet's) rational enthusiasm confessed and adored an infinite and eternal being, without form or place, without issue or similitude, present to our most secret thoughts, existing by the necessity of His own nature and driving from (Himself) all moral and intellectual perfection. These sublime truths, thus, announced in the language of the Prophet are firmly held by his disciples and defined with metaphysical precision by the interpreters of the Koran." (Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire - Gibbon, p-667)

The Prophet inculcated in his followers the observance of a high standard of justice and morality. He succeeded in raising the uncouth bedouins of the stark desert of Arabia to the heights of cultural refinement and civilisation. He generated in them a highly rational sense of social values and the impact of its reflections reached all the corners of the world. In essence, all the super qualities of a great nation had become manifestly visible in the earliest of Muslims in the lifetime of the Prophet. Thus, the Prophet returned to Madina happy and contented.

On the way, a complaint was made to the Prophet by Buraida Aslami against `Ali Murtaza in regard to the distribution of state tax during his governorship in Yaman. In fact, the complaint was based on a misunderstanding on the part of Aslami. The Prophet delivered an eloquent address at Khum Ghadir (a place between Makka and Madina). There he pronounced the exalted qualities of the *Ahl-i-Bait* (family of the Prophet), Allah be pleased with them. The Prophet held high the hand of `Ali, and said, "For whom I am a friend, may he also be `Ali's friend."

`Umar Faaruq, after the address, congratulated `Ali Murtaza for this honour. Buraida Aslami lived the rest of his life as one of the devotees of `Ali and was martyred in the battle of Jamal (in the Caliphate of `Ali).

THE HAJJ IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

A millennia before, the Prophet Isaiah, the great foreseer of future events, proclaimed the Hajj. He uses the names Kedar and Nebaijoth,¹ two sons of the Prophet Ismail, as well as Midian, Ephraim and Sheba², sons and grandsons of the Patriarch Abraham (Ibrahiim) from his third wife Keturah³ to symbolise the followers of the Prophet Muhammad (SAW). It should be noted that Nebaijoth and Kedar were full brothers and that all Makkans (the Quraish) were the descendants of Kedar. The Aus & Khazraj, the two principal tribes of Madina, were the descendants of Midian, Ephraim and Sheba, and have been named by the Qur'aan as Helpers, the *Ansaar*. Thus, the Quraish and the Ansaar are cousins - their common ancestor being the patriarch Ibrahiim.

AN ADDRESS TO THE 'HOUSE OF GOD' AT MAKKA IN ISAIAH (OLD TESTAMENT)

- 60:01 Arise, shine, for thy light has come and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee.
- 60:03 And the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising.

Gentiles refers to people of non-Jewish origin, neither Jews nor Christians. Here it stands for the sons and grandsons of the Patriarch Abraham from his second and third wives, Hagar and Keturah, who were cousins and brethren of the people of the Book. The word brethren is used several times in the Old Testaments. The Prophet Ismaa'il's daughter was wedded to Esau,

1 Settled in and around Makka. The two names are given in Genesis. (25:13)

2 Settled in Madina. For their names see Genesis. (25:2) and (25:13)

3 Keturah was married to Abraham after the death of Sarah. (Genesis 25:1)

elder brother of the Prophet Jacob (Ishaaq) (Gen. - 25:9), and settled in Italy. Many women from Italy, obviously from this branch of Esau's family, were married to the descendants of Imaam Ja'far Saadiq. See Vol-II.

60:05 Then thou shalt see and be radiant, your heart shall thrill and rejoice, because the abundance of the sea shall be converted unto thee, the forces of the Gentiles shall come unto thee.

60:06 The multitude of camels shall cover thee, the young camels of Midian and Ephah; all those from Sheba shall come. They shall bring gold and frankincense and shall proclaim the praise of the Lord.

Midian was the son of Keturah, third wife of the Patriarch, and Ephah and Sheba were her grandsons (Gen. 25:1-3).

60:07 All the flocks of Kedar shall be gathered together unto thee. The rams of Nebaijoth shall minister unto thee, they shall come up with acceptance on my altar (Mina), and I will glorify the house of my glory.

The descendants of Kedar & Nebaijoth performed the ritual of sacrifice of animals in the name of Allah as all Muslims do today.

60:11 Therefore, thy gates shall be open continually; day and night, they shall not be shut; that man may bring unto thee, the wealth of the Gentiles with their kings led in procession. (The rulers of the world of Islam did all that is mentioned in this verse).

60:14 The sons also of those (i.e. the Makkans) who afflicted you shall come bending low unto thee and all who despised you shall bow down at your feet, they shall call thee the City of the Lord. (This bending 'low' was experienced by the Quraish after the conquest of

Makka, when they felt humiliated before their conquerors, their brethren.)

Bait-Ullah is the exact translation of the city of the Lord. Lastly, it is a historical fact witnessed daily by pilgrims that the gates of the house of God (Bait-Ullah) remain open day and night.

- 60:15 Whereas thou hast been forsaken and hated, with no one passing through thee, I will make you majestic forever, a joy from age to age. (A historical fact).

As long as the idolaters of Makka had the upper hand, the glorification of God in the house of God remained forsaken and despised. Now it is the most majestic and spacious sanctuary in the world for the glorification and worship of the one God, capable of accommodating more than one million pilgrims at a time.

- 60:16 Thou shalt also suck the milk of the Gentiles, and shalt suck the breast of kings; thou shall know that I, the Lord, am the Saviour and thy Redeemer.

The custodians of Makka,¹ the Ummaiyads, succeeded by the Abbasides, the Turks, the Sharif of Makka and now the house of Saud have spent billions on the renovation and extension of this house of God. The project still continues. A six mile long tunnel, fully air-conditioned, has joined Makka with Mina thanks to the magnanimous house of Saud. The Prophet's mosque at Madina has also been extended and enlarged. It

1 Mecca is sometimes also spelled as Becca or Baca (as in the Qur'aan 3:96 and Old Testament Psalm 84:6). Both words are synonymous, and signify a place of great concourse, *is certainly one of the most ancient cities of the world*; it is by some, thought to be the Mesa of Scripture, a name not unknown to Arabians, and supposed to be taken from one of Ismael's sons. George Sale - Translation of the Qur'aan, p-3, Preliminary Discourse. See footnote 1 of the next page for Mesa or Massa.

accommodated, till 1985, 50,000 pilgrims at a time. By 1993 it had space for half a million pilgrims and was fully air-conditioned.

- 60:18 Violence shall no more be heard in thy land, desolation and destruction within thy border; but thou shalt call thy walls 'salvation' and thy gates 'praise'.

The sacred cities of Makka and Madina are well-known for maintaining exemplary peace and order in the world. Even the hunting of birds and animals is a criminal offence in and around Makka. There is, and never has been, any city in the world which claims such distinctions.

- 60:19 The sun shall be no more thy light by day, not for brightness shall the moon give light to thee by night; but the Lord shall be unto thee an everlasting light, and your God will be your glory.

It is a fact the primordial house of worship, where the glory and praise of Allah, our Lord is proclaimed day and night without a second's break, is the *Bait-Ullah* at Makka, now capable of accommodating one million pilgrims at a time with full modern facilities, and, therefore, a unique 'house of God' in the world.

QUR'AANIC CONCEPTION OF THE BEST NATION

The Quraan says, "Let there be a people (Umma) among you, who invite to the best religion and command what is just and forbid that which is evil" (3:104 translation by George Sale). "You are the best nation ever brought forth to men, bidding to honour and forbidding dishonour and believing in God" (3:110 translation by Prof. Arberry).

We now quote the Old Testament and the Prophet Isaiah who foresaw this status and made the following prediction:

STATUS OF THE MUSLIMS IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

Gen. 21:18 says, “Arise, lift up the lad (Ishmael) and hold him in thine hand for I will make him a great nation.” (*This prediction was made when Ishmael was only a few months old. When he was thirteen years old, this assurance was again repeated and with greater emphasis.*)

“As for Ishmael I have heard thee (i.e. Abraham): Behold I have blessed him and will make him fruitful and will multiply him exceedingly: Twelve Princes¹ shall he beget and I will make him a great nation.” (Gen. 17:20) The Prophet Muhammad (SAW) was the descendant of Prince Kedar, the second son of the Prophet Ishmael. Makka’s ancient name was Mesa after Massa, the seventh son of Ishmael as also mentioned by Geoge Sale. Madina’s ancient name was Tema, probably after Tema, the tenth son of Ishmael.

The Muslim nation, being a tremendous historical fact, has to its credit a magnificent record of achievements in all spheres of life, spread over fourteen centuries of its emergence. Says Robert Briffault in his book, *The Making of Humanity*, “The Arabs introduced three inventions into Europe, each of which was to bring about a world-transforming revolution. The mariner’s compass which was to expand Europe to the ends of the earth; gunpowder which was to end the supremacy of the armoured knights, and paper which paved the way for the printing press.”

“It was under the influence of the Arabian and Moorish revival of culture, and not in the fifteenth century, that the real

1 Genesis. (25:13) Nebaijoth, the first born of Ishmael, Kedar, Adbeel, and Mibsam.

Genesis. (25:14) Mishma, Dumma and Massa.

Genesis. (25:15) Hadar, Tema, Jetur, Napish and Kedemah.

Ibid. (25:16) These are the sons of Ishmael, and these are their names by their towns and castles, twelve princes according to their nations.

Renaissance took place. (Muslim) Spain, not Italy, was the cradle of the rebirth of Europe.” p-188

"The history of the rebirth of Europe from barbarism is constantly being written without any reference whatsoever, to the influence of Arab civilisation except to mention, ‘the triumphs of the Cross over the Crescent’, and ‘the reclamation of Spain from Moorish Yoke’, the history of the Prince of Denmark without Hamlet. Dr. Osborn Taylor had even achieved the feat of writing two large volumes on the development of the mediaeval mind without betraying by a hint the existence of Islamic culture." p-189, (Pakistan edition)

“Science owes a great deal more to the Arab culture, it owes its existence.” p-191

“What we call science, arose in Europe as a result of a new spirit of inquiry, of new methods of investigation, observation, measurement, of the development of mathematics in a form unknown to the Greeks. That spirit and those methods were introduced into the European world by the Arabs.” p-191

“The Greeks systematised, generalised and theorised, but the patient ways of investigation, the accumulation of positive knowledge, the minute methods of science, detailed and prolonged observation, experimental enquiry, were altogether alien to the Greek temperament.” p-191

“Science is the most momentous contribution of Arab civilisation to the modern world.” p-202

“Theocracy in the East has not been intellectually tyrannical and coercive. We do not find there the obscurantism, the holding down of thought, the perpetual warfare against intellectual revolt, which is such a familiar feature of the European world with Greece and Rome at it back.” p-118

“Thus, shocking as the paradox may be to our traditional notions, it would probably only be strict truth to say that the Muhammadans have contributed at least as largely as the actual,

practical, concrete morality of Europe as many a more sublimated ethical doctrines.” p-309

“Lustre of Moorish elegance circulated unimpeded throughout the peninsula and the South of France.” p-209

Other independent sources say:

“It is to Musalmaan Science, to Musalmaan literature that Europe has been to a great measure indebted for its extrication from the darkness of the middle ages.” (Speeches of the Marquis of Duffrin in London, 1890, p-24.)

“And the right of the wife to seek divorce was recognised for the first time in the history of mankind by Islam!” (The Evolution of Marriage, M. Letourneau, p-247.)

“Studded with splendid cities, gracious mosques, and quiet universities where the wisdom of the ancient world was preserved and appreciated, the Muslim world offered a striking contrast to the Christian West, then sunk in the night of Dark Ages.” (A.M.L. Stoddard, Ph.D. The New World of Islam London, 1932, p-163.)

“The extinction of race consciousness as between Muslims is one of the outstanding achievements of Islam, and in the contemporary world there is, as it happens, a crying need for the propagation of this Islamic virtue.” (Prof. A. J. Toynbee, Civilisation on Trail 1948, p-205)

“If ever the great societies of the East and the West are to be replaced by cooperation, the mediation of Islam is an indispensable condition.” (H. A. R. Gibb, Whither Islam, London 1932, p-379.)

“By abolishing alcohol and prostitution he (Muhammad) made an undoubted reformation in the life of Arabia.” (Rev. R. Macgregor, York Shire Post, 8th June, 1935)

It was in 1881 that England passed the Married Women’s Act. Islam did better 1400 centuries earlier.

“More than most religions, Islam preaches (rather practices), the brotherhood of all races, colours and nations within its fold.” (James A. Michner, Islam, the Misunderstood Religion, Reader’s Digest, May, 1955, American ed., p-45.)

The brotherhood of Islam is no mere word. The Ghaznavide dynasty was founded by the slave Sabaktagin; the first King of Delhi, Qut-bud-Din and his four successors to the throne (e.g. Altamash, his daughter Razia Sultana, his son Nasiir-ud-Din, the saint-sovereign, and Ghias-ud-Din Balban), were slaves. (Muhammadanism - Dr. Leitner, p-17-18.)

THE EVER-LASTING CHARACTER OF THE QUR’AAN

Let us now return to the remaining features of the Farewell Address, “I am leaving behind a legacy for your guidance (i.e. the Qur’aan).”

The status of the Qur’aan as the lasting book of guidance is clearly substantiated by the verses of the Qur’aan itself, unlike the other revealed books which are silent on the issue of their role, their divine preservation and their scope of guidance. The like of the following verses are not found in other revealed books.

“This is the book from Allah wherein there is nothing doubtful; a guidance for people who are conscious of God.” (2:1) This opening verse of the Qur’aan is a feature in itself, the text of no other revealed book adopted this natural style of self-introduction or claimed to be from God. It is the Qur’aan alone which testifies to its origin.

“A message for all the people of the world.” (39:41)

“Nay, but it is a glorious Qur’aan inscribed on a well-guarded tablet.” (85:22)

“No falsehood can approach it from before or from behind it.” (41:42)

“Even if men and Jinn banded together to produce the like of this Qur’aan, they would never be able to produce though they backed each other.” (17:88)

“It is indeed a message of instruction.” (80:11)

“Exalted in dignity, kept pure and holy.” (80:14)

There are millions of Christians and Jews, living in the Middle East, whose mother tongue is Arabic. Some of them are editors of newspapers and standard magazines. Others have beautifully rendered the Qur’aan into English and authored well-known dictionaries and books (al-Munjid, al-Muhiit and Aqrab-ul-Mawarid), their scholarly works having been well received and accepted by Muslims with thanks.

These scholars are authorities on Arabic literature, but none in this vast world have ever attempted to accept the challenge of the Qur’aan in the last 1400 years, “They would never be able to produce the like of it.” (17:88)

An out-spoken critic of Islam, Sir William Muir, had to concede, “There is probably in the world no other book which has remained twelve centuries (now fourteen centuries) with so pure a text. This almost incredible purity in a book so widely scattered over the world and continually copied by people of different tongues and lands is without doubt mainly owing to Caliph Othman’s recension, and to the official promulgation and maintenance of his edition. We need not wonder then that with such means resorted to, perfect uniformity of the text has been maintained.” (Life of Mohammad by Sir W. Muir - p-XIII).¹

Finally, the Qur’aan asks, “In what other ‘Discourse’ will they then believe?” (77:50)

1 It was the decree of the All- Pervading God that had to prevail. Publishers of the King James version of the Scriptures probably had all the means which Caliph `Uthmaan had, but their unending and undisclosed periodical revisions have cast a shadow on their Biblical literature. Ed.

The above verse makes it abundantly clear that there will be no revealed book after the Qur'aan and as such no prophet either.

Now let us examine the opinions of independent and outstanding men of letters about the exalted status of the Qur'aan:

Professor Arberry in the preface to his classic, 'The Qur'aan Interpreted', confirms Pickthall's description of the Qur'aan as, "That inimitable symphony, the very sounds of which move men to tears and ecstasy."

"The Qur'aan's undeniable claim to rank among the greatest literary masterpieces of mankind", is also conceded. Professor Arberry further adds, "The Qur'aan is the ocean of prophetic eloquence and self-consistent to the highest degree. The message being of the eternal, is one message in eternity and has stored in it astonishing wealth and variety of rhetoric and rhythm."

In the last paragraph of his preface the learned professor writes, "The task of interpretation was undertaken not lightly, and carried to conclusion at a time of great personal distress, through which it comforted¹ and sustained the writer. I pray that this interpretation, poor echo though it is of the glorious original, may instruct, please and in some degree inspire those who read it."

Another esteemed and profound scholar says:

"That our whole strength lies in absolute submission to Him, what so ever He does to us; the thing He sends to us, even if death and worse than death, shall be good, shall be best, we resign ourselves to God." (Carlyle)

Goethe, that other bastion of insight and learning, (1749-1839) said, "If that be Islam, do we all not live in Islam?"

Professor Carlyle (1795-1881) in reply to Goethe's above summation of Islam said, "Yes, all of us that have any moral life,

1 Parkulete (meaning comforter or the holy Spirit) as mentioned in the Scriptures and St. John. (15:26)

we all live so. This is yet the highest wisdom that heaven has revealed to our earth. The word of such a man is a voice direct from Nature's own heart. Men do and must listen to that, as to nothing else; all else is wind in comparison."

The well-known historian, Gibbon, had to concede, "The creed of Muhammad is free from suspicion or ambiguity, and the Koran is a glorious testimony to the Unity of God. The Prophet of Makka rejected the worship of idols and men, of stars, of planets on the rational principle that whatever rises must set, that whatever is born must die, that whatever is corruptible must decay and perish." (p-665)

Gibbon further writes,

"The Latin church has not disdained to borrow from the Koran the immaculate conception of his virgin mother." (p-667)

George Bernard Shaw, as if in a moment of inspiration, said that Islam would spiritually conquer Europe in another 100 years.

