

رُفِئَ رَجْمُهُ
بِالْمُؤْمِنِينَ

MUHAMMAD

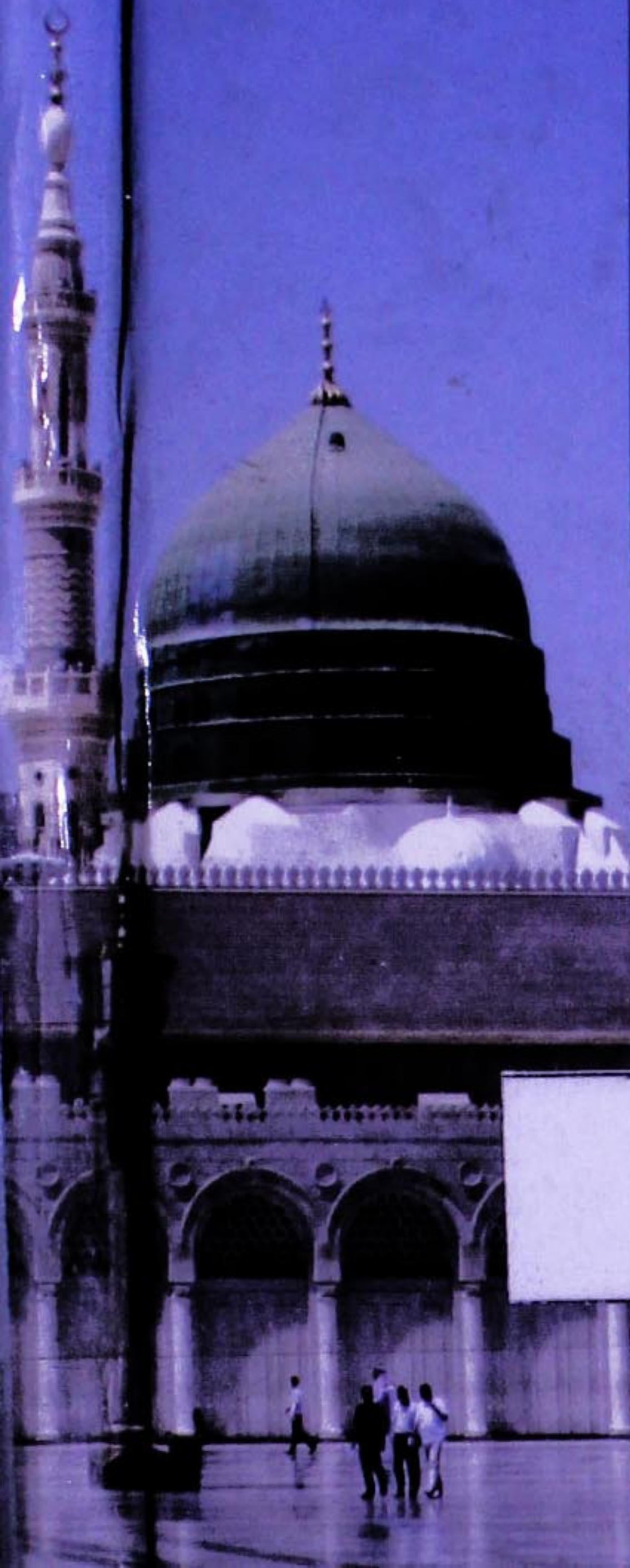
صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ

THE MERCIFUL MESSENGER OF ALLAH
SEERAH OF THE PROPHET



ABDULHAMID QADRI

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MUHAMMAD ﷺ

رَسُولُ
الْمُرْسَلِينَ

**THE MERCIFUL MESSENGER OF ALLAH
THE MERCY FOR THE UNIVERSE**



THE MERCIFUL MESSENGER OF ALLAH
SEERAH OF THE PROPHET ﷺ

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MUHAMMAD ﷺ

رُفِّعَ رَجْمُهُ
بِالْمُؤْمِنِينَ

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Verily, there has come unto you a Messenger from amongst yourselves. It grieves him to see you in agony. He is anxious over you for your deliverance; for the Believers he is Comforter, Kind and Merciful.

(At-Taubah 128).

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ
الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي
خَلَقَ الْمَوَدَّعَاتِ
الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي
خَلَقَ الْمَوَدَّعَاتِ
الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي
خَلَقَ الْمَوَدَّعَاتِ



Dedication

I dedicate this work not only to my grand children, especially to Muhammad, Taha, Hamza, Wardah and Abeer, whose keen interest in the subject prompted me to pen down this brief life-sketch of our Beloved Holy Prophet ﷺ, but also to all Muslim children living in countries where to be a Muslim is no less than a stigma, so that they can study the life of their Beloved Holy Prophet the Messenger of Peace and Mercy ﷺ.



Preface

Millions of man-hours have been spent throughout the ages, and this will continue to the end of times, by lovers, sympathizers, critics, historians, and the so-called objective orientalist, to write about the life (*Seerah*) of the Prophet of Islam Hazrat Muhammad Rasulallah ﷺ. Then why write another biography? Why should one read about him? The answer is very simple. Addressing the Holy Prophet ﷺ, Allah ﷻ says in the Holy Quran: "We tell you the stories of the Messengers, in order to make your heart firm." As is correctly said, 'belief' lies in the core of the heart. To be a perfect believer one has not only to believe in the prophethood of Muhammad ﷺ, but also to emulate his conduct and behavior as the best human ideal and to love him more than anybody and anything in one's life. It is, therefore, necessary that we should know, as much as possible, about the life-story of the Holy Prophet ﷺ, think about his glorious work and achievements, and try to follow his sublime example. Knowing details about his *Seerah* 'makes one's heart firm' in faith and belief.

The objective of this small book is, however, very limited with no claim whatsoever to scholarship. The only objective is to sketch in broad outlines the life and character of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ to provide the readers, especially the English speaking students, with basic but authentic insight into his life and achievements. In no way it is intended to be a comprehensive biography, nor should, honestly speaking any endeavour of this kind ever have any aspiration to completeness. Therefore, this work just aims at providing the young students with a basis for further and extended study of the subject in the advanced years of their studies. Another aim of the book is to place the biographical sketch of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ in the hands of young Muslims living in lands where Islam is little read and hardly understood to enable them understand his mission and achievements in a more effective.

Addressing the Holy Prophet ﷺ Allah ﷻ says in the Qur'an: [Say: O people! I am sent to you all, as the Messenger of Allah, to Whom belongs the dominion of the heavens and the earth; there is no god but He: it is He that gives both life and death. So believe in Allah and His Messenger, the unlettered Prophet, who believes in Allah and His Words and follow him so that you may be guided. With no school-learning the unlettered Prophet' was blessed with Divine Knowledge through which he turned out to be the best 'Educator' for the world. Making an example for mankind in virtues and piety in all walks of life, Allah ﷻ says: Ye have indeed in the Messenger of Allah ﷺ a beautiful and the best (pattern of conduct) for any one whose hope is in Allah and the Final Day, and who engages much in the praise of Allah.

At another place in the Quran, Allah ﷻ further says: “Now hath come unto you Light from Allah and a plain Scripture.” As Muslims, we all deeply love our Prophet ﷺ as it is through him that Allah has rescued us from the darkness of Ignorance to the light of the Right Path. It is thus natural for Muslims to instill in their hearts deep love and reverence for the Holy Prophet ﷺ, as not only is he our guiding light and ideal in all walks of life, but in bringing the sublime message of Allah ﷻ to us he is the savior of our souls.

It would be great ingratitude on my part if I fail to express my sincere thanks to my grand kids living in Great Britain whose keen interest and long telephone calls and questions prompted me to write this small book. My special thanks are for my daughter whose long discussions on the 'Life of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ' and assistance made the completion of this work possible. May Allah the Almighty ﷻ bless her with His love and blessings!

Abdul Hamid Qadri
Medinah Al-Munawwara
12 Rabi al-Awwal, 1431 A.H.

Introduction

Millions are born every day. Of them only a few are destined to be great. The rest lead their lives and pass away without leaving lasting memories behind. If ever we count the great ones from early times, we find that only a numbered few could emerge as great persons in the real sense of the word. Of them some were renowned as great rulers, some as conquerors, some as legislators or administrators, some as scholars or philosophers, and some as opinion leaders; while only a few of them were chosen by God to be His Prophets and Messengers to mankind who have influenced the world in one form or another.

As for the Prophets, some were accepted by their tribes, while others were rejected and killed. Each prophet preached the same divine message - Monotheism - the Oneness and Unity of God - the worship of One God - and based upon a divine moral and social code for mankind to live by. With the passage of time, however, those who had heeded the call of the prophets fell into superstitions and lost sight of the message of Almighty God. Some even

started worshipping deities made by their own hands and some took their prophets as deities, while others started worshipping planets and forces of nature, such as the Sun, Moon, clouds and anything that they thought would benefit them. Ancient scriptures around the world mention names of some famous Prophets but a complete list has never been available. The Bible mentions only a few, twenty-six of whom have been mentioned in the Quran as well. Faith in previous prophets and the scriptures is fundamental to the Muslim faith just because the message of Islam is a continuation of the monotheistic message preached by earlier prophets.

Many of the prominent Prophets and Messengers (peace and blessings of Allah be upon them all) whose teachings have come down to us in one form or another, besides preaching the True Religion of the Creator, did, however, make a specific mention of a prophecy that the line of prophets would end with advent of the chief of all the prophets whose message would stay with mankind forever. Such prophecies are found in the scriptures of almost all the religions, such as the Bible, the Hindu Vedas and Puranas,

the Buddhist Shastars or the Zoroastrian Avestas, and even in the Dead Sea Scrolls of the community of Qumran that had lived thousands of years ago. Each of these scriptures had made a specific mention of the coming of the Comforter and the Deliverer of Mankind, the most praised one and the loveliest, at a particular point in time: for example, the Gospels mentioned *Periklytos*, and the Old Testament mentioned '*Mahamadiym*'. The Buddhist scriptures mentioned '*Maitreya*', the Hindu books prophesied for

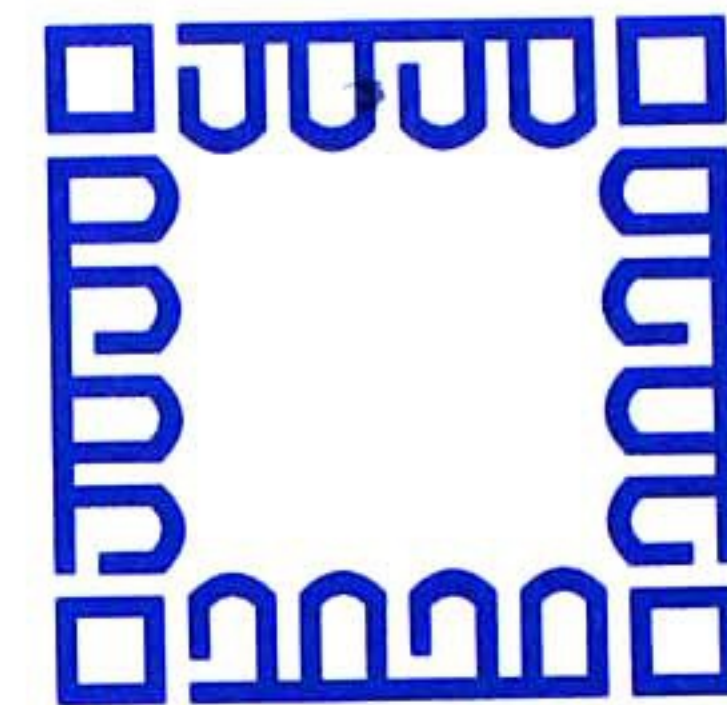


'*Mahamad*' and the '*Kalki Avatar*' while the Zoroastrians await the arrival of 'Mercy for the entire Universe'.

The religious scenario at the time of the birth of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ can be summarized in just a few lines. The major religions had been a long time in various stages of paganism. Judaism and Christianity were Hinduism besides a few local cults. As for Islam, it was the only monotheistic religion then surviving as the Jews were on the run from one land to another in search of

peace and advent of their awaited *Messiah*, especially after the Babylonians had pulled their chief temple to the ground. Christianity had had a meek start and flourished only after King Constantine embraced and reformed this religion. It was weakened by the strife between the Catholics and the Eastern Church. Similarly, the fire of *Yazdan* lit in Zoroastrian temples was faltering. Buddhism had been expelled from India by the hegemony of Brahmans who fell into the net of superstitions and nature worship. Greek philosophers too had failed to provide an adequate solution to the ills suffered by humanity. At about the same time, the descendants of Abraham عليه السلام and Ismail عليه السلام, who had built the "house" (*Ka'ba*) for worshipping One True God, were expelled from Makkah by the Yemenite *Quraish* clans, who sculptured hundreds of idols and worshipped them in the holy *Ka'ba*. Although in the long chain of prophets had come to guide humanity, yet after Jesus, almost six centuries had passed by but none had been sent by God to restore the religion in its pure form and re-establish the worship of One True God. The world was yearning for a savior and guidance.

Such were the times when in the heart of Makkah there appeared the most-awaited Prophet who was born as an orphan in the noblest house of the famous *Quraish* tribe. This orphan, named *Muhammad* ﷺ, who was born in a remote town geographically cut off from the rest of the then civilized world, was destined to lead the world to the straight path of the Unity of Godhead. He succeeded not only in terms of restoring belief in One God, but, through his sublime conduct, has influenced a large segment of human beings who cherish to emulate his example in all walks of their lives.

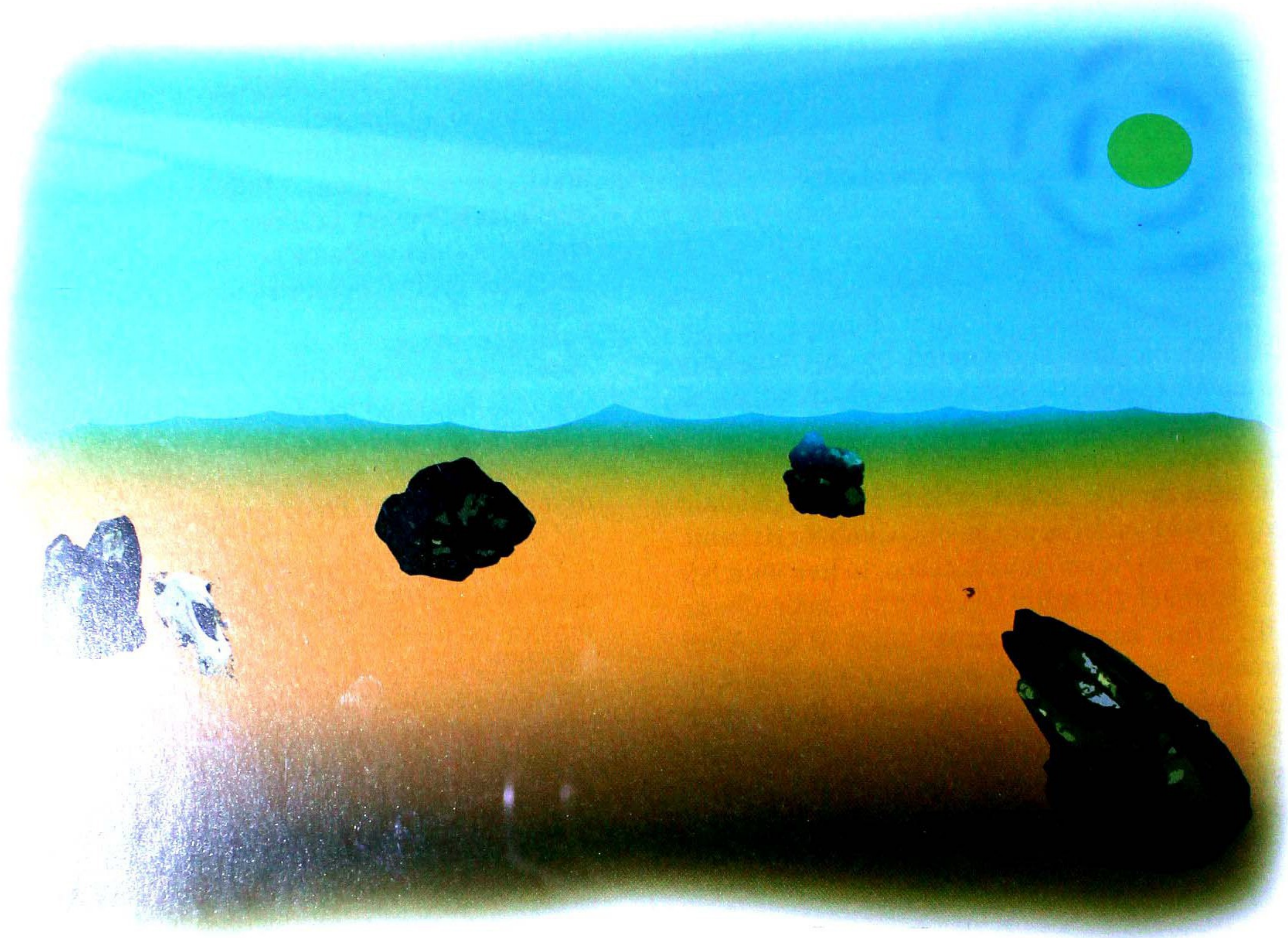


MAKKAH

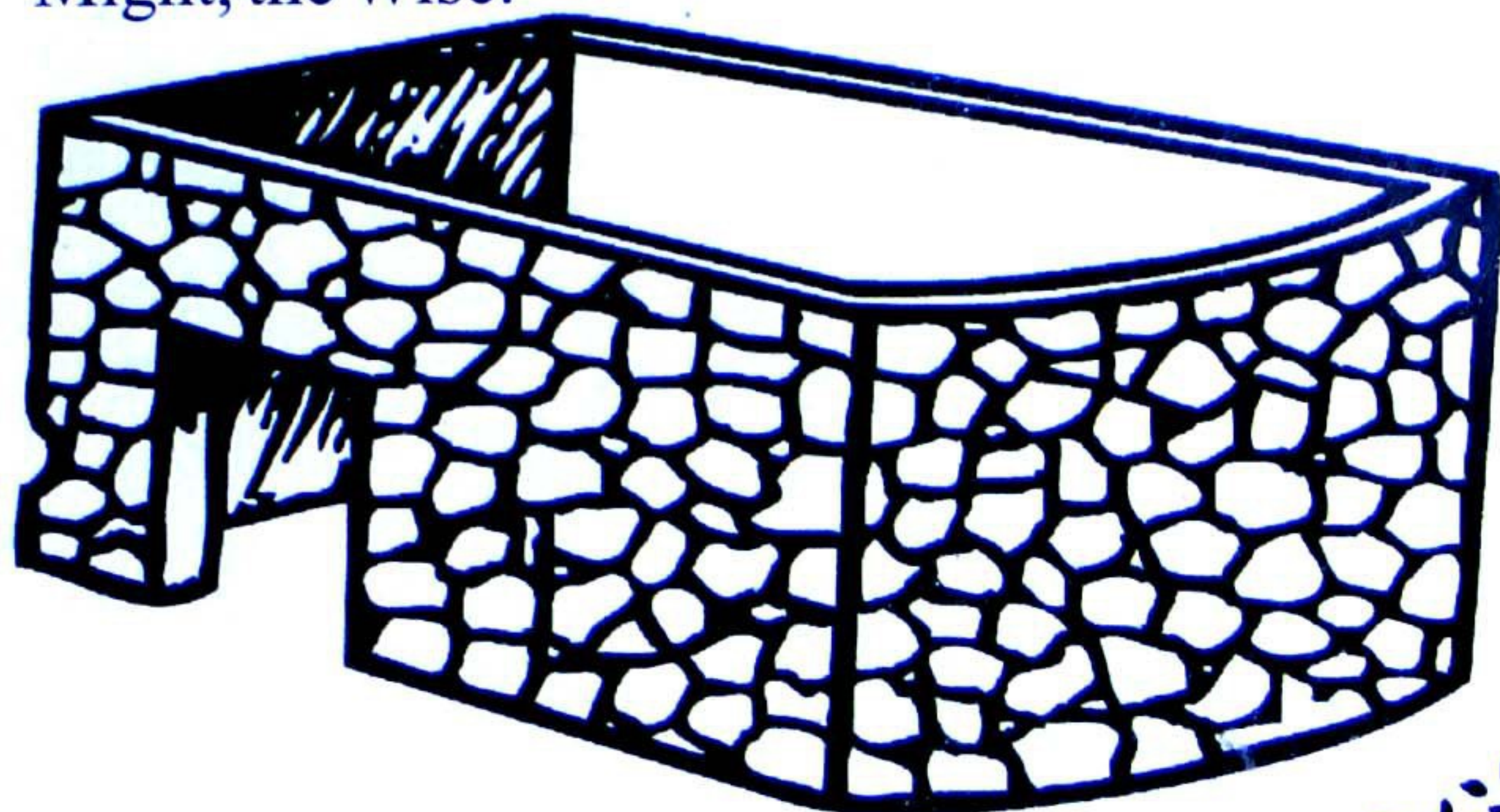
In ancient times Makkah was a barren waterless piece of land formed of dry volcanic lava surrounded by dry but lofty mountain ranges. No human being had ever dared settle there because of hostile terrain and absence of means of living. It is mentioned in the Torah as the area in the desert where Hagar (Islamic *Hajar*) was left by her husband Abraham (Islamic *Ibrahim* عليه السلام), upon him be peace, to live with her son Ishmael (Islamic *Ismail* عليه السلام) under divine will. This happened circa 1850 B.C. After *Ibrahim* عليه السلام left the mother and the child in desolation *Hajar* went atop a nearby hill in search of water. She wailed and desperately ran between two nearby hills but could not find any sign of water. Despairingly she returned to her child who was crying and stamping the ground with his feet.