The above observations by enlightened non-Muslim scholars had already been beautifully encompassed by the Qur'aan, "Again and again, the unbelievers will wish that they were Muslims." (15:2)

Besides the overwhelming internal and external evidence about the everlasting characteristics of the Qur'aan, the reader is reminded that of all the revealed Books, the Qur'aan alone has been preserved and available all over the world in its original language. All other Books are translations of translations which have needed periodical revisions even of proper nouns (For instance the wording 'The valley of Baca' (i.e. present day Makka) was given in Psalm 84 for eighteen centuries in all authorised and standard versions till 1984, when it was surreptitiously changed to 'baca bushes' in the revised version of the Bible (1984-N.Y. U.S.A). For fear of being ridiculed by the intellectuals of the world, for such monstrous, scholarly dishonesty, this daring alteration has nowhere been commented

upon by the editors of this 1984 edition, much less in the preface as is the general practice. However, Islam's resplendent supremacy over all religions does not and has never needed endorsement from any other source. References from scriptures and other sources are quoted for the easy understanding of those who are yet not Muslims but are seekers after truth. Furthermore such alterations only expose the uneasiness of a guilty conscience. Falsehood shall always be distinguished by the infallible forces of Truth, later, if not earlier, this being the law of Nature.

The Qur'aan is the only revealed book whose text has immaculately remained the same, unaltered in any detail, small or great, all over the world and through the centuries (not a comma less nor a semi-colon more). Even all the books of The Traditions and Jurisprudence have remained unaltered and so too their commentaries.

The Qur'aan is the only book so divinely designed that it can easily be, and has been through the ages, preserved in human memory by millions of Muslims, a unique feature in the entire history of religious literature to this day. Some of these learned ones have been those born blind and remaining illiterate, but they hold a high ranking among the *Huffaaz* (those who recite the Qur'aan from their memory).

The Muslims of Japan, China, Europe, America, Asia and Africa recite from their memory, the whole of the Qur'aan every year, before thousands of Muslims in the month of Ramzaan, besides doing so five times a day as did Zaid b. Thaabit, the compiler of the Qur'aan, and several other companions, in the life time of the holy Prophet.

These astonishing features lead us to conclude that the Qur'aan, being the last message, was so designed by the All-Knowing and All-Comprehending God, that it could easily be preserved in a believer's memory.¹ This easily verifiable fact is a

1 **The miraculous tenacity of a Believers' memory:**

standing miracle, happening in every town and city of the East and the West. This astonishing status of the Qur'aan was also foretold in Rev. - 14:6,

“I saw another angel in the midst of the heavens having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth and to every nation and kindred and people.” Exactly we find in the Qur'aan,

“The Qur'aan is a guidance for the people of the whole world.” (81:27) “Warn thy clan and thy nearest kin.” (26:214)

In St. John (16:13) Jesus says: “How be it, when he, the spirit of truth (as-Saadiq) is come, he will guide you unto all truth” and again, “But when the comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the spirit of truth, which proceedth from the Father he shall testify¹ of me.” (St. John - 15:26)

Muhammad (SAW) was given the title of as-Saadiq (the truthful) and al-Amiin (the faithful), by the Quraish of Makka, decades before his appointment as ‘the Prophet’ as also foretold by St. John (quoted above). The Qur'aan alone testifies to the prophethood of Jesus Christ in several verses, eulogises his characteristics and confirms his miraculous birth. Thus, the foregoing prediction of St. John can only apply to the last of the Prophets.

I attended dialogues between Dr. Shrosh, a high-priest from N. York and Mr. Ahmad Deedat, a well-known scholar of Scriptures from S. Africa, held in Albert Hall, London and Birmingham around 1986 - 89. Mr. Deedat quoted hundreds of verses from the New Testament exclusively from his memory, while Dr. Shrosh depended on two of his assistants, who turned page after page to trace out verses and under pressure misquoted several verses. Mr. Deedat, on his turn, quietly pointed out from his memory, those misquotes. Video tapes of these dialogues are available from the Islamic Propagation Centre, 418, Coventry Road - Birmingham, U.K.

- 1 Has any other religion, except Islam, officially testified to the immaculate birth and prophethood of Jesus Christ? The answer is, “No.”

Now let us return to Revelation 14:6 quoted above. Our interpretation of the prediction becomes irrefutable, when we find that Christians have all along remained unconcerned about this prediction (about the everlasting Gospel) and are still holding on to their Old and New Testaments, although they differ from continent to continent and from country to country. There is nothing on public record to show that they have taken any interest in the everlasting Gospel, predicted by St. John, as they know that the prediction cannot be interpreted to their advantage. In fact, that Gospel is non-existent in their sphere of religious activities. Its existence would have automatically abrogated all their previous Scriptures. In such a quandary, silence or a non-committal attitude is helpful for self-satisfaction.

In the light of St. John's prediction, it is in the best interests of the whole world to accept the Qur'aan as the ever-lasting Gospel, which factually it is, the pages of which are interspersed with myriads of gems of wisdom as stated above by independent analysts.

“Its teachings guarantee abiding peace of mind and soul to the reader in the holocaust of an unruly world and offer practical solutions to the sons and daughters of Adam of all their social, economic and political problems. They not only lay the foundation of international brotherhood and concord, but also build its structure. Non-acceptance of these teachings will only plunge the world into a quagmire of Aids, drugs, racial discrimination, soaring crime rates, day-light robberies and give birth to the demon of recession which remains a permanent danger-spot on the economic horizon of the globe.

There is still time to think and believe that all else except Islam is wind. There is still time to believe in the absolute oneness of Allah, Lord of the whole creation and the holy Prophet, designated by Him as the last of the Prophets, whose voice is a

voice direct from Nature's own heart; men do and must listen to that, as to nothing else; all else is wind in comparison¹.

THE ELEVENTH YEAR OF HIJRA - EVENTS

This is the year in which the Apostle of Allah completed his mission according to His will, and returned from the mortal world to His Creator. Six months earlier the following words were revealed to the holy Prophet, "When Allah's Help and Victory comes, and you see men entering the religion of Allah in throngs, then hymn the praises of your Lord and seek His forgiveness for indeed He is oft-returning unto men (to show Mercy)." (Sura 110.) From this Revelation the Prophet understood that the hour of return to his Creator was near at hand.

In the last month of Ramzaan of his life and in the 10th year A.H., the holy Prophet retreated for twenty days instead of his usual practice of ten days `Itikaf (secluded meditation in a mosque for remembrance of the God and prayers; an observance followed to this day by believers). The reason for doubling the period of `Itikaf was confided to his dear daughter, Faatima Zahra, "I am nearer my death," the holy Prophet foretold. During the famous homily at the last pilgrimage (Hajja-tul-Wida) the Prophet had let it be known to his audience that he would soon be bidding farewell to this world.

The Prophet began to prepare for his final journey to the eternal life, from the month of Safar, 11 A.H. He went to the graveyard of Uhad and offered prayers for the martyrs of the battle. On his return he addressed the believers from the pulpit (minbar) of the Masjid-e-Nabvi, "O my men, I am departing ahead of you. And I shall bear your witness. By Allah! I can perceive 'al-Hawd' the fountain of al-Kawthar in Paradise (Qur'aan 108:1). I have been granted keys to the treasures of various countries. I do not fear that you shall turn polytheists when I am

1 Hero and Hero-worship by Prof. Thomas Carlyle. Ed.

not there; but I am afraid that you shall vie with one another in forging ahead.”

He visited the graveyard (Jannat-al-Baqi`) one midnight and prayed for those who lay there in peace. To the departed souls, he said, “I am following you.” It was as if he wished to delight them with the news that he would be joining them soon.

One day he addressed the believers, “Good tidings be to you all! O Muslims! May Allah enfold you in Mercy! May He hearten you! May you get providence from Him! May He grant you peace and tranquillity! It is my testament that you be mindful of Allah. May He alone be your Lord and may you be fearful of Him only! To be a ‘warner’ was my prophetic mission. Be careful and do not be overbearing, haughty and selfish in God’s towns and among (God’s) dwellers... Allah has commanded you and I all in the following words: And the last abode has been assigned for those who do not exult themselves in the earth towards excess, nor towards mischief. And a good end is for those who sustain mindfulness to Allah (who are the God-fearing).” (Qur’aan 28:83)

The Prophet then recited this verse, “Is there not in hell a lodging for the arrogant?”¹ Finally he said, “Salaam (peace) be upon you and upon all those who shall (in the future) declare allegiance to me through their faith in Islam.”

1 (Qur’aan 39:60), Zurqani - V.8. Waahidy from Abi Mas`ud.

5. THE BEGINNING OF THE PROPHET'S ILLNESS

On Monday, the 29th of Safar, the Prophet suffered from a headache and high fever, on his way back from a burial. Abu Sa'id-al-Khudri reported that the kerchief around his head and the body of the Prophet were warm. Al-Khudri showed his concern. "The Prophets suffer the most, hence they excel in reaping its reward", replied the Prophet. The Prophet continued to lead prayers for eleven days despite his illness, extending over a period of thirteen to fourteen days.

THE LAST WEEK

The holy Prophet spent the last week of his life in the hut of his wife, Sayyida `A'aisha. She reported that during his previous illness the Prophet had invoked the healer by reciting the following words and then breathing out on his hands and over his body, "O Lord of mankind, put down the danger and give me health. You are the only Healer. That healing is real which You confer. Grant me perfect health." `A'aisha added that she recited the above words and when she wanted to breathe on to his hands and over his body, the Prophet withdrew his hands and instead uttered these words, "Salvation; O Lord God. I am closest to my highest Benefactor."¹

FIVE DAYS BEFORE

It was Wednesday. The Prophet took a bath in water drawn from seven different wells. He felt relaxed after the bath and rested for some time. Later, he gave a brief address in his mosque, "There were people before you, who turned the grave-sites of their Prophets and saints into places of worship.² You shall not do that. Do not convert my grave into a deity. Listen; God's great wrath

1 Bukhaari - `Abdullah b. `Utba b. Mas`ud. (2:639)

2 Sahihain from `Urwa from `A'aisha.

fell upon those people who turned tombs into temples. Take to heart this unforgivable instruction. May God curse those people who converted graves of their Prophets into a deity.¹ O Lord! Be my witness. O Lord! Be my witness.”

The time for the next prayer approached. He led the prayer and stepped up to the pulpit (*minbar*) to address the faithful for the last time². Glorifying and eulogising the Lord, he said, “I leave my will unto you. Be good to the Helpers (the Ansaar). They have adorned me like a dress. They have been to me like a traveller’s provisions. They have yet to be paid for their services and rights. Admire and appreciate those of the Ansaar (people of Madina), who do good and forgive³ those of them who are remiss.”

He then asked, “Do I owe anything to anybody?” A person claimed three Dirhams, which he had paid on the behest of the Prophet to a needy person. The amount claimed was paid off. The Prophet concluded, “A person was offered a choice of all the blessings and bounties of this world or the World Hereafter. He chose the latter.”

Abu Bakr Siddiq, perceiving the esoteric meaning of this sentence, responded, “Would that we might lay down at your feet, our parents, our lives, and all our possessions?”⁴

FOUR DAYS BEFORE

It was Thursday. The Prophet's illness took a serious turn. He intimated to those present that he wished to give written instructions. Someone remarked that the Prophet was bearing the pains of illness, and that the Qur’aan was with them for their total guidance. Some others agreed with the Prophet and asked for writing material. Arguments multiplied and as the noise grew, the

1 Muwatta - from `Ata b. Yassar.

2 Zurqani - V.8.

3 Ibid.

4 Sahihain from Abu Sa`id Hazri.

Prophet said that they should all withdraw.¹ Later, on that day, the Prophet declared his will:

1. The Jews be settled beyond the sacred limits of the soil of Arabia (i.e. Makka and Madina).
2. The protocol of warm reception and hospitality shown till now to the incoming deputations be maintained.
3. The status of the Qur'aan (as a guide for all eternity be clearly understood) as reported by `Abdullah b. Abi Aufi.

The Prophet led all the prayers till maghrib (sunset). The verses recited in the prayer were from Sura Al-Mursalaat. The last verse of the Chapter is, "In what other Discourse after this Qur'aan, will they then believe?"² (77:50) This was clearly a parting message to the Umma that there would be no prophet or revealed Book after him. In essence, the glorious Qur'aan was to be the last of the revealed Books and the Prophet, to be the last of the Prophets.

The Prophet determined to go to the mosque for prayer on three occasions but while settling himself for ablution (Wuzu), fainted several times. He, therefore, instructed Abu Bakr to lead the prayer. Thereafter, Abu Bakr led seventeen prayers in the lifetime of the Prophet.³ With a heavy heart, Abu Bakr came forward to fulfill the Prophet's wish, and the Companions sobbing behind him. Their sobs reached the Prophet's ears. By that time the Prophet had somewhat recovered from his weakness. He stepped out towards the mosque, sitting on the left side of Abu Bakr and led the prayer. After the prayer, he addressed the gathering, "O you Muslims; I entrust you to the care, and protection of Allah. He will guard those of you, who submit sincerely to His commands and are mindful of Him in all walks of

1 Bukhaari from `Ubaidullah b. `Abdullah from Ibn `Abbaas.

2 Bukhaari from Sulaimaan, from Sa'id from Jaabir from Ibn `Abbaas. (1:382)

3 Ibid - from Umm-al-Fazal. (chapter Illness of the Prophet) (2:637)

life. I shall soon be bidding farewell to this world. May God be your Guide.”

TWO DAYS BEFORE

It was Saturday. The mid-day prayer (Zuhr) was being led by Abu Bakr when, resting on the shoulders of `Ali and his uncle `Abbaas, the holy Prophet entered the mosque as if to join the prayer. Abu Bakr vacated his position. The Prophet signalled that he should continue to lead and himself sat beside Abu Bakr, who followed his Imaam, the Prophet, whereas the congregation in rows behind, followed the voice-commands (Takbirat) of Abu Bakr Siddiq.¹

THE DAY BEFORE

On Sunday, all his slaves were manumitted. In some traditions the number of slaves is reported to be forty. The holy Prophet possessed seven Dinars in cash, which were given in alms. On that evening - the last night of the Prophet's life, Sayyida `A`aisha Siddiqa had to borrow oil from a neighbour. The Prophet bequeathed his personal arms to his companions.² His chain-armour was lying mortgaged³ with a Jew in lieu of thirty *sau* of oats (one *sau* being the equivalent of two kilos). Monday was the last day of his life. At the time of Fajr prayer, the Prophet had removed that curtain which separated, his wife, `A`aisha's quarters from the mosque. The congregation was disciplined for prayer. The Prophet watched them praying. Their total absorption was a testimony and tribute to the excellent training he had given them. The scene caused a glow on his countenance, and a smile of joyous satisfaction. His face took on the hue of title page of the holy Qur'aan.⁴

1 Sahihain from `Ubaidulla b. `Abdullah. (1:95)

2 Bukhaari from `Amr b. al-Harith b/o Umm-ul-Mu`minin Juwairiya.

3 Ibid from Aswad from `A`aisha.

4 The title page then used to bear a golden colour. Sahihain from Anas.

The companions, at the near presence of the Prophet, moved their gaze towards his face. Abu Bakr assumed that the Prophet would lead the prayer, so moved as if to give up his position. However, the Prophet signalled him to carry on,¹ and he instead joined the prayer as one of the congregation under the Imaamate (leader of prayer), of Abu Bakr.² Another time of Salaat (prayer) was not destined for him.

After the prayer, the all-affectionate Prophet sent for his daughter, Faatima. She was greatly upset by the grave condition of her father. The Prophet consoled her saying, "Your father shall never know pain after this day." The Prophet then uttered something in her ear to which she started crying. He whispered again causing her to smile. Later, she explained that her affectionate father confided in her, that he would soon be leaving the mortal world - but from among the family (*Ahle-Ba`it*), she would be the first to join him. She died six months later. Bukhaari from `Urwa, from `A`aisha.

Later in the day, the Prophet gave her glad tidings of her entitlement to be the leader of women of the world³ (Sayyida-tun-Nisa-ul-`Aalamiin). The Prophet then sent for his grandsons, Hasan and Husain. He kissed them and willed the believers to hold them in veneration.⁴

It was now the turn of his wives, followed by `Ali Murtaza, to avail of the Prophet's advice. `Ali cushioned his head in his lap, while listening to the holy Prophet. `Ali was so close that he could feel on his face the moisture of the Prophet's lips.⁵ The Prophet advised him to be kind and considerate to slave-servants, bearing

1 Bukhaari from Anas - Chapter - Last illness of the Prophet.

2 Rasail Arkan Arb`a. Maulana Bahr-ul-`Aluum. This is clearly given in all editions of the book, published till 1930, i.e. during the life time of the author. It seems the calligraphist (*Katib*) missed these two lines in later editions. Ed.

3 Bukhaari from `A`aisha. (2:638)

4 Mudaraj-al-Nabuvat.

5 Zurqani from Ibn Sa`d.

in mind fear of Allah, to give them good food and clothes and to exercise patience and forgiveness in all matters.

Finally the Prophet uttered these words, “Take care of your prayers and those that your right possess¹ i.e. (your wives) and slaves.” They be treated with kindness. `A`aisha said, “It was the last advice given by the Prophet to his Umma and he repeated it thrice.”

THE LAST MOMENTS

The Prophet was breathing his last. Sitting behind him, `A`aisha Siddiqah provided him with support. A cup of water was by his bedside. The Prophet would wet his hand and pat his face. His face would now turn red, and then pale. He spoke these words, “There is no God but Allah; indeed there are pangs in death.”²

Then `Abdul Rahmaan, son of Abu Bakr Siddiq, entered, holding a freshly plucked miswak (a tender branch of a certain tree used to brush teeth and gums). The Prophet longingly looked at it. `A`aisha Siddiqah chewed the bark to soften the rind and gave it to the Prophet. He brushed his teeth more thoroughly than ever before. Then he raised his hand uttering his last words:

“Allah is the Most Exalted Friend.”