To her surprise, she found pure drinkable water gushing out of the rocky ground at his feet. This miraculous spring came to be known as *Zamzam* and it exists even today. Millions of pilgrims who visit Makkah every year not only drink the sweet and pure water of *Zamzam* but they take gallons of it back to their countries for their families and friends.

It is stated in the Qur'an, that *Ibrahim* عليه السلام left *Hajar* and *Ismail* عليه السلام in the valley of *Bakka* when *Ibrahim* عليه السلام visited his family, in a dream he found himself sacrificing his son at the command of God. As a Prophet of God, he decided to fulfill his dream by sacrificing his son *Ismail* عليه السلام in the name of Allah. However, Allah جل جلاله had already substituted for *Ismail* عليه السلام. *Ibrahim* عليه السلام built a house for worship of Allah in the valley of *Bakka* and established rituals for the pilgrims. The valley in which the Ka'aba was built was known as *Bakka*, which in time came to be known as *Makkah*. When *Ibrahim* عليه السلام had completed the building of the Holy Ka'aba, he prayed to Allah جل جلاله: "Our Lord! Send amongst them a Messenger



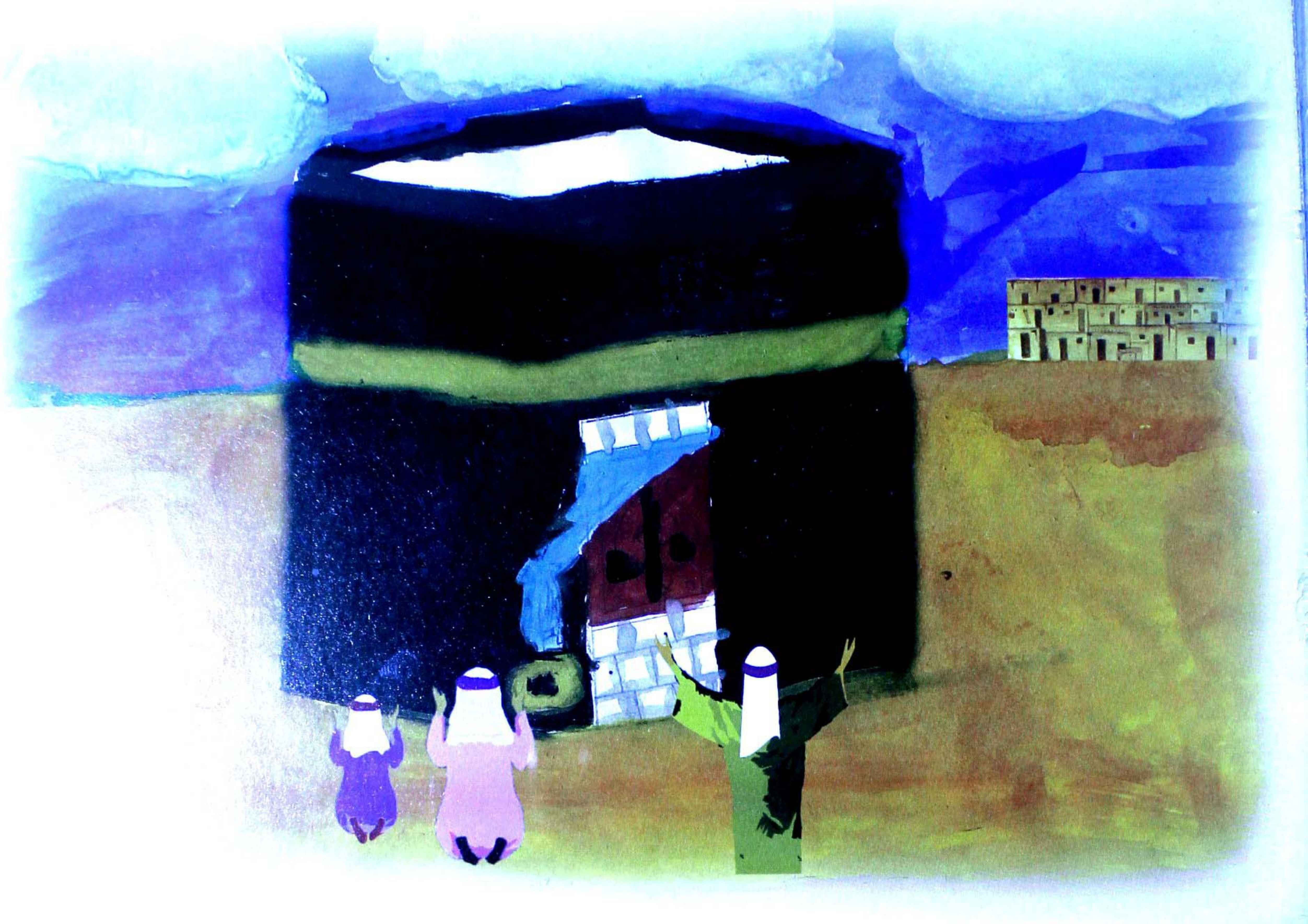
of their own, who shall rehearse Thy Signs to them and instruct them in scripture and wisdom, and sanctify them: For Thou art the Exalted in Might, the Wise."



Ismail عليه السلام and his descendants were the first Arabs to settle there. He married a lady from the Yemeni tribe of Banu Jurham and they were blessed with twelve sons, the first of whom was *Nebioth* and the second one *Kedar*. While *Nebioth* shifted northwards, *Kedar* and his descendants settled and thrived in the northern Arabia, especially in Makkah. The religious importance of *Ka'ba* made Makkah the center of

Arabia where people came to trade and perform pilgrimage. It became a city of peace. The descendants of Ismail remained trustees of *Ka'aba*, the House of Allah.

The Old Testament narrates: "The Lord came from Sinai and dawned over them from Seir; He shone forth from Mount Paran". This prophecy refers to the prophethood of three personalities: Moses عليه السلام, Jesus عليه السلام and Muhammad ﷺ respectively. Sinai is the place where the Prophet Moses عليه السلام had the revelation to speak to God and received the Torah. Seir, a mountain range in Palestine, is where Prophet Jesus عليه السلام received his Divine Revelation. In a cave in the mountains of Mecca, the Quran the last testament started to be revealed when Gabriel (Islamic *Jibreel* عليه السلام) came down for the first revelation to Prophet Muhammad ﷺ. Allah ﷻ. Paran is a mountain range in the Sinai Peninsula is mentioned in the Torah as an area in the Sinai Desert where Hajar was left by her husband Ibrahim عليه السلام to live with her son Ismail عليه السلام. The well of Zamzam had appeared in it. As is stated explicitly



in the Qur'an, Ibrahim عليه السلام left Hagar and Ismail عليه السلام in the valley of Makkah, which was then an uninhabited place within the mountain ranges of Paran. The Quran tells us that the first ever temple exclusively devoted to the worship of God was built at this place. Prophet Muhammad ﷺ is the descendant of the great Prophets Ibrahim عليه السلام and his son Ismail عليه السلام. Muhammad is mentioned by name in the Song of Solomon. The Hebrew word used there is Mahamadiym. The last letters, the suffix '**IYM**' means a plural and is used as a mark of respect, majesty and grandeur. Minus "**iy**", the name would have been '*Muhamud*' which is translated as "altogether lovely" in the Authorized Version of the Bible. In Arabic '**MUHAMMAD**' means 'The Praised One' or 'the one worthy of Praise' (Peace and blessings of Allah be upon him)!

صلى الله
عليه
وسلم
محمد رسول الله

The Family Background

A Brief Sketch of the Early Life of the Holy Prophet ﷺ
His Forefathers:

The Qureshites, the family of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, was held in high esteem even before the advent of Islam. Even though there was no hard and fast type of political set up in Makkah those, such as a kingdom, yet all political affairs were looked after by the influential group of the Qureshites. Thus the forefathers of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ were considered among the elites of the city. In Muslim we find a Hadith in which the Messenger of Allah ﷺ has said: "Allah purified and chose Kinana out of all descendants of Ismail and He chose Quraish from among children of Kinana and He chose from Quraish, Banu Hashim, and He chose from amongst Banu Hashim, me." Therefore, from his lineage he was the very best of the best of the best.

When Mughaira bin Shu'ba رضي الله عنه took the letter of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ to the Sassanid Emperor, Yazdgard, he said about the Beloved Prophet ﷺ: "...Allah sent to us a person whom we knew well. We know his lineage, we know his face, we know his birth, his land is the most sacred of all lands, his ancestors were the best of all our ancestors, his house (household) is the best of all our households, his tribe is the best of all tribes, and he himself as a person of all of us."

One of the grandfathers of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ was Qusay, the one who united and led the Quraish for a long time. He built the *Nadwa* (the first public house in Makkah) where the elders to decide matters of importance. His grandfather, Hashim, was responsible for providing food and water to the pilgrims was the one who made trade agreements with other Arab tribes as well as with the Persians and Romans, and negotiating safe passage of the Quraish caravans – a step that largely contributed to the boosting of the trade ties with the neighboring states. Being descendants of Isma'il عليه السلام, his forefathers held the custodianship of the Holy Ka'aba. His immediate grandfather, Abdul

Muttalib, was the one responsible for digging the well of Zamzam to offer water to the Arabs. In addition he was the one to stop Abraha when he came to conquer Makkah.