As his hand came slowly down, his eyes were raised...³

It was Monday, the 13th of Rabi` I, 11 A.H.⁴ - the 8th June, 632 A.D., in the forenoon,⁵ when the holiest of all souls ascended from his chaste body to the ‘blessed companionship on high’. He was 63 years and 5 days old, according to the lunar calendar, and 61 years and 51 days according to the solar calendar. *“Indeed, we*

1 Bukhaari from Anas. (2:637)

2 Bukhaari. (2:641)

3 (2:640)

4 (2:641) and ‘The History of the Saracens’ by Sir Amir `Ali.

5 Abul Fida.

belong to Allah, And to Him we are returning.” (Qur’aan 2:156)
“So then if you die, will they live ever after?” (Qur’aan 21:34)

Sayyida Faatima Zahra on knowing the tragic news of her father, said, “My dear father has accepted the call to the Truth, and chosen his abode in the lofty Heaven. Who will convey the sad news to Gabriel, the Archangel, that the era of prophethood has finally closed, and he would no longer be required to deliver revelations?” She added, “O Lord, unite the soul of Faatima with the soul of Muhammad (SAW). O Lord, grant to me the pleasure of perceiving the holy Prophet (in dreams)! O Lord, bestow upon me Thy reward in lieu of this hour of grief. O Lord, do not deprive me of the Prophet’s intercession on the Day of Judgement!”

‘A’isha Tayyiba chose these words for her requiem:

"The Prophet who chose meekness to might - who preferred humility to arrogance - the defender of faith, who never had a sleep of comfort in his anxiety for the remission of sins of his followers - who was steadfast in his fight with the desires of the self - he, who would not so much as wink in favour at the forbidden - who would never shut the door of charity and free-giving - whose enlightened conscience was never defiled by the ill-will and rancour of his enemies - whose gem-like teeth were broken by a hurled stone, and whose forehead, sparkling with light, was bruised - he, who had not tasted wheaten bread consecutively for two days - he has been taken away today from this world to his Lord.¹ "

The news of the death of the last of the Prophets left most of the companions dumbstruck. Some behaved wildly in their grief. Others simply stood motionless. `Umar Faaruq refused to believe in the news and threatened those who believed it. He said, “By

1 The holy Prophet remained in this world for twenty two thousand three hundred and thirty days and six hours (22330 days and six hours). The last six hours are part of the thirty first day. He bore his ‘Mission’ for eight thousand, one hundred and fifty-five days (8155 days).

God, the Prophet will return as Moses returned forty days after his alleged death.”¹

Abu Bakr Siddiq looked at the holy body, touched the lips of the Prophet, kissed his forehead, and with tears in his eyes, said, “You are dearer than my father and mother! By God! A second death shall not overtake you. You had to taste a death that was written in destiny.”² Abu Bakr then hastened to Masjid-e-Nabwi. After the formal announce-ment of the holy Prophet’s death, he said, “Be it known! If any of you did worship Muhammad - Lo! Muhammad has died. For those of you who worshipped the Lord Allah, He is the Eternal, the Ever-living.” Abu Bakr quoted, “*Muhammad (SAW) is none else but a Messenger. Messengers have passed before him. If he were to die or be a martyr, would you go back and turn on your heels.*³ *He who turns, would not harm Allah and Allah will reward the grateful.*” (3:144)⁴

BATHING AND FUNERAL OF THE HOLY PROPHET

While bathing the body of the Prophet, `Ali Murtaza spoke these words, “May I sacrifice my mother and father for you! Your death has caused a loss that no other death could. It has meant the termination of prophethood, prophecy, and the revelation from the High Lord. Your death is the greatest tragedy. No other shock shall chill the warmth of human hearts. The loss is heart-rending and universal, shared by all alike. Had you not ordained patience and forbidden lamentations, we would have bathed you in our tears. Even that would not have consoled the grief or softened the agony. Your death is the shock of our life - unforgettable and

1 II - G - p-683. Ed.

2 Bukhaari from Ibn `Abbaas (illness of the Prophet).

3 Ibid from Abi Saima from `A`aisha.

4 When `Umar heard these verses, he was dumbfounded. His legs would not bear and he fell to the ground. (II - G - p-683). Ed.

overwhelming. My parents be your ransom! Mention us before thy Lord! And do remember us, noblest of men!”¹

The Prophet’s body was shrouded in three pieces of cloth² and was not moved from the place where he had died. The prayer was offered in turns; first by the members of the Prophet’s family, followed by the Emigrants, the Helpers, men, women and children. There was no *Imaam* in these prayers.

The *hujrah* (chamber of `A`aisha Tayyiba where the holy Prophet died and was buried) was not spacious. Only ten³ people could be accommodated at one time. There was a long stream of people to pay homage and this queue continued throughout the day and the night. Hence the burial took place thirty-two hours after he was taken by the Creator, on the night of Wednesday, the 14th of the Hijra.⁴

“*Verily we belong to Allah, and verily to Him we shall return.*” (Qur’aan 2:156)

BENEDICTORY SALUTATION

The last homage to the holy Prophet was paid by his companions with these words, “*Allah and His angels shower blessings on the Prophet. O believers you are also ordained to offer to him your greetings and earnest salutations worthy of him.*” (Qur’aan 33:56)

And: "On your command, O God, we are present here to solicit your most gracious and choicest blessings to be showered

1 Nahij-al-Balagha - p-250 (Printed in 1267 A.H. Tabrez (Iran).

2 Imaam Shafa`i’s book, al-Umm (4:7) and Imaam Nudi’s commentary of Sahih Muslim.

3 The proposal to offer burial prayer by turns was made by Abu Bakr Siddiq and seconded by `Ali Murtaza.

4 Shaikh Muhammad b. Yaqub’s al-Usul-Lul-Kafi and Mulla Baqar’s Hayat-al-Qalub - Vol-II, chapter 64th.

upon Muhammad b. `Abdullah, the Prophet and the Messenger; the Seal and leader of the Prophets, solace of the pious, an Observer over mankind and Harbinger of good news, an inspired Preacher, and a radiant Lighthouse, emitting guidance by Your commands. And may the prayers and greetings of pre-eminent Angels and Prophets and the righteous be also incorporated in our solicitations.^{1"}

GLIMPSES INTO HIS CHARACTERISTICS

The events in the life of the Prophet Muhammad (SAW) so far recorded in this book testify briefly to the formidable difficulties he had to overcome, in order to give utterance to his mission, preach the faith and protect the believers.

Arabia was a country where there was no organised rule of law or government. The Arabs had taken to a life where fierce might was right. To offer, in such a culture, an invitation to the highest morality and spirituality was to invite instant repudiation or relentless opposition from the tribes. That such an invitation was made and sustained in spite of the avowed hostility of thousands, who remained united for two decades in an armed and planned struggle, involving the sacrifice of men and material was a sure sign that it could only have been possible with Divine succour and support. With that support, the Prophet was able to change the course of history and the map of the world.

The events so far recorded provide a glimpse of the Prophet's sublime qualities of character and conduct, which shine forth like gold in the vast regions of sand. The first phase, in Makka, of the Prophet's mission is a tale of provocations and persecutions of himself and his followers, of abuse and jeering, torment and torture, exclusion and siege. In the second phase beginning with his migration to Madina, he found himself to be a Chief. During these two phases of poverty and power, quite

1 Zurqani. (8:293) - printed in 1328 H, Azharya Press - Egypt.

opposite to each other, the Prophet remained humble and honourable, soft-spoken, kindly, courteous and considerate as ever.¹

Persecutions did not dishearten him nor power sway his judgement or his conduct. No man before or since has ever been endowed with a personality so perfectly comprehensive and so perfectly balanced.² Only a Prophet chosen by God could reveal such perfect conduct. Only a person possessed and patronised by Divine power could acquit himself so well in such a variety of situations. Worldly temptations did not and could not ever distract him, from his reformatory and missionary duties. The events of the Prophet's personal and public life form a glorious precedent to be followed by all nations and communities in all walks of life.

The 'nature of Muhammad' has become the criterion by which administrators, statesmen, businessmen, scholars, reformers and saints must judge their own journey. They must remind themselves of the Prophet's conduct, manners, morals, principles and practices in all given situations of life.³

1 In Poverty or Power - he didn't Change

"On the whole, the wonder to me is how much, but how little, under different circumstances, Muhammad differed - from himself."

"In the shepherd of the desert, in the Syrian trader, in the solitude of Mount Hira, in the reformer in the minority of one, in the exile of Madina, in the acknowledged conqueror, in the equal of the Persian Chosroes and the Greek Heracles, we can still trace a substantial unity."

Rev. Bosworth Smith, Muhammad and Muhammadanism - p-93.

2 "Perseverance under oppression, stiff-necked when attacked, adherence to truth when settling affairs, to be forgiving when endowed with power and prestige, are such rare qualities which have not been found in one man." The Making of Humanity - Richard Briffault.

3 "The spectacular success of Muhammad in unifying the tribes under the worship of the one God, Allah, and in perpetuating his own name as Allah's Prophet, can hardly fail to excite both wonder and admiration. The dire poverty which he endured so courageously is well-known. His dwelling was a hut with a minimum of furniture." "This was a man who could inspire his followers with zeal, and love for himself. He was calm in danger, and in the cave of Thaur during his flight to Madina assured Abu Bakr 'that God was

In this chapter, we shall examine the characteristics of the holy Prophet from texts in the Qur'aan and Hadith. "Educate me, O Lord, and tutor me well."

There shall be no mention in this chapter of the marvellous or miraculous qualities that obtain to Sayyidina Muhammad (SAW), nor of his special attributes which are inimitable. Here we shall record only those incidents of everyday life which may be adopted as a noble example by any earth-bound novice in the Faith. *"Verily in the life of the messenger of Allah, you have a glorious exemplar and a beautiful pattern of conduct."* (Qur'aan 33:21)

The Prophet Muhammad (SAW) was unlettered, being unable to read or write. He never even had the company of a scholar until the advent of his prophecy. In his cultural environment, no man could attain prestige or a place of honour in his tribal society until he had mastered or learnt archery, equestrian skills or become a rhetorician, a panegyrist, or a genealogist. The Prophet did not show any vocational interest in any of these arts.

"Have we not enlightened your bosom." (Qur'aan 94:1)

VIEWSON THE HOLY PROPHET'S CHARACTERISTICS

We now quote independent views of analysts of the rare characteristics and unique achievements of the Prophet:

"His skin was clear and soft, his complexion red and white. His hands were as 'silk and stain' even as those of a woman. His

with them' (9:40). He showed a Spartan endurance of utter poverty, which he shared with his converts in Madina. By abolishing alcohol and prostitution he made an undoubted reformation in the life of Arabia." Rev. R. Magregor, Yorkshire Post (Leeds - U.K.) 8th June, 1935.

step was quick and elastic, yet firm as that of one who steps 'from a high to a low place'. In turning his face, he would also turn his whole body. His whole gait and presence was dignified and imposing. His countenance was mild and pensive. His laugh was rarely more than a smile."

"In his habits he was extremely simple, although he bestowed great care on his person. His eating and drinking, his dress and his furniture retained, even when he had reached the fullness of power, their almost primitive nature. The only luxuries he indulged in were arms, which he highly prized, and a pair of yellow boots, a present from the Negus of Abyssinia. Perfumes, however, he liked passionately, being most sensitive to smells. Strong drink he abhorred."

"He was gifted with mighty powers of imagination, elevation of mind, delicacy and refinement of feeling. 'He is more modest than a virgin behind her curtain', it was said of him. He was most indulgent to his inferior, and would never allow his little page to be scolded whatever he did. 'Ten years', said Anas, his servant, 'I was about the Prophet, and he never said as much as 'Uff' to me.' He was very affectionate towards his family."

"His readiness to undergo persecutions for his beliefs, the high moral character of the men who believed in him and the greatness of his ultimate achievement - all argue his fundamental integrity." W. Montgomery Watt, 'Mohammad at Mecca'. (Oxford - 1953 - p-52)

**ALLAH EXALTED HIS NAME AND MULTIPLIED HIS
FAME¹ (Qur'aan 94:3)**

“He never struck anyone in his life. The worst expression he ever made use of in conversation was, ‘What has come to him? May his forehead be darkened with mud!’ When asked to curse someone, he replied, ‘I have not been sent to curse, but to be a mercy to mankind.’ He visited the sick, followed any bier he met, accepted the invitation of a slave to dinner, mended his own clothes, milked the goats, and waited upon himself”, relates summarily another tradition. He never first withdrew his hand out of another man’s palm and turned not before the other hand turned.”

“He was the most faithful protector of those he protected, the sweetest and most agreeable in conversation. Those who saw him were suddenly filled with reverence; those who came near him loved him; those who described him would say, ‘I have never seen his like either before or after.’ He was of great taciturnity, but when he spoke it was with emphasis and deliberation, and no one could forget what he said.”

“He would kindle the fire, sweep the floor, and milk the goats himself. Indeed, outside the Prophet’s house was a bench or gallery, on which were always to be found a number of poor, who

1 Name Exalted and Dignity Raised

The verse, “We have exalted thy name” (94:3) is a living prediction given in the Qur’aan about the holy Prophet, made at a time when the Prophet and all his followers were being humiliated, derided, persecuted and even killed. As such, the prediction must have struck the unbelievers as ridiculous. But history has established its correctness. There is not a single moment day or night, when his name is not exalted somewhere in the far-flung corners of the world, this being particularly so in the precincts of the Ka`ba, and the mosque at Madina.

lived entirely upon his generosity, and were hence called ‘the people of the bench.’ His ordinary food was dates and water, or barley bread; milk and honey were luxuries of which he was fond, but which he rarely allowed himself. The fare of the desert seemed most congenial to him, even when he was sovereign of Arabia.” Table Talks by Stanely Lane Poole, p-27-29

“A little more than a year he was actually the spiritual, nominal and temporal ruler of Madina, with his hands on the lever that was to shake the world.” (J. Austin, Muhammad, the Prophet of Allah, p-47)

“Muhammad himself did not make any claim to infallibility. On one occasion he had a revelation censuring him severely for having turned away from a beggar (80:1-2) in order to speak to an illustrious man of the commonwealth, and he published this revelation, the very last thing which he would have done had he been an impostor, as ignorant Christians call the great Arab.” (G. W. Leitner, L.L.D, M.A., Ph.D., D.O.L. *Muhammadanism*, Lahore, 1893, p-4)

“To thoroughly comprehend the spirit of Mohammad or the soul of Islam, the student himself must at the outset recognise that Mohammad was no mere spiritual pedlar, no vulgar time serving vagrant, but one of the most profoundly sincere and earnest spirits of any age or epoch. A man not only great, but one of the greatest (i.e. truest) men that humanity has ever produced. Great, not simply as well as a spiritual builder who constructed a great nation, a greater empire, and more even than all three, a still great Faith, true, moreover, because he was true to himself, his people, and above all to his God. Recognising this, we will thus acknowledge that Islam is a profound and true cult, which strives to uplift its votaries from the depths of human darkness upwards into the higher realm of Light and Truth.” (Major Arthur Glyn Leonard, *Islam - Her Moral and Spiritual Value*, London, 1927, p-20-21)

“It is greatly to his (Muhammad’s) praise that on this occasion (conquest of Mecca), when his resentment for ill-usage in the past might naturally have incited him to revenge, he restrained his army from all shedding of blood, and showed every sign of humility and thanksgiving to Allah for His goodness... Ten or twelve men who had on a former occasion shown a barbarous spirit were proscribed, and of them four were put to death, but this must be considered exceedingly humane, in comparison with the acts of other conquerors; in comparison, for example, with the cruelty of the Crusaders, who, in 1099, put seventy thousand Muslims - men, women and helpless children, to death when Jerusalem fell into their hands; or with that of the English army, also fighting under the Cross, which in the year of grace 1874 burned an African capital, in its war on the Gold Coast. Muhammad’s victory was in very truth one of religion and not of politics; he rejected every token of personal homage, and declined all regal authority; and when the haughty chiefs of the Koreishites appeared before him he asked, ‘What can you expect at my hands?’ ‘Mercy O generous brother.’ ‘Be it so; you are free’, he exclaimed.” Arthur Gilman, *The Saracens*, London. (p-184-185)

MUHAMMAD (SAW) - A SIMPLE, SINCERE AND HUMANE PERSON

“I wanted to know the best of the life of one who holds today undisputed sway over the hearts of millions of mankind... I became more than ever convinced that it was not the sword that won a place for Islam in those days in the scheme of life. It was the rigid simplicity, the utter self-effacement of the Prophet, the scrupulous regards for pledges, his intense devotion to his friends and followers, his intrepidity, his fearlessness, his absolute trust in God and in his own mission. These and not the sword carried everything before them and surmounted every obstacle.”

"When I closed the second volume of the Prophets biography, I was sorry there was not more for me to read of that

great life." Quoted by 'The Light', Lahore - M.K. Gandhi - Young India, 16th Sept, 1924.

VIEWS OF MUSLIM SCHOLARS ON THE HOLY PROPHET

(Hujja-tul-Islam) Imaam-al-Ghazaali¹ writes,

“The holy Prophet would lay out fodder for his cattle, tie up the camels, sweep the house, and milk his goats. He would let his servants eat by his side, and would rather assist them in their chores than not. He would do all shopping himself, carrying his bag all the way. He would be the first to greet the young or the old. He would walk hand in hand with anyone who wished to go alongside. He would not discriminate between a master and a servant, and a white Turk and a black negro. He would keep to the same dress for the morning and the evening. He would accept an invitation to meals by anyone, be he poor or rich, and would approve whatever food was served unto him. He would not preserve the left-over from the supper for the next morning, nor from the morning meals for the evening. He was good natured, kind-hearted, open-minded. He bore a pleasant face and avoided laughter. He would be sober as if sad but would not be sharp-worded. He was hospitable but not ostentatious. He was charitable and generous but not a spendthrift. He was a mercy to all beings. None of his needs were dependent on anyone else so he was free of greed. He would keep his gaze low (by bending his head).”²

(Hakim-ul-Ummat) Shah Wali-Ullah says,

“Anyone who personally appeared unto the holy Prophet would be overawed. And anyone who would sit besides him would be his devotee.”³

1 “According to Macdonald, al-Ghazaali is the equal of Augustine in the philosophical and theological disciplines.” Development of Muslim Theology, Jurisprudence, London. 1903, p-215.

2 Keymeiya - Ay Sa`dat. (Ghazaali - died 505-H)

3 A saying of `Ali Murtaza.

He was very considerate to his family and servants. Anas (may Allah be pleased with him) served the holy Prophet for ten long years and was never questioned by his master. He never used indecent or abusive words. He never cursed. He would be patience itself, when others were contumacious. He was a ‘mercy to God’s creatures’. None ever suffered by his hands nor by his words. He would always be attentive to the moral improvement of his family and his following. He would discern and appreciate the worth in every man and every thing. He would always be looking forward for justice to prevail on earth.¹

Imaam Bukhaari in his celebrated Sahih writes,

“He was neither ill-tempered nor harsh-worded and would never shout. He would not pay back in the same coin if he was ill-treated. He would forgive the repentant and bless the sinner. His mission was to root out all adulterations in faith and society. His teachings provide eyes to the blind, ears to the deaf, and lift the veils from darkened souls. The holy Prophet possessed all that was good; he was endowed with qualities of superb excellence. Sakina (Shechina - tranquility) was his apparel, goodness his practice, mindfulness to Allah his conscience, wisdom his speech, and justice² his nature. His Shariat (creed and jurisprudence) is wholesome truth,³ his notion is submission to God, and his leadership pure guidance. He dispelled all darkness, uplifted the forsaken and forgotten and bestowed titles on the lowly. He converted scarcity unto bounty and replaced poverty by plenty.”

“The day of Muhammad’s greatest triumph over his enemies was also the day of his greatest victory over himself. He freely forgave the Kuraysh all the years of sorrow and cruel scorn in

1 Hujjat-Allah al-Baligha, by Shah Wali-Ullah, Delhi - p-385.

2 Behold my servant - *Abad*, whom I uphold; mine elect, (i.e. Mustafa), in whom my soul delights. I have put my spirit upon him; he shall bring forth judgement to the Gentiles. (Isaiah 42:1)

3 "The Muhammadan Law is interwoven with a system of the Wisest, the most learned and the most enlightened jurisprudence that ever existed in the world." Edmund Burke. Impeachment of Lord Warren Hasting, second viceroy of India. (1732 - 1818)

which they had inflicted him and gave an amnesty to the whole population of Makka.” Stanely Lane Poole, Table Talks, London. p-46.

PART - III

- 1. WHAT THE PROPHET PREACHED, PRACTISED AND APPROVED**
- 2. CHARACTERISTICS OF THE PROPHET MUHAMMAD (SAW)**
- 3. THE QUR'AAN – ITS COMPILATION, ITS DIVINITY AND SELECTED VERSES**

1. WHAT THE PROPHET PREACHED, PRACTISED AND APPROVED

This chapter deals with the characteristics, disposition and nature of the Prophet in the light of his traditions. All his acts, utterances and instructions to his immediate companions and all practices approved by him, were recorded after their careful scrutiny by God-fearing research scholars of unimpeachable integrity,¹ and the collection is called 'traditions of the Prophet' (Ahadith Nabvi).

How, when and by whom were these traditions collected, preserved, scrutinised, and written down? This information is provided to the reader from an independent source which throws full light on all the issues listed above.

HADITH AND SUNNA

Prof. James Robson, Head of the Department of Arabic, Manchester University (U.K.) writes:

"Hadith (literally) means a report of what happened, whereas *Sunna* means a practice. Within the community of Islam, these came to be applied to matters relating to the Prophet and the customs (practises) followed by him and his immediate followers. Records were collected telling what the Prophet said and did, and his reaction to things said or done in his presence.

Briefly, the *Sunna* is what was practised, and the *Hadith* is the record of what was practised.

Each *Hadith* was prefaced by a chain of authorities (*Isnad*) through whom it was transmitted. In this way, the authors of these

1 "The traditional sayings of the Prophet known as 'Hadis' (Hadith) have been handed down from mouth to mouth with the strictest regard to genealogical continuity." (Sir E. D. Ross, Ph.D.) Foreword to Sale's translation of the Qur'aan. p-1 (Warner Bros. - London).

works provided not merely the information they had compiled about the Prophet but also its documentation. Every Hadith must have an Isnad (i.e. names of the narrators of the Hadith), as well as the text. p-i

The one who deserves most credit for establishing traditions as a basis of Islam was Shafa`i (150-204 A.H.). The great exponent of jurisprudence and the tradition traced back to the Prophet came to be recognised as a basis of Islam second in importance to the Qur'aan. p-ii

Shafa`i's argument for the high status of tradition was to quote the Qur'aanic phrase, "The Book and Wisdom"¹ (2:151), (3:164), (4:113), (62:2). The tradition is not merely a record of what Muhammad (SAW) said or did but is a record of his words and deeds, which were subject to Divine guidance.

The doctrine holds that the Qur'aan is the eternal, uncreated word of God, which is not subject to any human adaptation of wording. In the Qur'aan, Muhammad (SAW) was given the actual words of God. In the traditions, the words used were his own, but they were uttered under Divine guidance.²

It may safely be assumed that from the very beginning the Muslims were interested in what the Prophet said and did, and that after his death, Islam spread widely, and new converts would be anxious to hear about him. Those who had associated with him would be listened to eagerly as they told about him, and in due course of time a great amount of material became current. While this was largely conveyed by word of mouth, there is reason to believe some men (i.e. companions of the Prophet) made small collections for their own use.³ p-ii

1 i.e. the words of wisdom and guidance incorporated in each tradition.

2 *Nor does he (the Prophet) speak of his own will (53:3).*

3 a) Horovitz in Islamic Culture, Vol-I, p-533.

b) "There are certain contemporary records of undoubted authenticity. Moreover, Muslim tradition is of a peculiar and systematic character

A notable work not normally considered to be a Hadith work, was the Sira of Ibn Ishaq (85-151 A.H.), which has been preserved in the recession of Ibn Hisham (213 A.H. or 218 A.H.). p-iii

Another was the Maghazi of Waqidi (130-207 A.H). These books made use of Isnads, but not in a thorough-going manner as we find in the later Hadith works. p-iii

The subject matter of Hadith is very comprehensive, covering almost every topic on which guidance might be sought. Sahih Bukhaari is divided into 97 books, the first three being: the beginning of the revelation, faith and knowledge. Next come 30 books connected with ablution, prayers, *Zakaat*, pilgrimage and fasting. This is followed by 22 books dealing with matters of business, trusteeship, conditions of employment, various legal matters, and the beginning of the creation. The next books deal with marriage, divorce and the maintenance due to one's family. From here to book 95, such matter as food, drink, clothing, seemly behaviour, medicines, invitations, vows, the expiation of broken vows, blood revenge, persecution, the interpretations of visions, civil strife and the trials before the end of the world. Book 96 stresses the importance of adhering to the Qur'aan and Sunna, and the last book which is fairly lengthy, deals with God's unity (Tawhiid). p-v

The principle of the criticism of (traditions) was to discuss the men (i.e. their general reputation, behaviour, their teachers, their age and their memory), who transmitted traditions rather than to investigate the material itself. Bukhaari collected 600,000 traditions, and yet he included only 7,275 traditions altogether in his Sahih. When repetitions are eliminated this total is reduced to 2762 only. p-vii

bearing in some respects an authority superior to that of a common tradition." (The Life of Muhammad by Sir William Muir, p-XIV)

The system adopted by Bukhaari in compiling his Sahih, with some variations, was adopted by other traditionalists.¹ The first book to be compiled was the Muwatta of Maalik (93-179 A.H.), the Great Madina Doctor of Law.

“Among the earliest collections of Hadith which was still extant and in print, are the *Musnad of Taialisi* (died 203 A.H.), and the *Musnad of Ahmad b. Hanbal* (164-241 A.H).” p-iii

A better method was afterwards adopted, and in the course of time six of these books came to be recognised by the Sunnis as the most authoritative of all.

These were:

- i) The Sahih of Bukhaari (194-256 A.H.), by Imaam Muhammad b. Ismaa`il of Bukhara;
- ii) The Sahih of Muslim (202-261 A.H.), by Imaam Muslim b. Hajjaj born in Nishapur;
- iii) The collections of Abu Dawuud Sajastani (202-275 A.H.);
- iv) Abu `Isa Tirmidhi (Seestan-Khorasan), (209-279 A.H.);
- v) Nassai` (Ahmad b. Shua`ib), (215-303 A.H.);
- vi) Ibn Maja Muhammad b. Yazid b. Ibn Maja Qazwaini (209-273 A.H.) p-iv.

They were not all recognised immediately, but the two Sahihs immediately commended to the Muslims. The collection which took the longest to gain acceptance was the work of Ibn Maja. “It is important to notice that even the collections which rose to the rank of Canonical works, were not commissioned by any authoritative body, but were taken on the initiative of these authors. They, therefore, had to commend themselves to the

1 Needless to say that all these traditionalists were models of righteousness, dedication and scholarship. In every act they had in their mind the fear of God. To verify or collect only one tradition, the traditionalists visited several towns and cities at their own expense, on foot or camel-back where some of the transmitters lived. Ed.

community before being recognised as authoritative works.” (i.e. by scholars of the whole world of Islam)¹ Ed.

2. CHARACTERISTICS OF THE PROPHET MUHAMMAD (SAW)

*“Allah did confer a great favour on the Believers,
When He sent among them a Messenger from themselves:
Reciting unto them the Signs of Allah,
Sanctifying them,
Instructing them the Scriptures,
And Wisdom, (i.e. the traditions of the holy Prophet,
Ahadith) Imaam Shafa`i,
While before that they had been in manifest error.”
(Qur’aan 3:164)*

“O God illumine my grave, my heart, my sight, and my hearing. Send light to my right, to my left, above and under me. Illumine my front, my back and render me all light. Diffuse light in my language, in my blood, in my bones, in my hair and in my human frame. O God, bless me with light and expand it for me.”
(A tradition of the Prophet)

`Ali solicited the Prophet about his deportment. The Prophet replied,

“Knowledge is my weapon!”²

1 Excerpts from Mishkat-ul-Musabih, p-iv, translated into English by Prof. James Robson.

2 Out of Sixteen verses of this Hadith Qudsi, only one verse is given here as these verses have been quoted by the author in Vol-III with exhaustive and inspiring comments.

SILENCE AND SPEECH

The Prophet would often remain quiet, preferring a silence to unnecessary speech. His speech was a bouquet of sweet words, his eloquence perfect and natural without ever being mere rhetoric. His words were irresistibly attractive to the listener's heart and soul and the genius of his speech was a quality in him to which even his opponents attested, and which the uncouth among them attributed to 'words of a sorcerer and magician'. The construction of his sentences was ornate. Each word was a compliment in a chain of literal and applied meanings. His style was embellished with choice diction. He would deliver his speech as if flowers of rhetoric were budding open, and at such an even pace that a listener could count the number of words while absorbed in the meaning of the message.¹

LAUGHING AND WEEPING

The Prophet would never resort to open laughter. His smile was his laugh. He would often be in tears during late night prayer (*Tahajjud*). The Prophet's son Ibrahiim died as an infant. When he was laid in the grave, the Prophet was full of tears and said, "The eyes are wet, the heart is grieved, yet, not to say that which is not pleasing to God: O (my son) Ibrahiim, you have caused me grief."

He lifted his granddaughter (daughter of Sayyida Zainab) in her dying moments. His eyes were tearful. Sa'd, the companion, was surprised and spoke, "How is that O Messenger of Allah?" He answered, "It is that compassion which The Compassionate has endowed to His servants. And Allah will be Compassionate to those who show compassion to others." (Bukhaari from Usaama b. Zaid, chapter Faith)

1 Bukhaari quoted by Zad. (1:47)

Ibn Mas`ud was reciting the holy Qur'aan before the Messenger of Allah. When he read the verse 4:41. *“How then shall it be when we bring forward from every nation a witness and we bring thee (O Muhammad) a witness over them,”* then the Prophet could not bear it and asked Ibn Mas`ud to stop reciting. Ibn Mas`ud saw tears flowing from the eyes of the Prophet.

ADVISE ON EATING HABITS

“Going to bed hungry hastens old age,”¹ the Prophet instructed.

He added, “the stomach is as an organ of three compartments: one to contain solid food, one for liquids, the third compartment to be left to itself (i.e. empty).”

He gave detailed instructions about the combinations of fruits, and vegetables for consumption at any one time.² The benefits of one would sometimes negate the harmful effects of the other, and in a different recipe, one fruit or vegetable would complement the other's food value.

VISITING THE SICK

He would advise preventive measures against infectious diseases. The healthy were advised to be careful when visiting the unhealthy. The sick were advised to consult approved physicians.³ He was forever emphasising dietary control.⁴ He forbade quacks

1 Zad. (2:78)

2 Ibid. (2:35). For a detailed account see ‘Tibb Nabvi’ by Dr. Khaalid Ghaznavi, Al-Faisal Publishers, Urdu Bazar, Lahore.

3 Zad. (2:50)

4 Ibid. (2:46)

to practice¹ and held them responsible² for any damage done to the patient. He forbid the use of prohibited (*haram*) food and drinks (such as pork and intoxicants) even as medicine, reiterating that, “Allah shall not heal thereby.”³

He would visit the sick among his companions, and comfort them. He would enquire of the patient about his requirements and if that wish did not go against his recovery, he would arrange for it. A young Jewish boy used to serve the Prophet and when he fell ill, the Prophet made it a point to visit him.⁴

MEDICAL TREATMENT

He used medicine during his illness, and advised people to get treatment, “O, you servants of Allah, take to treatment. Lo! God the Healer has set a cure for every ailment except one.” He was asked, “What is that?” “That incurable ailment is old age (senility)”, he answered.⁵

PUBLIC SPEAKING

He used to deliver his sermons while standing from a rostrum or standing on the ground. Sometimes he would address people while mounted upon a camel. The holy Prophet would begin his talk with the words of *tashahud* (testament to the being of Allah and His Messengers), and close the talk with the words of *astaghfar* (seeking Allah’s forgiveness). The Qur’aan was always quoted in his sermons and the creed always preached. His address to Muslims would always include advice on the needs of the hour, and all that pertained to the development of a true

1 Ibid. (2:35)

2 Ibid. (2:47)

3 Ibid. (2:53) - Bukhaari from Ibn Mas`ud.

4 Ibid. (1:143)

5 Ibid. (2:5)

disciplined society.¹ Such sermons were not only given at Friday congregations, but he would address the believers as and when the occasion demanded. The Prophet would lean on a staff or a bow during his speech; he never held a sword in hand, nor would he lean against it. We quote here Ibn Qiyyim's comments, "It is not proved by any tradition that he ever leaned on a sword² during a public address. His public speeches commenced only after his arrival at Madina and that city was 'conquered' by the holy Qur'aan, not by the sword." He concludes, "A religion is accepted and sustained by inspiration and not by coercion."³

PROTECTION OF NON-MUSLIMS

If a Muslim murders a non-Muslim, who was in alliance with Muslims, the murderer shall not smell the scent of Paradise, although it sends out its fragrance to a distance of forty year's journey.⁴

APPRECIATION OF LIFE

No Muslim should wish for his death. If he has been on the right course, he will have more time to add to his good record. If

1 Zad. (1:49)

2 "A pernicious tenet has been imputed to the Muhammadans, the duty of extirpating all the religions by sword." Gibbon - Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire - p-667.

 "The picture of the Muslim soldier with a sword in one hand and the Koran in the other is quite false." (A. S. Tritton, Islam, London, 1951 p-21)

 "History makes it clear, however, that the legend of fanatical Muslims sweeping through the world and forcing Islam at the point of the sword upon conquered races is one of the most fantastically absurd myths that the historians have repeated." Delaey O'Leary, Islam at the Cross Roads, London p-8, 1923.

3 Zad. (1:49)

4 Bukhaari from Ibn `Umar. (chapter al-Jazya)

he has been sinning, he might remould his life and obtain the pleasure of God.¹

HEALTH AND PROSPERITY

There are two Divine gifts, which people do not properly appreciate. These are health and prosperity.²

EXCELLENCE IN REPAYING DEBTS

While returning a camel to a person, the Prophet returned a camel superior to the one he had borrowed. The Prophet then said to those nearby, “Superior among you is he, who repays his debt with grace.”³

WEALTH

Opulence is not measured in gold. It is the richness of heart which matters.⁴

COMPASSION

He who does not show mercy will be shown no mercy.⁵

HERITAGE

It is better for you to leave your heir in plenty. Let him not start life as a pauper.⁶

1 Bukhaari from Abi Huraira. (2:1074)

2 Ibid from Ibn `Abbaas. (2:949)

3 Ibid from Abi Huraira. (1:332)

4 Ibid from Abi Huraira. (2:954)

5 Ibid. (2:887)

6 Ibid - Sa`d b. Abi Waqqaas. (Wills)

THE EQUALITY OF ALL MEN

There is no excellence reserved for an Arab over a non-Arab,¹ nor to a non-Arab over an Arab, nor to a black person over a white person, nor to a white person over a black person.²

OFFERINGS AND GIFTS

The Prophet would never accept any charitable offerings. Yet, he would accept gifts presented by his companions, Christians and Jews. He would also send gifts in acknowledgement, or by his initiative, but he would never exchange gifts with unbelievers.

The King of Egypt presented the Prophet with a mule, which he accepted. He rode that mule in the battle of Hunain. However, he refused to accept a horse sent by `Aamir b. Maalik, an unbeliever.³ Gifts of value were usually shared among his companions if that was possible.

1 Zad. (2:185)

2 "Concept of Equality in Islam

The brotherhood of Muhammadanism is no mere word. All believers are equal and their high-priest Zeid (Zaid b. Haaritha), the ex-slave, led Muhammad's troops.

The Ghaznavide dynasty was founded by a slave Sabuktigin; the first King of Delhi, Qutub-ud-Din Aibak was a slave. (Qutab - Minar, seventh wonder of the world, was built in his reign).