Abdul Muttalib son of Hashim was head of the Hashemite clan of the *Quraish* – the descendants of Prophet Ismail عليه السلام son of Prophet Ibrahim عليه السلام and was held in high esteem by all residents of Makkah. God had blessed Abdul Muttalib with eleven sons, among them Abdullah, besides four daughters, but he loved his son Abdullah more than anybody else. He was blessed with outstanding features and qualities. It is said that in darkness his forehead used to shine and a beam of light came forth to light up everything around him. When he became young the Quraishi ladies vied with one another to marry him, but modest as he was, he did not agree to any proposal. On the other hand, Abdul Muttalib was looking for a bride for his son who was of high charm and chastity. He came to know of a beautiful daughter of Wahb, from Banu Zahra who was renowned for her piety. The people of Makkah were descendants of Zahra the daughter of Qusa'i the great grandfather of

the Holy Prophet ﷺ. He visited the lady's parents and asked for her hand for his son and the proposal was readily accepted. Thus Abdullah married Amina رضي الله عنها. According to the custom of the times, the couple stayed in Amina's house for the first three days. Thereafter, the couple started their new life in a small house. The light of Prophethood on Abdullah's forehead was transferred to lady Amina رضي الله عنها.

Abdullah was a merchant and used to lead caravans to business centers in and around the Arabian Peninsula. After a few months of his marriage, he left for Ghazza with his merchandise. On the way back, he stayed at Yathrib (now called Medinah) to visit his maternal uncles (Banu Najjar). There he fell sick and his caravan returned without him to inform his father of his illness. Abdul Muttalib sent his son Al-Harith to bring him back but when he reached there he found that Abdullah had died a month after the departure of the caravan and had been buried there. Al-Harith brought the sad news, among others, to Amina رضي الله عنها who was then expecting a child – a child who could never see his father's care and affection but was destined to

be the Last Messenger of God. Prophet Muhammad ﷺ was born six months after the death of his father and was thus an orphan – a gifted orphan whom Allah Y took into His own care – a fact mentioned in the Quran as “Alam Yajidka Yateeman f'awa! (Did We not find you an orphan and took care of you?)

The Attack on Makkah:

Makkah had become the hub and center of trade in the area. Besides, people visited this holy city for pilgrimage which gave it additional prestige and power. Jealous of this socio-religious significance of Makkah the then Abyssinian viceroy for Yemen, namely Abraha Al-Arsham, built a temple at Sana'a to rival the Ka'aba at Makkah and started forcing Arabs to visit it for pilgrimage but nobody paid any attention. Failing to attract the Arabs he decided to attack Makkah in order to destroy Ka'aba. Riding on an elephant, he marched with a huge army which pitched their tents in a valley near Makkah in the month of Moharram. His soldiers captured a large number of livestock including

some camels belonging to Abdul Muttalib. Abraha sent a word to Abdul Muttalib that he had no intention to fight the Makkans and only wanted to pull down the House of Allah, the Ka'aba. When Abdul Muttalib visited him in his camp, he simply asked him to release his two hundred camels captured by his army. However, he advised Abraha to abandon his plans and even offered him one third of the wealth of the Tihama region if he would spare Ka'aba, but Abraha turned down that offer.

On return to his kinsmen, Abdul Muttalib briefed them about the evil designs of the invaders. When asked as to what would happen to the House of Allah, he simply said: “Allah will protect His house. Ka'aba was the cause of invasion and destruction. However, if the invaders could march forward, by Allah almost all the army perished. Huge flocks of small birds called “Ababeels” (like swallows) hovered over their heads and pelted stones on them. They swooped down upon the invaders and destroyed them and their elephants. Exhausted and disappointed, Abraha with a very small number of survivors could not but flee back to



Yemen where he died of shame and shock. The year when this event took place was forever etched in the Makkan history as the Year of the Elephant. Allah ﷻ had indeed protected His House. The enemy perished and the Makkans were jubilant. Rasulallah ﷺ was born about two months after that incident. Forty years later, Allah ﷻ reminded the Makkans of this great event, in the following verses of the

Quran:

Have you not seen what your Lord did to the people of the elephant? Did he not make their wicked plans go astray? And set upon them birds (swallows) in great hordes to pelt them with stones of hard mud, making them like chaff.

The Birth of the Holy Prophet ﷺ

Amidst celebrations of this jubilant occasion of perishing of their enemy, Bani Hashim were blessed with the birth of a baby who was to be the Mercy for the entire universe. Rasulullah ﷺ was born 50 days after the day of destruction of the Abraha elephants, in the early hours of Monday 12th Rabi-al-Awwal in the year commonly known as the Year of the Elephant. Scholars unanimously agree that he was born on a Monday. Abu Qatada al-Ansari ﷺ stated that when the Messenger of Allah ﷺ was asked about why did he fast on every Monday, he replied: This is the day on which I was born and the day on which I was bestowed with prophethood and I received the Revelation. According to the Gregorian calendar it was the 20th April of the year 570 CE (corresponding to 1st Jaith of 628 the Indian Bikrimi year – towards the end of the fortieth year of the reign of Anushirvan of Persia). It was related by Abdul Muttalib, “During the time of the birth of Muhammad ﷺ, I was

performing the Tawaf around Ka'aba. It was about dawn when I heard '*Allaho Akbar*' from the side of the Ka'aba and after that a messenger came with the good tidings that Amina had given birth to a baby boy. At the time of his birth, I saw light in every direction.” On hearing the good news Abdul Muttalib rushed to his house and took the baby boy into his loving arms. With tears of joy he carried the baby to Ka'aba and after taking him around it seven times he proclaimed: “Blessed child, I will call you Muhammad. The birth of the baby coincides with the glory for the Ancient House; how blessed is he!”

When the Makkans asked him why he had named the child as Muhammad, he preferred it to the names of his forefathers and said: “Because I want him to be praised in the heavens of Allah above and on the earth by the people.” The name means 'the one extremely praised'. His mother named him as “Ahmed”. Both names – Ahmed and Muhammad – were hardly known earlier. On the seventh day Abdul Muttalib slaughtered a sheep and arranged a

وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَاكَ إِلَّا رَحْمَةً لِّلْعَالَمِينَ

grand celebration for all Makkans to enjoy. It is not out of place to mention here why Abdul Muttalib named his grandson as 'Muhammad'. As for naming him Muhammad, there is a story behind it. Abdul Mutallib was once traveling in al-Sham with three of his companions. Along the way they met a group of rabbi Jews. The Jews asked, 'From where did you come?' They replied 'We are from Makkah'. One of the rabbis exclaimed: From your country a Prophet will emerge. They asked, 'What is the name of this Prophet?' He replied 'His name would be Muhammad'. Until then, this name was not used by the Arabs. On their return each one of them decided to name any of their new offspring as Muhammad. Abdul Mutallib could not have any more children, so he wanted to name the first grandchild that would be born thereafter to any of his sons as Muhammad. On that auspicious night, when Abdul Muttalib was performing circumambulation round Ka'aba, he got the good news. And when he heard about the way he was born, circumcised with his umbilical cord cut off, and supporting his body with his hands, prostrating and praying, he was overjoyed and exclaimed: 'By Allah, verily for this son of mine

there is a very special importance.' He rushed to the house of Amina رضي الله عنها, took the baby into his hands and before he was even named him he took him into Ka'aba raising him on his hands thanking Allah جل جلاله for this greatest gift for mankind, for whom Allah جل جلاله has also said in the Holy Quran: "Verily Allah has made a great favour to the Believers by sending to them His Messenger.

It is worth mentioning that some extraordinary events had taken place on the night of his birth. It is reported that most of the walls of the Ka'ba toppled over; the palace of the Emperor shook and cracked (the main palace still show fourteen of its walls which had collapsed); the small lake of *Sawa* dried up and fell into the earth, and the fire worshippers of the Zoroastrians at *Istakhrabad* that had been burning for over a thousand years at a stretch extinguished all of a sudden. All these signs were a clear indication of the arrival of the most awaited Prophet who would awaken the mankind.

According to one tradition, Amina رضي الله عنها had a dream during her pregnancy in which she was

told that she would give birth to a very dignified person; she was told to name that child *Muhammad* or *Ahmad*. She is also reported to have stated another dream of hers in which she saw that a beam of light emanated from her body and spread all over the horizons. With that light she could see the palaces of the Occident (the lands of al-Sham, as it was called then). According to some of the narrations from Amina رضي الله عنها during her pregnancy period she did not feel any discomfort of pregnancy as experienced by all would-be mothers. There are also traditions saying that she felt no pain during delivery. Again, according to another account, Prophet Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم was circumcised (*Makhtoon*) and *Masrur* (his umbilical cord was already cut off). He had been named by the angels and the Seal of Prophethood had been stamped on his back. It is reported that when Prophet Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم was born he was placed on a side (away from her mother), first he cried and then looked at the sky praying: 'O Allah! Forgive my Ummah. He

was neat and clean. Hassan Ibn Thabit رضي الله عنه, the poet of the court of the Messenger of Allah صلى الله عليه وسلم at Medina) stated: One day when I was seven years old, I was with or at the place of the Jews in one of the suburbs of Medina. There was a Rabbi from the Jews sitting high on the top of a house and calling out 'O Jewish people, today the star of 'Ahmad' has emerged or appeared, and it is not supposed to appear except on his arrival'

His Childhood:

For the first few days, besides being suckled by his mother Amina رضي الله عنها, the infant was suckled by a lady named Thuwaibah al-Aslamiyah, who was then a slave-girl belonging to Abu Lahab, an uncle of the Holy Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. Umm Ayman رضي الله عنها, whose name was Barakah Habashiah, was his baby-sitter. On the eighth day, Halima Sa'dia رضي الله عنها daughter of Abu Dhuayb, a lady from Bani Sa'ad bin Bakar tribe from Ta'if area, came. It was a practice of the Arabs to send their newborn boys to the countryside to let them

grow up in the care of Bedouin wet-nurses in hard but healthy atmosphere in the mountain valleys. Halima رضي الله عنها, accompanied by her husband Harith and foster child Dhamra, took baby Muhammad ﷺ to the valley of Banu Sa'd which is about 50 kilometers from Makkah and 60 Kilometers from Ta'if. Halima رضي الله عنها belonged to a poor clan of Banu Sa'ad. Her husband used to tend herds of livestock. Halima رضي الله عنها narrated that after she took the infant into her care she felt that everything started prospering. Her cattle yielded more milk and increased in number. The people of Banu Sa'ad also felt that their days had changed and the miracle baby had brought them prosperity and blessings.