Shams-ud-din Altamush, a slave was chosen to be the son-in-law of the King of Delhi (Qutab-ud-Din Aibak) and succeeded him to the throne. His daughter Razia Sultana reigned Delhi for some time and married a slave Altunia (commander-in-chief from her father's lifetime).

Her brother, Naasir-ud-Din Mahmud, a saint-sovereign, reigned over Delhi for 20 years. He earned his living by writing the Qur'aan with his own hands. This family is known in Indian history as the slave dynasty.

The cruel treatment of slaves has been the reproach of Europeans rather than Eastern nations." Dr. Leithner, Muhammadanism - p-17-18.

3 Zad. (1:161)

SELF-PRAISE

He would never resort to magnifying his prophethood in a manner which would elevate his station in relation to the earlier prophets. He instructed, “Do not depict the Prophets in a manner that one is made inferior or humbler to the other.”¹

Once he was attending a wedding. The young girls there were eulogising the historical achievements of their ancestors. A couplet in the song referred to the Prophet himself, “There is the Prophet amidst us who knows what is to happen tomorrow.”² The Prophet said to the girls, “Please do not utter this verse. Repeat the rest.”

ZEALOTS DISCOURAGED

The holy Prophet’s son, Ibrahiim, died on the day of a solar eclipse. Certain zealots declared that the tragic death had caused the sun to eclipse. The Prophet admonished them. “The sun and the moon do not eclipse at any death or birth.”³

PSYCHOLOGICAL HANDLING OF AFFAIRS

The Quraish had reconstructed the holy Ka`ba a little before the advent of the prophethood. They left unbuilt part of the perimeter which had been covered by the Prophet Ibrahiim. Another flaw was its single door fixed so high above the ground that steps were needed to reach it. The Prophet told `A`aisha Siddiqa, “I would have raised the edifice to the ground (to rebuild it). I would have liked to fix two doors; an entrance and an exit;

1 Bukhaari from Abu Sa`id Hazri. (1:325)

2 Ibid from Rabi` d. Ma`uz.

3 Ibid from Mughira b. Shu`ba. (1:144)

but I will not as the Quraish have lately embraced Islam and may misrepresent my intentions/actions.”¹

When the hypocrites transgressed law and order openly, `Umar Faaruq proposed to the holy Prophet that they all be put to the sword. The Prophet advised tolerance lest the ignorant should comment that Muhammad (SAW) did not spare even his colleagues.

1 Bukhaari from Ibn Zubair from `A`aisha. (chapter Knowledge) (1:24)

THE PROPHET AS A MAN

The Messenger of Allah was always careful to distinguish between his sayings and actions under the inspiration of prophethood, and his words and acts as one of Allah's servants.

Once he said, "I am a man. Disputes are referred to me for adjudication. One of the (parties in the dispute) pleads his case vigorously, leading the adjudication to tilt in his favour. (I hereby warn you) if a person receives what belongs rightfully to another Muslim, then for the recipient it will be a flame from the fire; he may take it or leave it."¹ The Prophet spoke in favour of a certain Mughis, the husband of a former slave-girl, Buraira. The freed woman asked whether the Prophet was making a recommendation or giving an order. The Prophet clarified that it was not a command. Thereupon she said, "I am a free woman now and I have renounced Mughis, and do not desire him any longer."²

The fruit-growers of Madina used to pour pollen over the date-trees. The Prophet once questioned the practice. Thereupon, the growers gave up the practice, resulting in a reduced yield that year. When the matter was reported to the Prophet, he clarified, "You may be ahead of me in your knowledge of such worldly affairs. You have to obey me when I preach and interpret the dictates of religion."

AFFECTION TO CHILDREN

When he passed by children, he would be the first to greet them.³ He would pat them and lift them up.

1 Bukhaari from Umm-e-Salma (chapter on Injustice).

2 Bukhaari (1:7951) from Ibn `Abbaas (chapter on Divorce).

3 Bukhaari (1:9231) from Anas.

KINDNESS TO THE AGED

The Prophet was in the city of Makka after its conquest. Abu Bakr Siddiq brought his aged and near blind father to the Prophet for initiation into Islam. The Prophet observed, “Why did you put him to this inconvenience. I would have myself walked over to him.”¹

Hassaan b. Thaabit, the poet laureate, was given the honour of reciting verses (in praise of Islam and in denunciation of unbelief) from the pulpit, generally reserved for the Prophet.

PRAYERS FOR A SERVANT

Anas b. Maalik had been in the personal service of the Prophet for ten years. During that long period, he was never questioned or admonished. One day the Prophet prayed specifically for him, “O Allah, Grant to him abundance in wealth and children, and bless that which is granted to him.”² The prayer was indeed granted.

CONDUCT AND MANNERS

The Prophet would not sit in public with his legs stretched out. He would always be the first to greet someone and the first to offer a handshake. He would address his companion by his *Kunya* (family name, patronymic, sometimes also matronymic or after one’s child, or one’s quality) because that custom was deemed honorific. He would never interrupt a person while talking. He would cut short the supererogatory prayers (nafl) when there was

1 II - G - p-549.

2 He lived for more than 100 years, had a large and well-maintained family, and was held in great esteem by his colleagues.

a visitor. He would generally be smiling or showing a cheerful countenance.¹

One of his she-camels named Uzba was a fleet-footed animal allowing no one else to overtake her. Once, an unbelieving Arab went ahead of Uzba. The Muslims were annoyed at this discourtesy. The Prophet calmed them by saying, "Allah's plan is to humble the one He had elevated."²

A person once addressed the holy Prophet thus 'O Ye the best of the creatures'. The Prophet commented, "Such eulogy is appropriate for the Prophet Ibrahiim (The Patriarch)."³

A person visited the Prophet and was overawed by his personality. He was heartened by these words, "Be at ease, I am not a king. I am the son of a poor lady. She was content with dry meat⁴ (a diet of the poor)."

KINDNESS

All God's creatures are His family; and he is the most beloved of God who doeth good to His creatures.

MARRIAGE

The best marriage is that upon which the least trouble and expense is involved.

POLITENESS AND CONSIDERATION

1 Shifa - p-54.

2 Bukhaari. (1:402)

3 Bukhari and Darmi (Kitab-al-Sunna).

4 Bukhaari. (1:16)

`A`aisha Siddiqah reports, "There was no one to excel him in politeness. The Prophet would always respond by '*Labbaik*' (at your service, here I am) whether the call was by a companion or by one of his family."¹

He would offer supererogatory prayers (*nafl*) in private, so that his followers might not be burdened by his example.

When there was a choice, he would adopt the easier course.²

He had a covenant with the Lord God of Blessings that if he should ever imprecate a reproach, it may be converted into an atonement for the person's sins, and a ground for his entitlement to blessings.

He desired, "Let no one speak ill of his brother before me, in his absence. I wish that I depart from this world in a state bearing no ill-will to anyone."³

He would preach only that much as his followers would not be bored.⁴

Once, when offering prayers during a solar eclipse, he wept reciting this invocation, "O Allah, you gave us a testament that no wrath should fall upon people as long as I was among them and they continued to seek Thy forgiveness.⁵ O God, I am among them and they are imploring forgiveness. Each Prophet has been privileged with the grant of one petition to Thee. The earlier Prophets have availed of their privilege. I reserve my privilege until the Day of Judgement for Thy grant of approval to intercede for my followers (Umma)."⁶

1 Shifa - p-53.

2 Bukhaari from `A`aisha.

3 Shifa - p-55.

4 Bukhaari from Ibn Mas`ud.

5 Zad. (1:49)

6 Bukhaari from Anas. (solicitations) (2:932)

EQUITY AND PARDON

If there was a dispute between two parties he would ensure perfect justice. If he himself was involved, he would be merciful and give pardon gratis.

A woman named Faatima committed theft. A group sought the holy Prophet's pardon through the intercession of Usaama (the son of Zaid, once his adopted son) who was very dear to him. The Messenger of Allah remarked, "Would you seek intercession for restraint in the Laws of God. Listen! Had the accused been Faatima, my daughter, even then I would have pronounced an indictment."¹

Sawad b. `Umar, the companion, reports that he appeared before the Prophet dressed in bright-coloured clothes. The Prophet prodded his belly with a stick saying, "Hut, hut." Sawad adds that he demanded Qisas (legal retaliation by inflicting equal damage or forgiveness by accepting compensation). The Prophet at once bared his bosom.²

COMPASSION FOR UNRELENTING FOES

During a famine in Makka, the natives were so hard pressed that some would take to consuming dead meat and bones. Abu Sufyaan b. Harb, a sworn enemy of the Muslims, petitioned the Prophet thus, "Muhammad (SAW), you advocate noble conduct to near ones. Your community is starving to death. Pray, invoke Allah's Bounty." The holy Prophet prayed and was answered by heavy rain.

A companion and a chieftain of Najd, named Thumaama b. Athal, enforced a ban on the grain traffic between Najd and

1 Bukhaari from `A'aisha. (chapter Laws of God) (2:1003)

2 Shifa - p-311.

Makka because of the Makkans continued animosity towards the holy Prophet. He was asked to lift the ban by the merciful disposition of the holy Prophet.

The holy Prophet was leading *Fajr* prayers in the plains of Hudaibiya. About seventy or eighty armed men descended stealthily from the hill of Tani`m and pounced upon the Muslims during their prayers. They were arrested, and later set free without punishment or ransom.¹

CHARITY AND GENEROSITY

The Prophet would never disappoint a person who sought his aid. He would never say “no” to a petitioner. If he was not in a position to satisfy the need there and then, he would ask to be excused in a manner as if begging forgiveness.

A poor man came to obtain something. He was told, “I do not have anything now. You may take a loan from anybody in my name and I shall repay that.” `Umar Faaruq submitted, “Allah has not imposed upon you a duty beyond the extent of your means.” The Prophet kept silent. A man from the Ansaar interposed, “O Prophet of God, give bountifully. The Lord of the Throne is the sustainer. Why be apprehensive of diminishing resources.” The holy Prophet smiled. He was pleased at the suggestion and declared, “Yes, such is the duty laid on me.”² Once, a petitioner was granted his need by borrowing half a Wasq (a few pounds) of grain. The creditor reminded him of the debt. The Prophet ordered, “Let him take a full Wasq; half in the repayment due and the other half as gratis.”³ The Prophet decreed that if any Muslim should die without repaying his debt then it would be for him to

1 Bukhaari from Ibn Mas`ud. (1:139)

2 Shifa. p-50

3 Ibid - p-51 from Abi Huraira.

pay that. If someone were to die intestate then his property would revert to his heirs.¹

MORALS

The most perfect of the believers in faith is he who is best in moral excellence.

MODESTY AND DELICACY

Abu Sa`id Khudri, a companion, reports, "The Prophet was more modest than a virgin in veils.² Whenever someone talked of a matter unpalatable to him, his face expressed it."

`A`aisha Tayyiba reports, "If he disliked an act, he would not denounce the actor by name, but would express, in plain words, his disapproval of the act itself.³ Also, he would prefer to do everything himself rather than ask someone else to do it for him."

When someone appeared before him to explain an omission or to seek pardon, the Prophet would lower his gaze out of modesty.⁴

`A`aisha Tayyiba says, "I never saw the Prophet in a state of nakedness."

PATIENCE AND FORBEARANCE

Zaid b. Sa`na, a Jewish money-lender, called upon the Prophet for the repayment of his debt, but behaved in a rough manner - seizing his cloak, holding on to his person, and accusing the tribe of `Abdul Muttalib of being bad pay-masters. `Umar

1 Bukhaari from Abi Huraira. (chapter Obligations) (2:997)

2 Bukhaari from Abu Sa`id.

3 Shifa. p-52 (quoted by Abu Dawuud)

4 Tirmidhi and Shifa. p-52

Faaruuq reproached the Jew sternly. The Prophet smiled and said, “‘Umar, you should have reacted differently, by advising me to be a good debtor and by teaching Zaid the right behaviour.” Addressing Zaid b. Sa`na, the holy Prophet said, “The debt is not repayable until three days hence, according to the agreed condition.” Turning to `Umar, he instructed, “His loan should be repaid at once, and let him have twenty sau more (a sau is about four-fifths of a pound) because you intimidated him.”¹

A bedouin drew the Prophet’s attention by pulling his cloak of coarse cloth with so violent a jerk that it caused an abrasion on the Prophet’s neck. Furthermore, he had the audacity to say, “O Muhammad (SAW), the goods do not belong to you, nor to your father. They are God’s. Hand me over a camel-load. The Prophet paused for a moment and then answered, “Yes, the goods are God’s and I am His slave.” The bedouin was granted one camel-load of oats and one more of dates.²

On the Prophet’s preaching mission to Ta`if, the natives responded by mud-slinging, shouting and hitting him with stones. The Prophet lost consciousness. He prayed, “O Allah; I do not pray for the destruction of the wrong-doers. If they do not believe in me, their children will surely do.”³ All of them embraced Islam during his lifetime. `A`aisha Tayyiba states, “The Prophet never sought legal retaliation for any wrong done to him personally.”

In the battle of Uhad, the unbelievers caused injuries to his head and teeth. The Prophet was forced into a trench. The companions urged that those who had hurt him be cursed. The Prophet told them emphatically, “I have not been sent to invoke curses.” Instead he prayed, “Guide my people O God - they do not understand me.”⁴

1 Shifa - p-48. Zaid the money-lender embraced Islam after that event.

2 Sahihain from Anas and Shifa - p-48.

3 Bukhaari.

4 Shifa - p-47.

The Prophet was lying asleep under a tree, his sword hanging on one of its branches. Ghaurath b. al-Haarith, seizing the sword of the Prophet, rudely awakened him and boasted, "Who shall save you now?" The holy Prophet calmly affirmed, "Allah the Great." Ghaurath fainted and fell down. The holy Prophet recaptured his sword and asked, "Who in your turn shall save you?" Guaurath was stunned. The Prophet told him to get away, as he never sought revenge.¹

During her Hijra, Zainab, daughter of the Prophet, was threatened by Habbar with his lance. She was so frightened that she fell down from her camel and had an abortion, leading to her ultimate death. Habbar sought mercy and the Prophet forgave him.²

The Prophet told his people, "There have been disputes among my people initiated in the age of darkness, leading to murders between tribes. I hereby blot out all violent and unpleasant memories. I begin by foregoing the blood-claims of Rabi`a, of my own family and all the outstanding debts due to my uncle (`Abbaas)."³

THE PROPHET'S TRUSTWORTHINESS

Even sworn enemies of the Prophet confirmed his truthfulness and never doubted his trustworthiness. In his early life, titles of 'Saadiq' (truthful) and 'Amiin' (faithful) were conferred upon the Prophet by the popular will of his community. It was in recognition of such qualities that long before the advent of his prophethood, disputes were referred to him for adjudication.⁴ Abu Jahl, addressing the holy Prophet, once said,

1 Bukhaari. (2:592) and Shifa - p-47.

2 II - G - p-315.

3 Address to Quraish after the occupation of Makka (Bukhaari 2:615).

4 Shifa - p-49.

“Muhammad (SAW), I do not consider you to be a liar, but my heart does not attune to your teachings.”¹

On the night of the Hijra, the Prophet's enemies surrounded his house with the intention of murdering, but he still remained busy in handing over entrusted goods to his cousin `Ali, to be returned to their respective owners on his behalf - as he could no longer look after them or return them himself.

HOLY WAR

The most excellent Jihad (holy war) is the conquest of the self.

CHARITY

Every good act is charity.

Assist an oppressed person, whether Muslim or non-Muslim.

To treat a wife tenderly and to put a morsel in her mouth is charitable.

INHERENT PURITY AND CHASTITY

The Prophet himself said, “I never participated in the festivals and rites of the age of ignorance. Twice only, as a child, I wished to; but Allah saved me. I was then ten years old. I asked a fellow shepherd-boy to take care of my goats. I went for a while to Makka to listen to stories arranged by a group of story-tellers as others of my age did. At the outskirts of the city there was a wedding festivity in a house. My attention was diverted by the

1 Ibid - p-59.

playing of an organ and the beat of drums. I was overpowered by sleep until sunrise.

On another occasion, sleep overtook me and the time of amusement passed. Apart from these two occasions I did not witness activities of the age of ignorance.”¹

Before his prophethood, he was invited to a dinner at the house of Zaid b. `Amr b. Nufail. When meat was served, the holy guest remarked, “Meat of animals slaughtered as a sacrifice to idols and gods is not acceptable to me. I only relish the meat of an animal whose life was taken by reciting the name of Allah.”²

TEMPERANCE AND MODERATION

The holy Prophet used to pray with these words, “O my Lord! Feed me on alternate days. In hunger I would implore and beseech Thy Bounty. When fed, I would give thanks and glorify Thee.”³

`A`aisha Siddiqi reports, “For a period as long as a month, no fire would burn in the hearth. The Prophet’s family would live on water and dates.”⁴

She adds, “In Madina, the holy Prophet did not have wheat-bread for three consecutive days.”⁵ (Wheat is a more satisfying cereal). When the Prophet passed away, his chain-armour was held by a Jew as a surety for a loan in cereals.⁶

On the Prophet’s last night in this world, `A`aisha Siddiqi had to borrow oil for a lamp, from a neighbour.⁷ The Prophet’s

1 Shifa - p-60.

2 Bukhaari from `Abdullah (Slaughter of animals).

3 Shifa - p-62.

4 Bukhaari from `A`aisha.

5 Ibid. (2:956)

6 Bukhaari from `A`aisha.

7 Bukhaari.

prayer used to be, “O Lord, let the family of Muhammad be given just enough to eat.”