Later in her life when she had embraced Islam, Halima رضي الله عنها used to cherish the old memories and recounted the turn of events which unfolded on her taking over the care of baby Muhammad and had witnessed that miraculously the scales of fortune had turned in their favour. She had another baby named Dhamra. She tells the tale of her journey to Makkah and back to Bani Sa'ad in

these words: It was a year of drought and famine and we had nothing to eat. I rode on a brown she-ass. We also had with us an old she-camel. By Allah we could not get even a drop of milk. We could not have a wink of sleep during the night as my child kept crying for milk. There was not enough milk in my breast and even the she-camel had nothing to feed him. We used to constantly pray for rain and immediate relief. At length we reached Makkah looking for babies to suckle. Not even a single woman amongst us accepted the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. As soon as they were told that he was an orphan, they refused him.

We used to fix our eyes on the child and we would get from the child's father. When Muhammad, he was an orphan. Every woman thought: An orphan! What are his grandfather's mother likely to do? So we spurned him because of that. Every woman who came with milk for suckling and when we were about to depart, I said to my husband: "By Allah, I do not like to go back along with the other women without any baby. I should go to that orphan and I must take him. He said, "There is no harm in doing so and perhaps

Allah might bless us through him. So I went and took him and returned to my place. I put him on my breast and to my great surprise I found enough milk in it. He drank to his heart's content, and so did his foster brother and then both of them went to sleep although my baby had not been able to sleep the previous night. My husband then went to the she-camel to milk it and to his astonishment too he found plenty of milk in it. He milked it and we drank to our fill, and enjoyed a sound sleep during the night. The next morning, my husband said: "By Allah Halima ؑ, you must understand that you have been able to get a blessed child." And I replied: "By the grace of Allah, I hope so." She also said: At his first sight when I had lifted him in my arms in front of his mother Anna ؑ, I tried to suckle him from my right side but the baby would not open his mouth. I then tried on my left side and he immediately opened it. During the entire suckling period he remained on my right side from which I used to feed. Ibn Hisham reported that she said, "When I brought the Prophet to my home from the arms of his mother, my home transformed into a place of happiness. It was a place of grief previously that, due to my

weakness, I was unable to feed my son to his full, but through the blessings of the Prophet being in our care, I was able to feed him and my son to their fill with ease."

She used to take the infant to Makkah every six months to have his mother, grandfather and uncles meet him. Prophet Muhammad ﷺ stayed with his wet nurse until he was five or six years old and was then brought to Makka and handed over to his mother. Halima's husband was Harith bin Abdul 'Uzza. The couple's children, Bashir, Unaysa and Juzama bint al-Harith (popular name Shayma), were the Prophet's foster siblings. Shayma used to take care of the Holy Prophet ﷺ and called him by the epithet "Qureshi brother". He had other foster brothers and sisters also: Abu Sufyan bin Al-Harith bin Abdul-Muttalib, the Prophet's cousin and Hamza bin 'Abdul-Muttalib, the Prophet's uncle, were also suckled by the same two wet nurses Thuwaibah and Halima Sa'adia ؑ, who had suckled the Messenger of Allah ﷺ.

Abdul Muttalib used to send his sons, by

turn, to the valley to carry provisions to Halima's family and make sure of the well-being of the child. In later years the Holy Prophet ﷺ used to tell his companions ﷺ: "I am the purest Arab amongst you. I am a Quraishi who was nursed by a lady of Banu Sa'ad". The memories of those days were so sweet that the Holy Prophet ﷺ always mentioned her with respect. Whenever she visited him he used to offer her gifts. Once, after his marriage to Khadija ﷺ, Halima ﷺ came to Makkah looking for some help as her valley was facing a draught, she returned home with camels laden with food and forty heads of sheep.

While he was in the care of Sayyeda Halima ﷺ, sometimes the blessed child Muhammad ﷺ used to accompany his foster-brother Bashir to the nearby pastures and valleys for grazing their sheep. One day when he was looking after the flock outdoor, his foster-brother came screaming that something had happened to his 'Qureshi brother' as all the Sa'adi brothers and sisters used to call him with deep affection. Halima and her husband rushed to the valley where Muhammad ﷺ was standing in perfect

calm although his face looked a bit pale. In her later years when Halima ﷺ had entered the fold of Islam, she used to narrate that upon asking about what had happened, he had told that all of a sudden two forms clad in white robes had appeared to him. One asked the other: Is that the boy? And the second replied: Yes it is he! He told them that the two heavenly forms opened his chest and took his heart out and after washing it the angel put it back in his chest. The holy Quran has alluded to this incident: "Have we not opened your chest for you?" This incident should be taken as a parable which signifies that Allah ﷻ had opened Muhammad's breast when he was quite young so that the divine light could enlighten it.

This incident happened in the sixth month of his age after which Halima ﷺ brought him back to his mother. Hardly had he entered the company of his mother to his fill when his father decided to take him to Yathrib where his grandfather lay buried. Umm Ayman ﷺ also accompanied them. They stayed there for about two months and then decided to return to Makkah. On way

back. Sayyeda Amina ؑ fell sick and passed away near the village of Abwa. While she was breathing her last, Amina ؑ looked at her child and said: "All living things perish. All things new get old. All things in abundance diminish. All things great disappear. Certainly I too will die, but I will always be remembered, because I leave to the world my son as a benefactor of the future." In the presence of a few people of the village, the orphan Muhammad ؑ said goodbye to his mother watching her burial on the top of a hill. Umm Ayman ؑ then brought him to Makkah. Orphaned with the death of his mother, Muhammad ؑ was brought back to Makka by Umm Ayman ؑ and entrusted to the care of his grandfather Abd al-Muttalib. Prophet Muhammad ؑ revisited Abwa in the sixth year after the Emigration (628 AD) and visited his mother's grave. Tidying the grave with his own blessed hands, he shed tears as he remembered the affection and compassion of his mother. So greatly affected by his grief, the people around him also could not hold back their tears and wept with him.

It is reported that his grandfather took him under

his care. He was so kind and careful that he always kept him beside him. Being the tribal chief and the custodian of the Ka'aba he was held in high esteem. A splendid couch was always laid for him in the shadow of Ka'aba and no one, not even his sons, could sit beside him. When Muhammad ؑ happened to come there, the kind grandfather always let him sit beside him on that couch. But the period of his guardianship could not last long and in the eighth year of the Prophet's age the grandfather also passed away. On his deathbed he passed the responsibility for his guardianship to Abu Talib who was the real brother of Abdullah the father of the Messenger of Allah ؑ (i.e. from both father and mother side).

Although Abu Talib himself had a large family to support, yet he shouldered his responsibility with devotion and love and took utmost care of his ward. On the death of his father Abu Talib became the custodian of Ka'aba. This position carried great honour and the people used to come to him for prayers at times of difficulties. Once when there was a severe drought in Makkah people approached him to pray for rains. He took

Muhammad ﷺ and seated him beside the door of the Ka'aba and raised the child's face towards the heaven. He believed that only a prayer by this gifted child could bring in the downpour of rain. He was right; in a moment the sky was overcast and heavy rains came in. Abu Talib was a great poet too. This miraculous event made him utter a few stanzas in praise of his nephew, the opening verse of which was:

What a beautiful white face this child has,
Which, when raised towards the skies,
brings in showers of blessings;
Surely, he will take care of widows and
look after the orphans.

Being a merchant Abu Talib had to lead trade caravans to the north in the summer season and to the south in the winter. History records that on one of these journeys, Muhammad ﷺ, who was then twelve years old, pressed his uncle to accompany with him. Abu Talib could not resist the request of his beloved nephew and seated him on his camel. This was his first travel out of

Makkah. On the way the caravans used to have stopovers at places where water and food could be found. On such a stopover, near a Christian church on the flanks of Jabel ed-Druz, the priest named Bohaira, saw young Muhammad ﷺ and invited the caravan to a luncheon. Caravans had been stopping there since ages but the priest had never invited anyone to have meals with him. But that time, the members of the caravan were invited to a sumptuous lunch. Everybody went to the party except Muhammad ﷺ. The priest insisted that the one left behind was in fact the chief guest and insisted that he must come. When the youth came, the priest asked him many questions and was astonished to have correct answers. He then requested him to show a mark on his back between his shoulders. On seeing the "seal of the Prophet" he exclaimed: he it is who has been prophesied in the Scriptures and said that the people would believe him and deny his message and might kill him. He advised Abu Talib to send Muhammad ﷺ back for fear of any mishap on the onward trip. The advice was well taken. Abu Talib sent him home with one of his slaves. Near the remains of that Church, on a rock where

young Muhammad ﷺ had stood for a while his footprints that got imprinted on the cliff-top miraculously, exist even today and bear testimony to the fact that young Muhammad ﷺ had graced that valley.

His Youth:

Nature had groomed this handsome youth to be upright, shy, modest, quiet, thoughtful, righteous, and humane to the utmost degree right from the beginning. As announced in the Quran, Allah ﷻ had taken him in His own care and safeguarded him from imperfections. As a youth he was very pious and reserved. He kept himself away from all types of ills which were common among the youth. The license and freedom that youth used to enjoy in those days had no place in his heart. History could not find a single fault in his character with this youth. He did not attend any folk-shows and fairs that could be good or bad in any sense. Modesty, humility, modesty and truthfulness remained the marks of his character. The Quran commanded him to be on the highest citadel of the character. Nobody could raise his

finger on his truthfulness as he had led a pious and righteous life among the Mekkans as mentioned in the Quran. At another place, it mentions that he was the most truthful. Never did he bow to any idol.

He had such a strong social standing that the people called him “the True” and “the Trustworthy”. Even his arch-enemies conceded these qualities as is shown by the speech of Abu Sufian in the court of the Byzantine emperor. His guardian-and-uncle Abu Talib, while he was on his death-bed, stated: “Muhammad ﷺ is Al-Amin (Trusty) of the Quraish, and Al-Siddique (the True) of the Arabs, and he unites in his person all the virtues.” His first wife, Khadija ﷺ who had spent fifteen years with him at the time of the first revelation said to him: “You are kind and loving to your kinsfolk, kind to your neighbours, charitable to the poor, faithful to your word, and always a defender of truth and justice...” His other wife A'isha ﷺ who spent almost ten years with him, said: “The Prophet ﷺ was more modest than a virgin in her closet.” She further said, “His character is the Quran itself.”

While he was in the care of his uncle Abu Talib, the family gave him due love and affection. On his part he too had great regard for the wife of Abu Talib, Fatima daughter of Asad رضي الله عنها, and respected her just as his real mother. Fatima took great care of Muhammad ﷺ, caring for him more than her own children. The Prophet ﷺ never forgot the goodness of his aunt when he grew up. He would visit her in her house in Madina and would sometimes sleep there in the afternoons. He was very much grieved when she passed away and used his own shirt for her shroud and personally led her funeral prayer. When speaking of his sadness to those around him, he showed his great sense of loyalty with the following words: "I was a child who was in need of her custody. She would feed me even if her children were hungry. She would leave her children and comb my hair. She was like my mother." Abu Talib is reported to have said: It was the habit of my family that we would not take the name of anything upon partaking of the food. However, it was the habit of Muhammad ﷺ to start food with the recitation of "*Bismillah*" and end with "*Alhamdo Lillah*". I have not seen that Muhammad ﷺ ever spoke anything untruthful, or back-bited or played or

joked with other children in his childhood."

He used to do all chores of the house as did the other family members, and sometimes he even tended the flock of his uncle in the *Qarareet* plateau at a stone's throw from Ka'aba. In his youth he had become a merchant. He used to lead the trade caravans to far-off international markets such as Syria in the north and Yemen in the south.

The Makkans were primarily traders, dealing in all sorts of goods. The well-to-do used to have herds of live-stocks – mostly camels and sheep. Abdullah the father of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ was also a trader. He had the natural inclination towards trade. As mentioned above, as a teenager he used to tend the flocks of his uncle Abi Talib. Abi Talib helped him in his trading – Abu Talib traded in cloth and grain and undertook long journeys north and south in the company of his trade caravans. Many traditions show that he undertook trade journeys, not only to the south, i.e. the Occident and Yemen, but also to Habasha in the west and Hajar in the east. There is

a general consensus among his biographers that he led an honest life and remained aloof from the wrongdoing.

Qais bin Sa'ib, one of the Makkan traders, stated that he had many commercial dealings with the Messenger of Allah ﷺ and he always found in him the most trustworthy and honest partner. He said: "When he set out on a journey, I would hand to him some transactions to be done on my behalf. After the journey he would not visit his house until he had told me about the transactions in a way that would make me satisfied. In contrast, when I set out on my travels and he gave some transactions to perform, upon my return he would only ask whether I was wealthy and in good spirits, unlike other people, who only questioned me on issues relating to my business."

Qais bin Sa'ib was always on the side of the poor and showed special affection to the down-trodden. One day a man from Zabid sold his merchandise to a merchant chief named Aas bin Wail but the merchant refused to pay him back. The Zabidi

approached various leaders to help him but nobody dared come forward. He then made an appeal to the Makkans in general. Prophet Muhammad ﷺ lobbied for him and a gathering of chieftains succeeded in making Aas pay his dues. Thus in his youth the Prophet ﷺ played a key role in reviving an institution known as *Hilfal-Fudhul* (Pledge of Virtues) under which the participants pledged to maintain peace among various tribes; to assist all those whom wrong was done; to protect travelers from Bedouin attacks; to help the poor and the needy and to protect the weak from the strong. The *Hilfal-Fudhul* was drawn up under the auspices of Zubayr bin Abd al-Muttalib, Prophet Muhammad's uncle, and under the leadership of Jud'an at-Taymi, the richest, oldest and the most influential tribal leader in Makka. In his later years, the Holy Prophet ﷺ talked about this alliance, praising it, and said: "I was present in Abd Allah bin Judan's house when they concluded a pact so excellent that I would not change my part in it even for a herd of red camels; if I was asked now, in Islam, to take part

in it, I would gladly agree."

In 605 CE the Quraish decided to re-build the holy Ka'aba as it had been damaged by a fire. After the building was ready, they had to put the 'Black Stone' (*Hajr al-Aswad*) in its place. This is a stone which had descended upon the earth at the time of descent of Adam and has always been held in high esteem. When the building was under construction it was temporarily put in a safe custody; but when the building was ready it was necessary to restore it. To put it back with ones hands was indeed a matter of great honour. All the chieftains vied with one another to have that honour and a dispute ensued. As the dispute could lead to a big tribal scuffle, on the advice of one of the chieftains, Umayyah bin Mughirah, they decided that anybody who would enter the Haram the next morning would be the umpire and decide who would have that honour. Next morning Prophet Muhammad ﷺ came first and everybody heaved a sigh of relief as all of them held him in high esteem.

They requested him to help them sort out their differences. The Prophet ﷺ spread his shawl

with the Black Stone in its centre and asked each tribal chief to hold an edge of that shawl to lift up the Black Stone to the height where it was meant to be placed. Then he placed the Stone with his own blessed hands. Everybody was satisfied. His wisdom thus averted a big fight and won appreciation of all.

Zaid bin Haritha ﷺ was a slave presented to Rasulallah ﷺ by his wife Khadija ﷺ. One day Zaid's father Haritha came to Makkah in search of his son, and having come to know that he was a freed slave living with the Prophet ﷺ, he approached him to let him go home. Rasulallah ﷺ readily agreed and said that he was free to go without any ransom. But Zaid ﷺ, who was very attached in the person of the Prophet ﷺ a loving and caring figure, more loving than any real father, refused to part with him. Seeing this, Rasulallah ﷺ took him to the courtyard of the holy Ka'aba and adopted him as his son.

Once, a business friend asked him to wait for him on the roadside. He did not return as

promised and thought that Muhammad ﷺ would have gone away. After three days when he happened to pass through the same place, he was astonished to find that he was still standing there waiting for him with no sign of anger on his face. He was as polite as ever. That person could not but feel ashamed and apologized. He was amazed that in an age when nobody cared for his words, Rasulallah ﷺ waited for such a long period and yet was not angered.

His name had become a house-hold word for piety, honesty and trustworthiness. People used to call him *Sadiq* (the Truthful) and *Ameen* (the Trusty and the Trustworthy). Later on, when he was forced to leave his native town, he left behind his cousin Ali son of Abu Talib ﷺ, under the care of his life, to deliver the trusts to the people who had reposed trust in him. The reputation of his righteous character bears no doubt. He took delight in helping the poor, the orphan and the old folks.

When he was on the threshold of youth and

wanted to work for his living, he decided to look after the business of a rich Qureshi widow named Khadijah ﷺ. He used to convoy her caravans of merchandise. Under this business arrangement he traveled to Syria accompanied by her slave Maysarah and one of her relatives, Khuzaima bin Hakeem. On one of such business trips his caravan made a stopover near the same church where the priest Bohaira had invited the caravan of his uncle Abi Talib to a luncheon in his childhood. During the stopover, he relaxed under the shade of a tree. *Bohaira* told Maysarah that hitherto no one but a prophet had relaxed under that tree. He pointed out that the radiant aurá around his face and the specks of clouds hovering over him during sunshine were signs which clearly indicated that Muhammad ﷺ was the awaited and last of the Prophets.

That business trip proved very successful; the caravan returned with a lot of merchandise and profit. As per the agreement, young Muhammad ﷺ turned in all the accounts of his

business trip and handed Khadija رضي الله عنها her full share honestly. As for himself, he gave away most of his dividend to the needy keeping little for himself and the family of Abu Talib. In all transactions, with deep interest and great astonishment Khadija رضي الله عنها used to observe in him a dignity that she had never seen in anybody else. He undertook many trips on her behalf. Every trip brought huge profits and more pleasant surprises for Khadija رضي الله عنها, that endeared him to her. She observed that his personality was imposing, his talk inspired respect, his modesty had a grandeur that commanded obedience, and his bewitching eyes made the heart of the beholder melt not to dare stare at him.

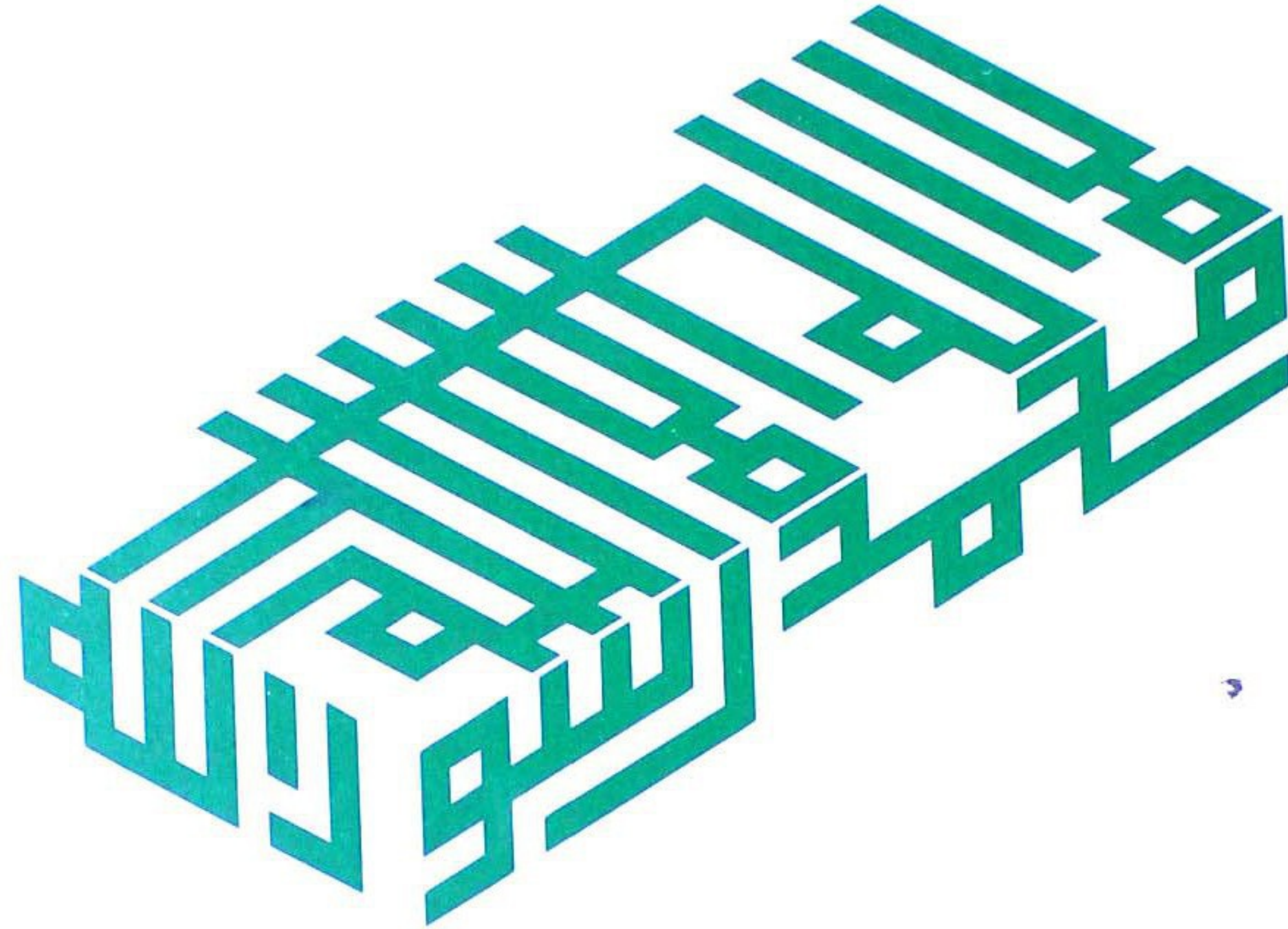
His First Marriage and Family Life:

Rasulallah ﷺ was twenty five by then. Khadija رضي الله عنها was forty and had been widowed twice. Due to her riches many of the Quraishi chieftains had proposed to her but all failed to win her consent. Her slave, Maysarah, had informed her of what the priest had spoken of him during his

trip. She was moved by his description of what he had been told and decided to marry him. She used to confide in one of her friends named Nafisa and sent him a proposal of marriage through her. At first he hesitated but later he accepted the proposal and talked to his uncle Abu Talib who also gave his consent.