It should be remembered that his temperance was not motivated by abstinence. He chose moderation in spite of the means to possess. It was a personal preference and not intended to prohibit the use of lawful things to himself or to his following. Once, the Prophet discontinued the use of honey, because its smell was disagreeable to his wife. Allah intervened, “*O Prophet! Why do you deny yourself that which Allah has made lawful for you, seeking the pleasure of your wives?*” (66:1)

TREATMENT OF PRISONERS OF WAR

War-captives were treated as guests. The prisoners of the battle of Badr were kept in Madina for several days. One of them attested, “Allah may show mercy to Muslims, they used to feed and look after us, better than their own family members.” The poorer captives taken at Badr were offered their release on the condition that they taught a certain number of the citizens of Madina to write.¹ When prisoners were presented to the Prophet, his first care was for their clothing.²

PHYSICAL FITNESS

The Prophet would exhort and encourage men to take to physical exercise. Rukana was a well-known wrestler in Arabia, famous for his skills and strength. He declared that the one stronger than himself would be the one to bring him to submit to Islam. The Prophet thrice floored the gallant wrestler.³

1 The Life of Muhammad by Sir William Muir, p-XIX.

2 Bukhaari from Jabar (chapter Prisoners).

3 Shifa - p-34, Bukhaari. (1:422)

ARCHERY

The Prophet urged the pursuit and practice of the martial arts such as archery. He would divide the competitors into two teams. Once, he included himself in a team asking the competing team to shoot the arrow first. The other team held back from the contest and said, “How can we dare to rival the holy Prophet’s team.” The Prophet was pleased to declare the contest open, adding that he was with them all.¹

HORSE RACING

Races were arranged under the instructions of the holy Prophet. The long distance race covered five to six miles, and the short sprint about a mile.²

CENSUS

The Prophet once ordered a census of the believers. The report listed fifteen hundred. The Muslims were delighted and offered thanks to God for they recalled the days when one could not find a companion to form a prayer-congregation and when praying alone was unsafe.³ It is regrettable that the Hadith recording the census does not report the year of the event. Bukhaari only mentions that it was the third census. The first count numbered five hundred, and the second went up to seven hundred.

1 Bukhaari from Salaama b. al-Akw`a. (chapter Archery and II - G - p-510)

2 Bukhaari Ibn `Umar. (chapter Horse-Races) (1:402)

3 Bukhaari - from Hudhaifa. (1:430)

ENVY AND SUSPICION

Envy and suspicion disintegrate society. Suspicion is the blackest lie. Do not look for the faults of others.

CHARITY

Charity is a duty unto every Muslim. He who has not the means, let him do a good act or abstain from an evil one.

Removal from the path of that which is harmful, is charity.

To treat children affectionately is a charitable act.

SALIENT FEATURES OF PROPHETIC TEACHINGS

It is well nigh impossible to comprehend the fathomless fountain of truth and wisdom, gushing forth from prophetic teachings. A brief synopsis of some topics may help to indicate the intellectual, ethical, social, spiritual and rational worth of pronouncements of the unlettered Prophet and the excellence of Islam as a faith.

THE MERCY OF GOD

The Prophet once observed, "In the Book God keeps by Him on His Throne, He has laid it down for Himself: Verily, My Mercy has overcome My wrath."¹

PREROGATIVES AND REWARDS TO HIS SERVANTS

The right of God Almighty due from His servants is that they worship Him alone and associate² none with Him and in return, His servants be not condemned.

1 Bukhaari - from Abi Huraira. (1:453)

2 Bukhaari from Mua`d b. Jabal. (2:962)

SERVICE TO PARENTS

Once a Muslim submitted, "I yearn to take part in jihad (holy war)." The Prophet asked him, "Are your parents alive?" He said, 'Yes.' The Prophet then observed, "Be at their disposal, strain all your energies in their service."¹

PERFECT FAITH

None shall achieve perfect faith until he chooses for his brother what he chooses for himself.²

MUTUAL CO-OPERATION

A believer in relation to another is like bricks in the foundation of a building. Each brick holds firm by sticking to the other. Then the Prophet intertwined the fingers of his right and left hand.³

THE BEST ACT

"The Muhammadans have uniformly withstood the temptation of reducing the object of their faith and devotion to level with the senses and imagination of man. "I believe in one God, and Muhammad is the Messenger of God," is the simple and invariable profession of Islam. The intellectual image of the Deity has never been degraded by any visible idol, the honours of the Prophet have never transgressed the measure of human virtue, and his living precepts have restrained the gratitude of his disciples within the bounds of reasons and religion." (Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire - Gibbon, p-693)

- 1 Bukhaari from Ibn `Umar. (2:883)
- 2 Bukhaari from Anas. (chapter Faith)
- 3 Ibid from Abi Musa. (1:331)

The companions asked him as to the best act. The Prophet replied, "An act which though done in a small measure is done without a break, is most pleasing to God." Then he observed,

"Worship only that much which you can easily bear."¹

THE SWEETNESS OF FAITH

He who has three qualities shall taste the sweetness of Faith.

He (or she) who loves God and His Messenger most.

The believer who loves a brother (fellow-believer) only for the love of God and has no personal motive.

He who hates to return to heresy just as he would hate to be thrown into fire.²

THE NATURE OF A MUSLIM

A Muslim is one whose tongue and hands do not harm others.³

PROHIBITION OF EXTREME MODES OF WORSHIP

The holy Prophet once saw in a house a rope hanging from the roof. He enquired of it. The people told him, "A woman ties it to her hair to keep herself awake when she stoops in slumber." He commanded, "Observe optional prayer only so long as you feel cheerful."⁴

1 Bukhaari. (2:957)

2 Bukhaari from Anas. (1:7)

3 Bukhaari from Anas. (1:6)

4 Ibid from Anas. (1:154)

A woman of the B. Asa`d was reported to the Prophet to be maintaining night vigils. She was advised to exert herself only to the extent of her capacity.¹

Once the Prophet said to `Abdullah b. `Amr b. al-`Aas, “I am told that you watch the night in prayers and fast day after day.” The man replied that this was so. The holy Prophet commanded, “You are not to act so henceforth. Keep fasts on alternate days and feed yourself well. Pray and also sleep well. Mind you that your body and your eyes have claims on you. Your wife also is entitled to her very many rights.”²

BEGGING CONDEMNED - LABOUR COMMENDED

To carry a load of wood is much better than begging. To survive by wood-cutting is better than to sustain oneself by begging, though people may feed beggars too.³

ENVIABLE PEOPLE

Envable are two people: One whom God has granted wealth and who spends it in lawful pursuits; the other whom God has granted wisdom, and who acts by it, and teaches others to act upon it.⁴

EXCELLENT MORALS

1 Bukhaari from `A`aisha. (chapter Optional Prayers)

2 Bukhaari from `Abdullah. (chapter Marriage ceremony)

3 Ibid Abi Huraira. (1:278)

4 Bukhaari Ibn Mas`ud. (Zakaat) (1:194)

Take to truth and excel in social service, carrying glad tidings to people. Formal prayer alone cannot lead anyone to Paradise.¹

EXHORTION TO BROTHERHOOD

Beware of scepticism. A conjecture is only a falsehood throughout. Lend no ears to idle rumours. Probe not into people's vices. Foster no grudge among yourselves. Do not turn your backs on each other, ye servants of God, but live like brothers in the services of God.²

PRAYER

That prayer is not accepted where the heart does not accompany the tongue.

RIGHTS OF GUESTS AND NEIGHBOURS

It is incumbent on anyone who believes in God, and the Day of Resurrection, not to annoy his neighbour, and to welcome a guest.³

To extend consideration towards neighbours and send them presents are charitable acts.

CHASTITY

Modesty and chastity are parts of Faith.

1 Ibid from `A'aisha. (2:957)

2 Bukhaari from Abi Huraira. (2:995)

3 Bukhaari from Abi Huraira. (2:959)

RESPECT TO GOD

To honour an old man is to show respect to God.

SPEECH AND SILENCE

Anyone who believes in God and the Last Day must talk sense or keep silent.¹

SURETY OF SALVATION

The Prophet said that if anybody would give him surety for that which lay between his jaws (i.e. his tongue) and for that which lay between his thighs (i.e. his private parts), then he would give that person surety of Paradise.²

PATIENCE AND GRATEFULNESS

If anyone of you finds someone greater in wealth or excellence, he should as well look around those lower to him in either.³

THE BEST WRESTLER

A good wrestler is not one who floors another person, but one who controls himself in the heat of anger.⁴

GUIDANCE TO PREACHERS OF ISLAM

1 Bukhaari from Abi Huraira. (2:958)

2 Bukhaari. (2:960) Sehl b. Sa`d. (2:959)

3 Bukhaari Abi Huraira. (2:960)

4 Ibid from Abi Huraira. (chapter Graces and piety) (2:903)

The holy Prophet deputed Mua`d b. Jabal and Abu Musa Asha`ri to preach Islam among the Yamanites. Bidding them farewell he said, “Deal with all persons mildly, do not put them to hardship, give them happy news, explain religion with tact and wisdom, and live together in harmony.”¹

THE FRUIT OF LOVE

A man shall be raised up (in the Hereafter) with those he loves.²

THE PRISONERS, THE POOR AND THE SICK

Obtain the release of captives, feed the hungry and attend to the sick.³

REWARD OF GROWING TREES

A person grew a tree. People and other creatures ate of its fruits. All would be counted as almsgiving for the grower and planter.

COMPASSION FOR ANIMALS

Once, the holy Prophet said, “There was a wayfarer who felt very thirsty. He went down into a well and quenched his thirst.

1 Ibid from Ibn Mas`ud. (2:622) (Instructions given to Mua`d b. Jabal and Ibn Musa)

2 Ibid from Ibn Mas`ud. (chapter Piety) (2:911)

3 Ibid from Anas. (chapter al-Adab) (1:428)

When he came out, he saw a dog, with its tongue hanging out, licking the wet ground. The man said: "Ah, poor dog, you are also thirsty as I was." He again lowered himself into the well, fetched water and gave it to the dog. God accepted this act of compassion and covered him in His Mercy."¹

Some one asked, "Shall we be rewarded for showing pity to animals?" The holy Master replied, "Yes, you will be rewarded for pitying any living thing, which has a moist liver."

UNIQUE CONSIDERATIONS FOR WOMEN

All historians agree that the whole of Europe and Asia were submerged in the Dark Ages, when the unlettered Prophet of Islam instructed his Umma thus:

- i) If anyone has a handmaid, he should educate her and treat her kindly. And if he makes her a free woman and marries her, he will be doubly rewarded.²
- ii) To treat a wife kindly and put a morsel in her mouth is charity.

1 Bukhaari from Abi Huraira.

2 Dr. Annie Besant said, "It is only in the last twenty years (i.e. around 1912) that Christian England has recognised the right of woman to property while Islam has allowed this right from all times." (Life & Teaching of Muhammad, Madras)

"Some groups in Europe believed that man was born in sin and that women have no souls. As against it, Islam teaches the inherent sinlessness of man and woman of course. It teaches that man and woman have come from the same essence, possess the same soul and have been equipped with equal capabilities for intellectual, spiritual and moral attainments." "That his (Muhammad SAW), reforms enhanced the status of women is universally admitted." (Sir Archibald Hamilton - Muhammadanism, London, 1953, p-33)

- iii) Women are the twin-halves of men. The rights of women are sacred.
- iv) A women who observes (a) five daily prayers, (b) fasts during the month of Ramzaan. (c) is chaste and obedient to her husband, can enter Paradise by whichever door she pleases.
- v) The best of virtues is to receive your daughter warmly, when she returns to you, having been divorced.
- vi) Of all permissible acts, 'Divorce' is the most disdained by God. All the same, the right of the wife to seek divorce was recognised for the first time, in the history of mankind, by Islam.

A woman is like a rib bone. If you make an attempt to straighten it, you will only break it. But if you let it go as it is, she will serve you well in her way. (Bukhaari from Sa`d, chapter Wills)

Umm-ul-Mu`miniin Safiya was with her husband (the Prophet) on a journey. As she had fully covered herself, the holy Prophet bent his knee forward to make it a step for her, thus enabling her to be seated on the camel's back. During the journey the camel slipped, causing both the Prophet and his wife to fall. Abu Talha (a distinguished companion) rushed to the help of the Prophet. The Prophet said, "Take care of the lady first." (Bukhaari from Anas - 1:433)

Some ladies were seated on their camel's back, accompanied by the Prophet and some other companions. The camel-drivers started chanting the rhythmical song 'Hudi' which quickened the pace of the camels. The Prophet remarked, "Mind the glassware", thereby indicating his consideration for the safety of the ladies. (Bukhaari from Ibn `Umar) A lady of the house is a princess (ruler) over her household. (Bukhaari from Ibn `Umar). "Your wife is an apparel for you and you are an apparel for your wife." (Qur'aan 2:187)

EDUCATION AND THE TRAINING OF GIRLS

Jaabir, a distinguished companion, once said, “Abdullah, my father, died leaving behind his daughters of a very young age. I married a widow, so that she might educate and train them properly. The Prophet approved that choice over a virgin.”¹

THE NATURE OF A HYPOCRITE

There are four qualities which make a man a hypocrite. If he has any one of them he is by that much an imposter. These qualities are: (i) Whenever he speaks, he speaks a lie; (ii) Whenever he gives his word, he dishonours it; (iii) Whenever he enters into a pact, he only honours it in its breach; (iv) Whenever he falls into a quarrel, he begins to speak obscenely. (Bukhaari from `Abdullah b. `Umar, 1:10)

THE NATURE OF THE EMIGRANT

The emigrant in the way of God is he who parts from things forbidden by God. (Bukhaari from `Abdullah b. `Umar)

THE SHADE OF GOD ON THE LAST DAY

Those who will be comforted under the shade of God on the Day of Judgement when there will be no shade elsewhere, are:

- i) the just rulers;
- ii) a man who worshipped God in his youth;
- iii) a person whose heart finds comfort in the house of God;
- iv) two people who love each other for God's pleasure;

1 Bukhaari from Jaabir b. `Abdullah.

- v) a person who reminds himself of God in solitude and whose eyes brim with tears;
- vi) a man whom a beautiful young woman invites to herself yet he replies, "I fear God";
- vii) a person who gives away alms in secret so that his left hand does not know what the right hand gives.

People with these seven characteristics will know the shade of God when the sun blazes on their heads.¹

THE PURSUIT OF KNOWLEDGE

- i) He dies not who takes to learning.
- ii) One learned man is harder on the devil than a thousand ignorant people.
- iii) To spend more time in learning is better than to spend more time in praying.
- iv) It is better to teach for one hour in the night than to spend the whole night in prayer.
- v) The acquisition of knowledge is a duty imposed on every male and female.
- vi) He who leaves his home in search of knowledge walks in the path of Allah.
- vii) The ink of a scholar is holier than the blood of a martyr.
- viii) It is better to sit alone than in the company of the bad; and it is better to sit with the good than being alone; and it is better to observe silence than utter vile words.

1 Bukhaari from Abi Huraira. (Kitab-al-Muharbiin)

THE OPENING VERSE OF SAHIH BUKHAARI

Inna-mal-`Aamalu-Bil-Niiyaat. (Actions shall be judged by intentions).

THE CLOSING VERSE OF SAHIH BUKHAARI

Subhan-Allah-hay wa-bay Hamday-Hi, Subhan Allah-Hill-Azim. (Immaculate is Allah and all Praise is His, Most Gracious is Allah and the Greatest).¹

The phrase is light on the tongue but its reward is mighty. This is the last Hadith of Bukhaari Sharif. How inspired was the Compiler in his selection.

Imaam Muhammad b. Ismaa`il (194-256 A.H.) is the most revered of all traditionalists. Outstanding as a scrupulous compiler, possessing analytical and editorial skill, his collection of traditions of the holy Prophet, known as Sahih Bukhaari, holds a unique place in the minds and hearts of all past and present scholars of Hadith. A work of great historical significance, it is second in importance only to the holy Qur'aan. As a pious Muslim and a conscientious intellectual, he is held in the highest esteem all over the world of Islam. He committed sixteen years of his life to completing this colossal task.

Imaam Muslim, the second distinguished compiler, was Imaam Bukhaari's pupil. Both had incredible memories and inborn dedication to their cause. The remaining four traditionalists and their successors were equally God-fearing and dedicated to their labour of love. All these six books have been translated into principal foreign languages. There has been no revision or alteration of a single word anywhere to this day - much less any revision. May God bless their most sincere and indefatigable efforts. Aamiin.

1 Bukhaari from Abu Huraira.

3. THE QUR'AAN – ITS COMPILATION, ITS DIVINITY AND SELECTED VERSES

SYSTEMATIC COMPILATION OF THE QUR'AAN AN INDEPENDENT VIEW¹

“Abu Bakr, under whose direction the recension of the Koran was undertaken, was a sincere follower of Mohammad, and an earnest believer in the divine origin of the Koran. His faithful attachment to the Prophet's person, conspicuous for the last twenty years of his life, and his simple, consistent and unambitious deportment as Caliph, admit no other supposition.” p-XXV

Abu Bakr said, “Thou (Zaid b. Thaabit) are a young man, and wise, against whom no one amongst us can cast an imputation, and thou wast wont to write down the inspired revelation of the Prophet of the Lord, wherefore now search out the Koran and bring it together.” p-XXI

“It is said that Zeid (Zaid b. Thaabit) used to repeat the Koran in the presence of Mohammad (SAW) in the order and sequence in which we now find it.”

“A careful recension of the whole set on foot. In case of difference between Zeid and his co-adjutors, the voice of the latter was conclusive of the Koreshite idiom, was to be followed.” p-XXII

“The original copy thus prepared was committed by `Umar to the custody of his daughter Hafsa, the Prophet's widow.” p-XXI

1 Extracts from: ‘The Life of Mohammad’ by Sir William Muir. Regarding the compilation of the Qur’aan, he writes on p-XV: ‘miraculous tenacity of Arab memory’.