The wedding took place in keeping with the status of Khadijah رضي الله عنها and was attended by the elite and all the relatives of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. Abu Talib recited the wedding khutba. After the marriage the groom shifted to the house of the bride which was more nearer to Ka'aba than his own home – where he continued to live till the Emigration. Khadija رضي الله عنها was Rasulallah's ﷺ first wife. She never had a rival in his heart and till his death, was his sole beloved spouse. Allah ﷻ blessed this couple with four daughters and two sons. His eldest daughter was Zainab رضي الله عنها, the second Ruqiyah رضي الله عنها, the third Umm Kulthum رضي الله عنها and the fourth one was Fatimah رضي الله عنها. He was satisfied with Abu al-Qasim as one of his sons was named Qasim. All his sons died in infancy. Only his daughters witnessed Islam and were among its first adherents. After his marriage he convoyed

many caravans to the north and south and had established himself as a successful trader.



The Mantle of Prophethood

His longing for Seclusion:

As business flourished and the cares of his daily life eased, Rasulallah ﷺ started going to a cave retreat where he spent most of his time praying and remembering the Creator. He would spend the whole month of *Ramadhan* in seclusion. He would carry food and water supply and stay in the cave for weeks. This retreat is known as Cave of *Hira* and is situated on the top of a famous mountain in Makkah known as the Mountain of Light (*Jabl Noor*). Sometimes his cousin Ali ﷺ would carry supplies to the cavern and sometimes a slave of Khadijah ﷺ would carry the stuff. Off and on he would come down to visit his family and sometimes Khadijah ﷺ and Ali ﷺ would take the children to the foot of the hill to meet him. After a period of time he started



having pious dreams that always came true. Sometimes when he walked through a pass he would hear the cliffs greeting him as the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. As time went on he would see angelic manifestations in the sky and rows of angels greeting him.

Start of Divine Revelation:

Young Muhammad ﷺ had by then completed forty years of his life. In the year 610 CE when he was praying in *Hira* on the 27th night of *Ramadhan* (*Lailat ul-Qadr* – the Night of Power), suddenly the cave lit up and Archangel Gabriel (Islamic *Jibreel* جبرئيل) appeared to him. The Archangel proclaimed: “Recite!”, but the Prophet ﷺ said he would not. The angel then called: “Recite in the name of your Lord who created!” and then embraced him. The Holy Prophet ﷺ recited these words. Thereafter the first revelation and thereafter the verses of the Quran were revealed to him from Allah ﷻ over a period of twenty-three years. The revelations were memorized and preserved and written down in full in

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the form of the Holy *Quran* being the final testament for all mankind.

When the phenomenon of revelation started, first of all he talked to his wife who, convinced of the truth of the divine message, became the first person to be a Muslim. But after some time when Allah ﷻ ordained him to announce the Message to his kins he started preaching it publicly. The first few who accepted his message were: his wife and daughters, his cousin Ali ﷺ, his friend Abu Bakr ﷺ and Zayd bin Haritha ﷺ. They embraced Islam by testifying: "There is no deity/god except Allah and Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah." The ground had been broken and foundation laid; the grand edifice of Islam, complete with all the articles of faith standing on five firm pillars, took some twenty three years to rise on the ruins of polytheism.

Announcement of His Prophethood:

His mission was to restore the worship of the One True God, the Creator and Sustainer of the Universes – as had been taught by Prophet

Ibrahim ﷺ and the other prophets earlier, to forbid the people from worshipping idols and false deities, and to warn them of strict accountability on the Day of Judgment. It was but natural for such a call to cause a strong reaction among the people who believed more strongly in a miscellany of man-made gods. The pagan rites and rituals which the Messenger of Allah ﷺ was criticizing were their source of prestige and power.

To start with, he invited the elders of Quresh to the Mount of *Safa*. He proclaimed: "O people of the Quraish, if I were to inform you that there was a band of horsemen behind this mountain, would you believe me?" They all responded: Of course, we would! To be sure, he was above suspicion. We have never heard you lie. Then he said: "I am the Messenger of Allah ﷻ coming to you before the painful punishment overtakes you! He continued: O sons of Muttalib, O sons of Abdu Manaf, O sons of Zuhra, and O sons of Taym: Allah has appointed me His Apostle to you all. I swear by Allah that there is no God besides Him. You will all die, though you fell asleep and then rise again as

through you woke up. For all your deeds you will have to give a full account and you shall be punished or rewarded according to your deeds. I can do you no good in this world nor give you a share in the life hereafter until you believe that "Allah is One!"

On hearing this, the crowd dispersed. One by one everybody left except his cousin Ali ؑ who was hardly ten years old. He spoke out: Messenger of Allah ﷺ, I will support you and be at war against those who fight you. Except Ali ؑ, the preaching had fallen on deaf ears and even his uncles mocked and went away. The only one who stood by him through thick and thin, till his death, was his uncle and guardian Abu Talib. Except a numbered few, virtually all the Mekkans were set against him. Abu Bakr ؓ was the first adult from Makkah who testified to his prophethood. Others were Sa'ad bin Usman bin Affan, Talha, Zubair bin Awwam, Abdullah bin Masud, Sa'ad bin Abi Bakr, Ubaid bin al-Jarrah, Saeed bin Zaid and Salman bin Araf. They were followed by Arqam, Bilal, Khalid bin al-Arat and Ammar ؓ.

With only a handful of followers, he broke the ground and started preaching publicly. The Makkans turned hostile and the small community of believers had to bear the brunt of that violent reaction. Not only the Prophet ﷺ but the whole Muslim community that consisted of only a few souls at that time faced severe hatred and persecution. People would pelt stones on them, and some even would stoop so low as to plant thorns in the way where the Prophet ﷺ was likely to walk barefoot, while some would throw filth and rotten tripe of slain animals at him when he was in prostration around the Ka'aba. In the beginning, for fear of harassment his followers used to say their prayers secretly in hills and dales around Makkah until the third year of the call when Arqam embraced Islam and offered his spacious house to become the first center of preaching. There the small community would gather quietly and listen to the divine message from the Messenger ﷺ. At first the response was slow but because the call was attractive and appealing to the good human conscience, it started gaining momentum and by and by it attracted a good number of followers.

Except for a few rich persons, most of the following was from the poor or the slave class even though they were more severely persecuted by the opponents. As Islam is race-blind and status-blind, from the very beginning its doors were open to the rich and the poor, the master and the slave, the white and the black alike. Islam elevated the Ethiopian Bilal, the Roman Suhaib and the Persian Salman and the Yemeni Zaid to such a social height that they could sit side by side with Quraishi chieftains enjoying equal respect and status, not only in congregations but in all walks of life. Islam had introduced a brave new world of social justice and opened new vistas of human equality. Against the prevalent prejudices, the Quran had laid down quite a different standard for human dignity. Gone were the social advantages of wealth, power, race and colour to intimidate less fortunate peoples. Islam promoted a fairer system of social justice. The holy Quran declared: "O mankind, We have created you male and female, divided you into tribes and clans so that you know each other. To Allah the most honoured amongst you is the most pious one."

The Quran propounded that all men are equal in the sight of the Creator which rendered superiority of lineage meaningless. For the first time equality of all human beings, irrespective of their race, colour, lineage, sex and social status, was declared in clear-cut terms. Widows, orphans and women in general were given inalienable rights.

In the past while the birth of a son was much celebrated, the arrival of a daughter was considered a bad omen nothing less than a social stigma. The pre-Islamic Arabs used to bury their daughters alive. They did not mind sacrificing their kids to their chief idol Hubal who was installed in the Ka'aba. Islam put an end to this act of barbarity. The message of Islam was thus a total breakaway from the customs of the yore. The master and the slave, the rich and the ruled were all made equally responsible to each other. As time marched forth the Prophet continued to receive more revelations. The Quran unfolded further articles of the divine charter which was not limited only to religious beliefs and rituals but also set out in detail a way and a

complete code of life for the Believers. A big revolution and a new world order was in the offing that would grant equal rights and liberties to all: the orphan, the widow, the slave and all the downtrodden. All humans are equal in the sight of Allah ﷻ.

It was not a hollow slogan just to win converts, but the concept was transparently put into practice in all walks of life. The result was that in congregations, especially at prayer times, no prominent areas were reserved for anybody. Even a slave could lead the prayers. A person on the lowest rung of existence stood next to the elite. The *Masajid* were open to all Muslims where blacks and whites, high and low, young and old, congregated together. It is a fact that is practiced throughout the world to this day and will continue to be practiced for all times to come. Riches and have-nots were all equal from the Islamic view of social respect. While it was a challenge to the arrogant pagans of Makkah, it was a boon to the down-trodden. The selfish might find it harmful to their vested interests, but the kind-hearted were drawn to this noble call.