“The compilation of Zeid as embodied in the exemplar, continued, during `Umar’s caliphate to be the standard and authoritative text.” p-XXI

“There is otherwise every security, internal and external, that we possess the text which Mohammad himself gave forth and followed.” p-XXVII

“The Koran consists exclusively of the revelation or commands which Mohammad professed from time to time, to receive through Gabriel as a message direct from God. Every syllable of the Qur’aan is of divine origin, eternal and uncreated as the Deity himself.” p-XXI

“At the moment of inspiration or shortly after, each passage was recited by Mohammad before friends or followers, who happened to be present, and was generally committed to writing by someone among them.” p-XIV

“The divine revelation was the corner stone of Islam. The recital of a passage from it formed an essential part of daily prayer, public or private, and its perusal and repetition enforced as a duty and a privilege, fraught it with religious merit.” p-XIV

“The Koran was accordingly committed to memory more or less by every adherent of Islam and the extent to which it could be recited was one of the chief distinctions in the early Muslim Empire.” p-XVI

“Passionately fond of poetry, but without the ready means for committing it to writing the effusions of their bards, the Arabs had long been used to imprint these, as well as the traditions of genealogical and tribal events on the living tablets of their heart. The recollective faculty thus cultivated to the highest pitch; and it was applied with all the ardour of an awakened spirit, to the Koran. Such was the tenacity of their memory and so great their power of application that several of his followers could, during the Prophet’s lifetime repeat with scrupulous accuracy the whole of the Koran then in use.” p-XVI

“It may be safely inferred that the verses so indefatigably committed to memory would be likewise committed carefully to writing.”

The Prophet neither read nor wrote. At Madina he had many amanuenses; some of them occasional as `Ali and `Uthmaan, and others official as Zaid b. Thaabit, who also learned Hebrew for the purpose.

Al Wakdi reports that fourteen such writers, some say twenty-four, others as forty-two (in Makka, he had no such facilities, but even then, Khadija, Warqa, `Ali or Abu Bakr who could all read). “Writing was without doubt generally known at Mecca long before Mohammad assumed the prophetic office. The poor captives taken at Badr were offered their release on condition that they taught a certain number of Madina citizens to write.” p-XIX

“This almost incredible purity of text in a book so widely scattered over the world, and continually copied by people of different tongues and lands is without doubt owing mainly to `Uthmaan’s recension and to the official promulgation and maintenance of his edition. To countenance a various reading was an offence against the State and as such would still to this day be punished. We need not wonder then that with such means resorted to, perfect uniformity of text has been maintained.” p-XXIII

`ALI ENDORSES `UTHMAAN’S RECENSION

“Far from objecting to `Uthmaan’s recension, `Ali multiplied copies of it. Among other manuscripts supposed to have been written by `Ali himself, one is said to have been preserved at Meshed as late as the fourteenth century, which bore his signatures.” `Ali was moreover deeply versed in the Koran, and his memory would amply have sufficed of itself to detect, if not to restore, any passage that had been tampered with. `Ali said of himself, “There is not a verse in the Koran of which I do not

know the matter, the parties to whom it refers, and the place and time of its revelation, whether by night or day, whether in the plains or upon the mountains.” p-XXII

“If transcripts of the revelations were made and in common use at that early time (‘Umar’s conversion to Islam), when the followers of Islam were few and oppressed, it is certain that they must have multiplied exceedingly when the Prophet came to power and his Book formed the law of Arabs.” p-XX

THE QUR’AAN AS A DIVINE BOOK - INDEPENDENT VIEWS

“On the whole we find in it a collection of wisdom which can be adopted by the most intelligent of men, the greatest of philosophers and the most skilful of politicians. There is another proof of the Divinity of the Qur’aan, that it has been preserved intact through the ages since the time of its revelation till the present day. Read and re-read by the Muslim world, this book does not rouse weariness; it rather, through repetition, is more loved every day. It was, therefore, neither by means of violence of arms, nor through the pressure of obtrusive missionaries, that caused the great and rapid diffusion of Islam.” Laura V. Vaglieri, *Apologie de l’ Islamisme*. (p-58-59)

“It is well for all who study the Qur’aan to realise that the actual text is never the composition of the Prophet but it is the word of God addressed to the Prophet.” Sir E. Dennison Ross C. I. E, Ph.D etc., in his foreword to Sale’s translation of the Qur’aan, p-6, (Warner and company: London).

“It is a literal revelation of God, dictated to Muhammad by Gabriel, perfect in every letter. It is an ever-present miracle witnessing to itself and to Muhammad, the Prophet of God. Its miraculous quality resides partly in style, so perfect and lofty that neither men nor Jinn could produce a single chapter to compare with its briefest chapter and partly in its content of teaching,

prophecies about the future, and amazingly accurate information as the illiterate Muhammad could never have gathered of his own accord.” H. G. Dorman, *Towards Understanding Islam* 1949, p-3

“Whenever Muhammad was asked a miracle, as a proof of the authenticity of his mission, he quoted the composition of the Qur’aan and its incomparable excellence as proof of its divine origin. The ampleness of its syllables with a grandiose cadence and with a remarkable rhythm have been of much moment in the conversion of the most hostile and the most sceptic.”

“The Qur’aan, in its original dress, has a seductive beauty and charm of its own. Couched in concise and exalted style, its brief pregnant sentences often rhymed, possess an expressive force and explosive energy, which it is extremely difficult by literal word for translation.” J. Naish, M.A. (Oxen) D.D. *The Wisdom of the Qur’aan*, Oxford, 1937 (preface p-VIII)

THE QUR’AAN - BY THE AUTHOR

It is essential for any scholar who aims to write the biography of our Prophet, that he should relate its details with reference to the context of the Qur’aan. Even for one such as myself, who only proposes to present a short portrait, it is necessary to draw its lines in the light of the holy Book. Someone asked `A`aisha, the mother of the faithful, as to the deportment of the Prophet. She replied, “The holy Qur’aan is his deportment.”¹ Truly, a biography which does not illustrate the characteristics of the Prophet in the light of the Qur’aan will only be a dim exposure of his life.”

I, like every Muslim, believe, as certainly as he believes in himself, that every word of the Qur’aan is the Word of God. The Prophet introduced mankind to the Book, and himself as its bearer. All the knowledge that he taught emanated from God from

1 Bukhaari from `A`aisha Siddiqa.

the beginning to the end. The text of this Book was revealed over a period of 23 years. It is secure on the tongues and in the hearts and souls of the faithful in the very words which were spoken by God to guide and teach His Prophet and which he, word by word, learnt and taught to his believers. It has reached the farthest frontiers of the civilised world. There is no part of the earth, no moment in the twenty-four hours of the day, when its sanctified verses are not recited in prayer, or studied in daily revision.

From the moment the first verse of this Book was revealed, the number of its readers has increased steadily. *No country, no latitude, no season nor custom of the believers or non-believers, has ever stood in its way of being delivered to the world.* Everywhere, it has appeared in its pristine beauty, and original form.

Errorneous translations of the Qur'aan have been deliberately introduced in various countries and different languages. Misleading annotations of its pure and simple context have also been published. No effort has, however, succeeded in soiling its pure and hallowed words. Its onward march is unstoppable, for it possesses the hearts and reclaims the souls of mankind everywhere, and will do more in due measure of time as also predicted by the Qur'aan, "That Allah will cause it (Islam) to prevail over all religions. And Allah sufficeth as a witness." (48:28)

The Qur'aan still exists in its own language, in Arabic, the only Scriptural language still in living use by hundreds of millions of mankind. No other revealed Book, neither the Old Testament, the Gospel, the Vedas nor Zund Pazund etc., exist in their original language. All these are pictured in strange, alien coverings and who can say with certainty that they have not been profanely altered. The languages in which they were revealed are today extinct and there is left no trace of those who spoke them. We have now only either translations of translations, or interpolations

in interpolations.¹ The Qur'aan itself speaks of all the criticisms that were levelled at it during and since its revelation. It also speaks of the allegations which were forged against the Prophet. Thus, the Book is its own history and argument.²

The Qur'aan has boldly stood in its defence and defiance of its critics for the last fourteen centuries. Truth is ever bold, expressive and forceful. Let any other book of religion show that it has withstood so long a test. The holy Qur'aan presents a powerful Truth. The religions which existed before and the creeds which have sprung up after its manifestation have been influenced by that powerful Truth to the measure that some portions of its message has been borrowed³ by other Books.

Allah Himself has said in the Qur'aan, "No untruth can creep into it from before or behind it." (41:42). The reader will appreciate these findings only when he studies the Books of the Jews, Christians, Zoroastrians, Buddhists and Hindus, before the revelation and preaching of the Qur'aan; and then re-reads these Scriptures in their reformed editions after the introduction of the Qur'aan in their countries. Compare these reformed and rearranged editions and their originals and the Qur'aan. There may be grateful people like the Brahmo Samaaj, who openly

1 "A final and complete text of the Qur'aan was prepared within twenty years after the death (A.D. 632) of Muhammad (SAW), and that this has remained the same without any change or alteration by enthusiasts, translators or interpolators, upto the present time. It is to be regretted that the same cannot be said of all the books of the Old and the New Testaments." F. F. Arbuthnot, *The construction of the Bible and the Koran*, London - p-5.

2 "All those who are acquainted with the Qur'aan in Arabic agree in praising the beauty of this religious book; its grandeur of form is so sublime that no translation into any European language can allow us to appreciate it." (Edward Montet, *Traduction Francaise du Coran*, Paris, 1929, Introduction, p-53.

3 "The Latin Church has not disdained to borrow from the Koran the immaculate conception of his virgin mother." (*Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* - Gibbon - p-667)

confess the blessings they have gathered from the Qur'aan. The Roman Catholics allege that Martin Luther deduced his tenets from the Muslims' holy Book, intending to discredit him thereby but indirectly paying a tribute to the Qur'aan. There may be others who do not openly confess their absorption and adoption of the Truths of the Qur'aan in one way or the other into their own Books. Let it be said that everyone who desires to keep the spirit in those Books alive will per force depend upon the infusion of the Spirit of God which only truly lives in the Qur'aan. Yet none can live long or well on stealthy borrowing. Besides, no heavenly book has ever preferred the claim: *This day I have perfected your religion for you and have given full measure of my bounties to you and have chosen for you Islam as a religion.* (Qur'aan 5:3)

SELECTED VERSES FROM THE QUR'AAN

In the name of Allah, the most merciful and compassionate.

LIGHT OF THE HEAVENS AND THE EARTH

"Allah is the light of the heavens and the earth. The similitude of His light is as a niche in a wall wherein is a lamp. The lamp is in a case of glass. The glass is as it were a shining star. This lamp is kindled from a blessed tree, an olive neither of the East nor of the West, whose oil would almost glow forth of itself though no fire touched it.

Light upon light, Allah guides unto His light whom He will. And Allah speaks to mankind in allegories, for Allah is knower of all things." (Qur'aan 24:35)

THE QUR'AAN INTRODUCES ITSELF

"This is the Book, without doubt (from God) and a sure guidance for the God-conscious." (2:1) The opening verse is a feature in itself as no other Book has introduced itself in this way.

"A Book of infinite value and an unassailable scripture, falsehood from whatever side shall not come near it."¹ (41:42)

"This Qur'aan is the very truth as much as the fact that you speak intelligently to each other." (17:82)

"The Qur'aan is a healing for diseases of the heart." (10:57)

"A Book We have sent down to thee that thou mayest bring forth mankind from the shadows to the light by the leave of their Lord to the path of the All-Mighty, the All-Laudable." (14:1)

"In what other Discourse (divine revelation) will you (then) believe hereafter?" (77:50). This verse reiterates that this Qur'aan is the final revelation to the last of the Prophets (SAW).

A CHALLENGE FOR ALL TIMES!

"And if you are in doubt concerning that which we have sent down to our servant, then produce a Sura like this."² (2:23)

SIGNS LEADING TO ALLAH

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- 1 "So there has been no opportunity for any forgery or pious fraud in the Koran, which distinguishes it from almost all other important works of ancient times." Mohammadanism - B. Coomar Bose. Calcutta 1931, p-4. Ed.
 - 2 "Well then if the Koran (Qur'aan) were his own composition other men could rival. And if they could not (and it is obvious that they could not), then let them accept the Koran as an outstanding evidential miracle." H. A. R. Gibb - Mohammadanism - London 1953, p-33.

“A sign for them is the dead earth, We revive it, and We bring forth from it grain so that they eat thereof.” (36:33) “Glory to Allah, who created in pairs things that the earth produces, as well as pairs of their own and (pairs of) other things of which they have no knowledge.”¹ (36:36)

“And a sign for them is the night: we strip it of the day, and Lo! They are plunged in darkness. And the sun runs for a period determined for him by Allah the Exalted, the Almighty, and the All-Knowing. And for the moon we have appointed mansions till she returns like an old shrivelled palm-leaf. It is not permitted to the sun to overtake the moon, nor does the night outstrip the day. They float each in an orbit.” (36:37-40)

“He it is, Who created seven heavens in harmony (one above the other). Do you see any want of proportion in the creation of the Beneficent Allah? Then look again: Can you see any rifts? Then look again and yet again, your vision will return to you weakened and worn out.” (67:3-4)

“He it is, Who has made the earth subservient to you, so that you traverse through its paths and eat of His sustenance and unto Him is the Resurrection.” (67:15)

“Allah is the Protector of believers. He will lead them forth from the depths of darkness unto light.” (2:257)

ALLAH IS UNIQUE

“Say: He is Allah, the One, the most unique and ‘immanently indispensable’ Allah. He begot no one and of none He is begotten. There is no other comparable to Him.” (112:1-4)

VERSE OF THE THRONE

1 It was only around 80 years ago that Botanists came to know about it. Ed.
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“Allah. There is no God save Him, the Alive, the Eternal. Neither slumber nor sleep overtakes Him. To Him belongs what so ever is in the heavens and the earth. Who is he that intercedes with Him except by His leave? He knows that which is in front of them and that which is behind them¹ while they encompass nothing of His knowledge save such as He wills. His throne does extend the heavens and the earth, and He is never weary of preserving them. He is the Most-High and the Supremely Glorious.” (2:255)

SUSTAINER OF ALL CREATURES

“There is not a moving creature on the earth but its sustenance is to be provided by Allah. He knows its habitation and its repository. All this is recorded in a Book resplendent.” (11:6)

RECKONING OF TIME

“He created the sun for the reckoning of time.” (6:97)

STARS ACT AS GUIDES

“It is He, Who has made the stars for you to act as guides for you through the dark spaces of land and sea.” (6:98)

HELPLESSNESS OF MAN-MADE GODS

“Those of you who call upon besides Allah cannot create even a fly. And if the fly should snatch away anything from them they would have no power to recover it.” (22:73)

MAN CREATED FROM A DROP OF SPERM

1 i.e. what took place billions of years ago besides that which will occur till dooms day! Ed.

“We did create man from a quintessence of clay. Then We placed him as a drop of sperm in a place of rest firmly fixed; then We made the sperm to a clot of congealed blood: then of that clot We made a (foetus) lump, then We made that lump bones and clothed the bones with flesh; then We developed out of it another creature.” (23:12-14)

CLOUDS JOINED FOLD ON FOLD

“See you not that Allah makes the clouds move gently and then gathers them, then makes them layers then you will see rain come forth from their midst. There are mountains of hails in heaven. He sends down these hails and smites therewith whom He wills and averts it from whom He wills. The vivid flash of His lightening well nigh blinds the sight.” (24:43)

THE BIG BANG - CREATION OF THE UNIVERSE

“Do not these unbelievers know that the heavens and the earth were one piece, an integrated mass, then we split (parted) them (billions of years ago), and made every living thing of water?” (21:30) Comments next page: Ed.

Comments by George Sale:¹

“They (the heavens and the earth) were one continued mass of matter till We (God) separated them and divided the heaven into seven heavens and the earth into as many (storeys); and distinguished the various orbs of the one (heaven) and the different climates of the earth (i.e. the heavens did not rain nor the earth produce any vegetables till God interposed His power).”

Scientists developed the theory of ‘Big Bang’, discovered that all the growth of the earth exists in pairs and that water is the

1 The First translator of the Qur’aan in English, 1734 - p-243. Ed.

quintessence of all living things only about a hundred years ago. The Qur'aan revealed these truths in a causal way 1400 years ago.

THE HOUR OF DOOM

“Man! Fear your Lord. The greatest upheaval of the last hour (i.e. Doomsday), will indeed be a terrible thing. The day you shall see it, every woman will forget her suckling baby and every pregnant female shall drop her load. You shall see mankind in a drunken riot, yet not drunk. You see the mountains and think them firmly rooted, but they will evaporate like flying clouds (on that Day).” (22:1-2)

GUIDANCE IN DARKNESS OF SEA AND LAND

“Who guides you through the haze of darkness on land and sea and sends the winds as heralds of His mercy?” (27:63)

ORIGINATOR OF CREATION

“Who originates creation then repeats it? Who causes to grow well-planted orchards full of beauty and delight? It is not in your power to cause the growth of trees (i.e. to make trees germinate).” (27:60)

“Who has made the earth stable (to live in); made rivers in its midst; set thereon mountains immovable, and *made a separating bar* between the two bodies of flowing water (of the oceans)?” (27:61)

HOW TO COMPREHEND GOD (GNOSIS)

“Senses and eyes cannot comprehend Him.” (i.e. Mankind can only know Him by His signs). (6:103)

“Nothing is like unto God (i.e. our Lord God is unique). He hears the prayers of His servants and beholds their conditions.” (42:11)

“God loves the believers and brings them out of gloom into light.” (2:257)

GOD IS MERCIFUL!

“Your Lord has Himself been pleased to enjoin on Himself His mercy unto His servants.” (6:54)

ALLAH’S CREATION CANNOT BE CHANGED

- a) “Therefore, set your face in Allah or Unity with which Allah has endowed man. Allah’s creation (*Fitrat* - man’s nature) cannot be changed. This is surely the true religion; although most men do not know it.” (30:30)
- b) In accordance with the natural disposition which God has instilled in man (i.e. Unity of oneness of God). Mohammad Asad’s translation, a German convert to Islam. Ed.
- c) This concept is the corner-stone of All Islamic teachings.

NO CHANGE IN THE LAWS OF GOD

“There is no altering in (the laws of) Allah’s Creation. This is surely the true religion, although most men do not know it.” (35:43)

“Our life takes its colour from Allah, and who can give a better colouring to life than God?” (2:138)

EFFORTS REWARDED

“That a man can have no more than what he strives for.”
(53:39) “Your effort is accepted and recognised.” (76:22)

ONLY SPIRIT BEHIND THE ACT COUNTS

“It is not their meat nor their blood that reaches Allah; It is their obedience to God’s command that reaches Him...” (22:37)

BE GRATEFUL TO ALLAH!

“Allah does not wish to burden you; He seeks only to purify and perfect His favours to you, so that you may give thanks.” (5:6)

REMEMBRANCE OF ALLAH

“Lo! Prayer restrains from lewdness and iniquity, and verily Remembrance of Allah is the greatest concern, of one’s life.”
(29:45)

YOU REAP WHAT YOU SOW

“Whatever misfortune happens to you is because of the things your hands have earned and for many of them We grant forgiveness.” (42:30)

GOOD DEEDS REWARDED

“Now no mortal knows what delights of the eye are kept hidden (in reserve) for them - as a reward for their (good) deeds.”
(32:17)

ACTS OF HIGH CHARACTER

“But if you endure, and guard against evil, then that will be an act of high character and a determining factor in all affairs.” (3:186)

WISDOM PRAISED

“And he to whom wisdom (intellect) has been granted receives indeed a magnificent advantage.” (2:269)

BLESSINGS OF PATIENCE

“And We appointed, from among them leaders (Imaams), giving guidance under Our Command, so long as they remained steadfast.” (32:24)

BE CONTENTED!

“Strain not your eyes (wistfully) at what we have bestowed on certain classes of them.” (15:88)

SELFISHNESS CONDEMNED

“Do not exult in you riches, O Karun (Korah).¹ Do not forget your share (of obligations) in this world, be good to others as Allah has been good to you.” (28:76-77)

1 Karun (Korah) was the son of Yesar or Izhar the uncle of Moses. He was a fabulously rich man. He built a palace overlaid with gold, the doors whereof were of mossy gold. People said to him, “Rejoice not immoderately.” He answered, “I have received these riches only because of my talents.” He was so carried away by his arrogance and pride that he rose in sedition against Moses openly and imputed a scandal to him. By the command of God, Moses asked the earth to swallow him, his riches, his palace and his confederates. As Karun sank gradually first to his knees, then

SIGNS OF THE UNBELIEVERS

“It is those who believe not in the Signs of God, that forge falsehood.” (16:105)

HUSBANDS AND WIVES

“He gave you wives from among yourselves that you could live in harmony, and instilled love and compassion in your hearts.” (30:21)

A TRIBUTE TO MEN OF KNOWLEDGE

“By the pen and the record.” (68:1)

The pen is the symbol of permanent record.

SIGNS LEADING TO THE CREATOR

“Behold! In the creation of the Heavens and the earth; in the alternation of the night and the day;

In the sailing of the ships through the ocean for the profit of mankind;

In the rain which Allah sends down from the skies, and the life which He gives therewith, to an earth that is dead;

In the beasts of all kinds that He scatters through the earth;

to his waist and then to his neck, he cried out, “O Moses! Have mercy on me,” but Moses turned down his requests. God said to Moses, “You had no mercy on Karun, though he asked pardon of thee four times; but I would have had compassion on him if he had asked pardon of me but once.” These comments are from Sale’s translation of the Qur’aan, p-385, first published in 1734. Ed.

In the change of the winds and the clouds which trail like slaves between the sky and the earth: (Here) indeed are signs of Allah's Sovereignty for people who have sense." (2:164)

MISUSE OF OATHS

"And make not Allah by your oaths a hindrance to your being righteous and observing your duty unto Him and making peace among mankind." (2:224)

SANCTITY OF OATH

"But honour your oaths." (5:89)¹

DISTINGUISHING CHARACTERISTICS OF THE BELIEVERS

- i) "O Ye, who believe! Surrender to Allah (i.e. be a Muslim) whole-heartedly (i.e. with singleness of mind and observe steady conduct thereafter)." (2:208)
- ii) "And let not those who possess dignity and ease among you swear not to give to the near of kin and to the needy and to fugitives for the cause of Allah. Let them forgive and show indulgence. Yearn ye not that Allah may forgive you? Allah is Forgiving and Merciful." (24:22)
- iii) "If you punish, then punish with the like of that where with you were afflicted. But if you endure patiently (i.e. forgive), verily it is better for the patient." (16:126)

1 Last line of V.89.

- iv) “And let not the hatred of some people in once shutting you out of the sacred Mosque lead you to transgression and hostility (towards them) on your part.”¹ (5:2)
- v) “Assist ye one another (including non-Muslims) unto righteousness and piety, but help ye not one another in sin and rancour.” (5:2)
- vi) “You who believe! Fulfil your undertakings (without any distinction of class or creed).”
- vii) “Believers! Stand out firmly for justice, as witnesses of Allah, even as against yourselves, or your parents or your relations, and whether it be against rich or poor, for Allah can best compensate and protect both (if at all your false testimony in their favour could be helpful).”

“Follow not the lusts of your hearts, lest you swerve, and if you distort your evidence or decline to give your testimony, verily Allah is well acquainted with what you do.” (4:134)
- viii) “Allah loves not that evil should be noised abroad in public except by those whom justice has been denied; do good openly or secretly, or forgive evil (done to the helpless), Lo! Allah being All-Powerful is yet Forgiving.”² (4:148)

RECONCILIATION PRAISED

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- 1 In the sixth year of the Hijra, the Pagans, out of their hatred for the Muslims, denied them access to the sacred Mosque. When the Muslims conquered Makka, some of them wanted to retaliate. This verse, revealed at that time, forbade such retaliatory measures. Ed.
 - 2 In pursuance of such Divine and other prophetic instructions, which number very many in the Qur’aan, and the traditions of the holy Prophet, the well known Imaam Ahmad b. Hunble forgave all his relentless persecutors (Kings of the Abbaside dynasty and their prime-ministers), although he was not only mercilessly tortured time and again but also kept behind bars for about a decade. Ed.

“And adjust matters (amicably) in which you have differences.” (8:1)

FORGIVE AND FORGET

“Let them forgive and overlook (each other’s faults and shortcomings). Do you not wish that Allah should forgive you?” (24:22)

MAINTAIN LAW AND ORDER

“Do no mischief on earth after it has been set in order.” (7:56)

GOD IS FORGIVING

“Nor would your Lord be the one to destroy communities for a single wrong-doing if its members were likely to mend.” (11:117)

SELF-DEFENCE

“Make ready all you can of (armed) forces and of horses tethered, that ye may dismay the enemy of Allah and your enemy.” (8:60)

FIRST SEEDS OF DEMOCRACY

“Forgive them (the ill-literate & the ill-cultured bedouins) and ask God’s pardon for them; and consult them in affairs in all matters of public concern.” (3:159)

“And those who conduct their affairs by mutual consultation.” (42:38)

STATUS OF WOMEN

“They (women) are your apparel and you are their apparel.”
(Let your dress be not sullied)¹ (2:187)

A COMMUNITY OF GENTLEMEN

“Let there arise out of you a band of people, inviting to all that is good, and honourable, enjoining what is right, and forbidding what is wrong; they are the ones to attain felicity.”
(3:104)

EDUCATION IN THE BATTLEGROUND

“Nor should the believers all go forth (to fight) together; if a contingent from every expedition remained behind, they could devote themselves to studies¹² and admonish those (on the battle front) when they return to them.” (9:122)

SIGNS

“And among His signs is this, that He created for you mates, from among yourselves, that ye may dwell in tranquillity with

1 Our dress protects us from harmful effects of winter and summer. It reflects our deportment. A man's culture is generally judged by the dress he wears. The outward deformities of the body are covered by our clothes. The relationship between husband and wife should be such that they share with equal grace the good and bad times and cover each other's failings. Their sincere regard for each other will lend grace to their public image. A glance at the dress may reveal, to an extent, our identity, culture and outlook. Ed.

2 “Knowledge is my weapon,” could not be better explained. Ed.

them and He has put love and compassion between your hearts.”
(30:21)

“And how many signs in the heavens and the earth do they pass by? Yet they turn (their faces) away from them and do not reflect.” (12:105)

WOMEN AND THEIR RIGHTS

“And women shall have rights similar to the rights against them, according to what is equitable; but men have a degree (of advantage) over them.”¹ (2:228)

IMPORTANCE OF KNOWLEDGE

“Allah will exalt those who believe among you and those who have knowledge.” (58:11)

TRAVELLING ADDS TO KNOWLEDGE

“Do they not travel through the land, so that their hearts (and minds) may thus learn wisdom and their ears may thus learn to hear.” (22:46)

WHO IS BLIND?

“But those who were blind (of heart) in this world, will be blind in the Hereafter.”² (17:72)

1 "The difference in economic position between sexes makes the man's rights and liabilities a little greater than the woman's. The sexes are on terms of equality in law, and in certain matters, the weaker sex is entitled to special protection." (A. Y. `Ali).

2 Those who remained blind to their obligations in the world.

BLESSINGS OF TRUE FAITH

“So lose not heart nor fall into despair for you will be triumphant if you are sincere in faith.” (3:139)

DIMENSIONS OF KNOWLEDGE IN THE QUR’AAN

“There is no animal (that lives) on the earth, nor a being that flies on its wings but (forms part of) communities like you. Nothing have We omitted from the Book, and they all shall be gathered to their Lord in the end.” (6:38)

THOSE WHO FOLLOW THE STRAIGHT PATH

“As for him who gives (in charity) and fears (Allah), and (in all sincerity) testifies to the best,¹ We will indeed ease his way to the path of bliss. But he, who is niggardly and thinks himself self-sufficient, and gives the lie to the best, We will indeed make smooth for him the path to hardship.” (92:5-10)

TESTS ACCORDING TO RANKS

“It is He Who has made you inheritors of the earth; he raised you in ranks, some above others; that He may try you (accordingly), in that He has given you; verily your Lord is swift in retribution; yet He is indeed Oft-forgiving, Most Merciful.” (6:166)

1 i.e. Who believes in the truth of the ultimate good. Everything will coincide more and more with what is good. Ed.

THE BALANCE OF JUSTICE

“And the firmament has He raised high and has set up the Balance of Justice.¹ In order that ye may not transgress the (due) balance, so weigh (your deeds) with justice and fall not short in the balance.” (55:6-9)

BROTHERHOOD

“The believers are but a single brotherhood.” (49:10)

ENTRUST YOUR WEALTH WITH CARE

“To those of weak understanding, do not make over your overall possessions, which Allah has made a means of support for you.” (4:5)

BE CHARITABLE!

“Satan threatens you with poverty and bids you to be niggardly. Allah promises you His forgiveness and bounties. And Allah is Infinite, All-Knowing.” (2:268)

1 "Justice is a heavenly virtue; the heavens are sustained by mathematical balance. The constellation Libra (the balance) is entered by the sun at the middle of the Zodiacal year. Justice is the central virtue and the avoidance of both excess and defect in conduct keeps the human world balanced just as the heavenly world is kept balanced by mathematical order." `Abdullah Yusuf `Ali. Ed.

EXHORTIONS AGAINST MISERLINESS

“And those who ward off the covetousness¹ of their own souls, they are the ones that achieve prosperity.” (64:16)

THE MIDDLE COURSE

“Those who are neither extravagant or niggardly, but hold a just (balance) between those two (extremes).” (25:67)

WHO WILL OBTAIN ENDURING BLESSINGS?

“Whatever things are given to you they are for enjoyment of this present life; but the reward which is with God is better and more durable for those who believe and put their trust in their Lord. Those who avoid the heinous sins and abominations and when they are moved to anger readily forgive. Those who respond to the call of their Lord God and are constant in prayer; those who (conduct) their affairs by mutual consultation; who spend out of what We bestow on them for sustenance; and those who, when an oppressive wrong is inflicted on them (are not cowed down) but help and defend themselves; those who recompense an injury equal thereto (in degree); but if a person forgives and makes peace, his reward rests with Allah; for (Allah) loves not evildoers; those who defend themselves after a wrong is caused to them, against such there is no blame. The way (of blame) is only against those who let loose tyranny and behave outrageously on land defying, right and justice; for such will be a grievous suffering, in store! But indeed if any endure with patience and forgive, for them

1 Our worst enemy is grasping selfishness. If we overcome this evil weakness, we will add to the good of society as well as our own.

it would truly be an exercise of courageous will and resolution in the conduct of affairs.” (42:36-43)

SALUTATION TO THE PROPHET

“Lo! Allah and His angels shower blessings on the Prophet. O believers! You are also ordained to offer to him your greetings and earnest salutation worthy of him.”¹ (33:56)

Subhaan Allah-e-Wa-be-Hamad-he, Subhan Allah-hil Aziim

Glory be to Allah and all praise is His, Immaculate is Allah, the
Exalted and the most High.

1 "If greatness of purpose, smallness of means and astounding results are the three criteria of human genius, who could dare to compare any great man in modern history with Muhummad? The most famous men created arms, laws and empires only. They founded, if anything at all, no more than material powers which often crumbled away before their eyes. This man Muhammad moved not only armies, legislations, empires, peoples and dynasties, but millions of men; and more than that, he moved the altars, the gods, the religions, the ideas, the beliefs and the souls. On the basis of a Book, every letter of which has become law, he created a spiritual nationality which blended together peoples of every tongue and of every race. The idea of the unity of God, proclaimed amidst the exhaustion of fabulous theologies, was in itself such a miracle that upon its utterance from his lips it destroyed all the ancient superstitions.

His endless prayers, his mystic conversations with God, his death and his triumph after death: all *these attest not to an imposture but to a firm conviction* which gave him the power to restore a dogma. This dogma was twofold, the unity of God and the immateriality of God; the former telling what God is, the latter telling what God is not.

“Philosopher, orator, apostle, legislator, warrior, conqueror of ideas, restorer of rational belief, of a cult without images; the founder of twenty terrestrial empires and of one spiritual empire, that is Muhammad. As regards all standards by which human greatness may be measured, *we may well ask, is there any man greater than he?*”

(*Lamartine, Historic de la Turquie, Paris 1854, Vol-II - p-276-277*)

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All Glorious is Allah and All Praise is His,
Immaculate is Allah, the Most Exalted, the Most High.

[This is the last Hadith quoted by Imaam Bukhaari (of blessed memory) in his monumental book known as Sahih Bukhaari. Ed.]

APPENDIX

a) Sons of Ismaa`il

Gen. - 25:13 Nebaijoth, Kedar, Adbeel and Misbam.

Gen. - 25:14 Mishma, Duma, and Massa.

Gen. - 25:15 Hadar, Tema, Jetur, Naphish and Kedema.

Gen. - 25:16 These are the sons of Ish`mael and these are their names by their towns, and by their castles; twelve princes according to their nations.

b) Twelve sons were born to the Prophet Yaqub (Jacob), son of the Prophet Ishaq; six of Leah, two of Rachel, two of Zilpha, the maid of Leah, and two of Bilha the maid of Rachel (Genesis - chapter 29-30). These twelve sons became the founding fathers of the twelve tribes of Israel; all testified to be 'blessed' by the Prophet Yaqub (Jacob), Musa (Moses), Dawuud (David), Messiah (Jesus) and the Apostle Yuhanna (John).

c) Scholars agree that the Prophet was born in the month of Rabi`-al-Awwal and that he was appointed as His Messenger and Prophet on the dawn of his forty-first year. The inference that the first commandment of Allah (Qur'aan Sura 96) was revealed at that time, is contradicted by the Qur'aan, "The month of Ramzaan in which was revealed the Qur'aan, a guidance for mankind..." (2:185) To remove this confusion, we need to clarify the interpretation of 'some time' (or some days) which passed between the announcement of his prophethood and the advent of the first revelation of verses of the Qur'aan. 'Some time' covers six months during which the Prophet saw clear visions and true dreams. True dreams are a forty-sixth part of Prophecy, according to a Hadith. The prophethood of Muhammad (SAW) covered twenty-three

years, the forty-sixth part of which is six months - the period between the first two visits of Arch-Angel Gabriel, the Ruh-al-Amiin, the Trustworthy Spirit. The exact date of the first revelation is calculated to be the night of the 18th of Ramzaan (in the first year of prophethood) corresponding to Friday, 17th August 610 A.D. According to Imaam Tabari's report, the date is 17th or 18th Ramzaan.

LATER ALTERATIONS TO THE MOSQUE

Caliph Abu Bakr did not make any alterations to the mosque. Caliph `Umar added a house to it, gifted by `Abbaas, uncle of the Prophet. The third Caliph made walls and pillars of stone and replaced the ceiling with quality wood. Concrete was added to the existing flooring (Bukhaari - chapter The Prophet's mosque).

Marwaan b. Haakam renovated the *Mehraab* - arch of the Mosque. Waliid b. `Abdul Maalik and `Umar b. `Abdul Aziz reconditioned the entire structure of the mosque. Eighty engineers were requisitioned from Egypt, Syria, and Qilet to supervise the construction. Marble stone was used for the whole construction. The size of the mosque was also extended.

Mehdi of the `Abbaasi dynasty added 100 yards of land to the back side of the mosque in 172 A.H. Muttawakkal had it repaired in 247 A.H. (Fatuh-ul-Buldan).

The present mosque (1922-1924) was constructed by Sultan `Abdul Majiid of Turkey.

The current Saudi government initiated massive and unprecedented changes to the mosque at Makka as well as the Prophet's mosque at Madina and it accommodated 50,000 pilgrims before 1930 and by 1993-94 it had accommodation for half a million pilgrims at a time. The whole mosque is air-conditioned. These mosques at Makka and Madina, with their sophisticated facilities for pilgrims, are almost certainly the

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biggest prayer-houses in the world. No House of Worship in the world has any comparison with these mosques, which throughout the year remain full of devotees - a blessed spectacle and a delight for the spiritual eyes.

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