While social justice was an important factor, the primary mission of the Prophet ﷺ was to establish the worship of One True God – a belief that had struck at the very roots of the worship of three hundred and sixty idols installed in and around the Ka'aba. The Arabs had been bowing to those false and man-made deities for centuries and were not ready to give up their age-old beliefs and adopt altogether a new faith. Muhammad ﷺ had lived among them for forty years – and had led a life of piety and truthfulness. They knew him very well, some had even kinship and some had trade relations with him; everybody knew how upright he was, but the idea that one day he was to be recognized as a Prophet of Allah was something that was not easily acceptable. They argued: how could a person who had lived amongst them and shared their weal and woe as a common man, who had no schooling and could not read nor write, be able to receive revelations as a Prophet. To them Muhammad ﷺ was introducing something new that was alien to their social values, destructive to

their religion and harmful to their economic interests. Their anger knew no bounds on seeing their own slaves drawn towards the Prophet ﷺ by his doctrines of human equality and worship of One True God. Since centuries people had been visiting Ka'aba and paying homage to those false deities. Trade caravans used to pass through Makkah and stayed there for months giving a boost to their cultural and trade activities. On the face of it, accepting the new religion amounted to an irreparable loss to their economy and status. So only a few came forward and embraced Islam while the rest turned hostile to the Messenger ﷺ and his followers.

The Arabs were strong believers in baseless superstitions and were scared of retaliation from their idols. Therefore, when the Prophet ﷺ spoke against their beliefs some of them branded him as a lunatic, some as a magician, some as a soothsayer, some as a poet, and some even went to the extent of thinking that he was under the spell of a ghost or a jinnie. They took the Quranic verses as magic spells and

abstained from listening to its recitation. They called the renowned magicians to confront him and some even sought help from healers and wise men of their time to find a cure for him.

The Makkans wanted him to perform miracles. Once Habib bin Malik a wise man from Yemen visited Makkah. The elders of the Quraish asked for his help. He met the Prophet ﷺ on a hill top in a big gathering and asked him to split asunder the Moon into two parts if he were a true prophet. As a learned person, Habib knew that magic spells would not affect the far away celestial bodies. Rasulallah ﷺ pointed his finger towards the Moon and it was split asunder. Habib bin Malik saw that astounding miracle. Habib bin Malik embraced Islam, but except for a few others just walked away saying that he was an accomplished magician. Similar accusations had been made against many prophets in the past. Quranic verses refuted all such accusations as baseless.

Similarly, there were many occasions when the people asked him for some sort of miracles which were done to their amazement.

Biographers have compiled volumes on the miracles wrought by him. As a matter of fact his entire life was full of such phenomena. Had no such incident occurred, even then he would still have been the Messenger of Allah. Yet as the earlier prophets had done similar feats, he too did many miracles. Abu Huraira narrated that the Messenger of Allah said: There was no Prophet among the Prophets but was given miracles because of which people had belief, but what I have been given is the Divine Revelation which Allah has revealed to me. So I hope that my followers will be more than those of any other Prophet on the Day of Resurrection.

He foretold the coming events and could communicate with animals in their languages. Birds and wild animals bowed their heads in respect to him. Narrated Unais bin Amr: A companion named Ahban bin Ausؓ said, "I was tending my sheep. Suddenly a wolf caught a sheep and screamed at it (the wolf). The wolf sat down and addressed me, saying, 'Who will look after the sheep (i.e. the sheep) when you are busy and I am here? Do you forbid me the sheep which Allah has provided me?' Ahban

added, "I clapped my hands and said, 'By Allah, I have never seen anything more interesting and wonderful than this!' On that, the wolf said, 'There is something more (interesting and) wonderful than this; that is, Allah's Messenger inviting people to Allah (i.e. Islam).' "Unais bin Amr added, "Then Ahban went to Allah's Messenger ﷺ and informed him what happened and embraced Islam."

The most wonderful and living and everlasting miracle is the Holy Quran itself. Its divine style (which the Arabic scholars name as '*al-Usloob al-Hakeem*') and the contents couched in perfect Arabic are incomparable and inimitable. It has clearly stated that no one can imitate its style which is a living challenge for all times! Allah has challenged the human genius to produce the like of it saying: And if you are in doubt concerning that which We have sent down to Our slave, then produce a *Surah* (chapter) of the like thereof and call your witnesses (supporters and helpers) besides Allah, if you are truthful! Many efforts were made by non-Muslims to compose something similar to the verses of the Quran, but they could not produce

even a few lines that could match its literary majesty and beauty. Even the critics have to state that although the Quran is not prose it still maintains a majestic flow of the best prose; it is not poetry, yet it has a very subtle rhythm. Its style is not human; it is so unique that it can only be called purely divine style. Many eloquent Arab poets and men of letters, who met the Prophet ﷺ and listened to some of the verses of the Quran as he recited them, had to admit: 'This is not the word of a human being! (*Ma Hadha Li Qawl al-Bashar*)'. No book in the world can be memorized as easily as the Quran. Even the children of five or six years of age are able to memorize it completely. Is it not a standing miracle of the Prophet ﷺ?

لا اله الا الله محمد رسول الله

لَقَدْ كَانَ لَكُمْ فِي رَسُولِ اللَّهِ
أُسْوَةٌ حَسَنَةٌ لِّمَن كَانَ

يُرِيدُ وَجْهَ اللَّهِ
وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ
ذَكَرَ اللَّهَ كَثِيرًا

Indeed in the Messenger of Allah you have the best precept and example for him who looks unto Allah and the Last Day and remembers Allah much.
(Al-Ahzab: 21)

Tests and Trials

The Persecution and the First Emigration:

The friends of yesterday had turned into foes putting the believers to severe tests and trials. As some of the first Muslims were slaves, they were easy prey for their masters to punish them openly. They were beaten, dragged on the streets and tortured. The master of Bilal رضي الله عنه tied his neck and often placed large rocks on his chest and the children of Makkah dragged him upon the scorching rocky surface of the streets, but he did not give up and kept proclaiming: *Ahadun Ahad!* (God is One without any partnership). Similarly, many others were severely punished: Ammar's mother Sumayya رضي الله عنها was so much tortured that she passed away during the savage torture. Another slave, who was a blacksmith, was tortured with the same red-hot tools that he used in his furnace by his cruel mistress who was a wicked woman.

Such were the tests and trials faced by the believers who maintained their faith and patiently waited for the tide to turn. Abu Bakr رضي الله عنه used to buy such slaves and set them free in the name of Allah, but even as free men they were not spared. It was at such a juncture that Allah سبحانه revealed the following verse:

There has come to you a Messenger from amongst yourselves, painful to him are the hardships that you suffer; he is careful of you to the highest degree and Benevolent and Merciful to those who believe.

The cruelties of the Quraish unabated. They tried all sorts of tortures, nothing could deter the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم and his followers from the right path. Various plots were made to eliminate him, but each time he was saved. As the fame of the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم spread, the worshippers became more and more aggressive. They scooped so low as to heap insults upon him. One day in the precincts of the sacred house, some pagans assembled and plotted to pick up a quarrel with him. As soon as Rasulallah صلى الله عليه وسلم

entered the area, one of them asked: Are you the one who insults the gods of our forefathers? 'Aye, I am that person!' was the fearless answer. One of them stepped forward and caught hold of the collar of his mantle and twisting it roughly round his neck he tried to strangle him. Abu Bakr ﷺ who happened to be there rushed and intervened, saying: Would you kill a man who proclaims that Allah is One? The pagan released the Prophet ﷺ but attacked Abu Bakr ﷺ and plucked his beard. On another occasion some persons placed filthy tripe on his head while he was prostrating in prayers. His youngest daughter, Fatimah ﷺ, came running and removed the filth and cleaned his blessed head. But he remained calm and fearless.

The Prophet ﷺ used to visit Ka'aba in broad day light but they could do no harm to him and they gnaw at their own follies and failures. Whenever he stood up to face them, they turned pale and felt humbled. Once an outsider from (Yemen) sold some camels to Abu Jahl and refused to pay him back. The stranger stood at the end of a street crying for help, but nobody came to help him against that tyrant. Some people even thought of making a fun of the

Prophet ﷺ and told the stranger to seek his help. The stranger knocked at the door of the Prophet ﷺ and requested to intervene. On his request the Prophet ﷺ went to the house of Abu Jahl and knocked at his door.

Who is it? Asked Abu Jahl.
Muhammad! Answered the Prophet ﷺ.

The mischief mongers kept watching the scene from afar. Abu Jahl came out trembling and pale-faced. "Could you give this poor person his money?" asked the Prophet ﷺ. Abu Jahl was so awe-stricken that he went into his house and brought the money to give to the stranger. The stranger thanked the Prophet ﷺ and walked away. Such was the commanding personality of the Prophet ﷺ that even his worst enemies would turn pale in front of him.

The Social Boycott:

As mentioned earlier, the Muslims were subjected to torture, but when this failed to desist them from their faith, a severe social and economic boycott was imposed on them. Their

movements were restricted to a narrow strip in the vicinity of the House of Allah where nothing but the writ of hunger and starvation ran supreme. The Makkans were prohibited to have any contact or sympathy with them. This was the worst trial for the small community of the Believers. They were not allowed to trade with locals and no outside trader was allowed to sell any needs of life to them. The Prophet ﷺ remained besieged along with his family and followers. Abu Talib's support stood the test of time. As always, he continued to defend his nephew with full support and devotion.

The Makkans tried all types of tricks and incentives to make him give up his preaching. Once they sent one of their leaders – Utba bin Rabia – to lure him to their side. He said: Nephew! You are one of us in rank and lineage, but you have brought us something very grave that has caused a split in our ranks. On behalf of my people I make you three offers hoping that one of these would be acceptable to you. He continued: If the aim of your call is wealth, we can collect all whatever you ask to make you the richest of us all. If it is honour, we are ready to

make you rule over ourselves, nothing shall be done without your command. If you aspire to be a king, we are ready to make you our king. If that which comes to you is a phantom or a ghost that you have no power to ward off we are ready to call a doctor for your treatment. In response to those offers Rasulallah ﷺ just read out a part of the Chapter *Sajdah* from the Holy Quran which is a call to justice, charity, kindness and the eternal truth that Allah is One. Utba was taken aback by the beauty of the divine words and went back to the Quraish and advised them to leave the Prophet ﷺ to himself. But his advice fell on deaf ears; they decided to keep up persecution.

Similarly, once Abu Talib advised that the Makkans would harm him if he did not stop from falsifying their idols. He told the Prophet ﷺ of Allah ﷻ that they had offered him the most beautiful woman among Arabs if he would provided he gave up his call. The Prophet ﷺ said: O uncle! Even if they put the Sun in my right hand and the Moon in my left to make me renowned in my mission, I shall never do so. I will not give it up, either it will please God to make it triumph or I

will perish in the struggle.

Tired of all these hardships, the believers needed some relief. The Prophet ﷺ allowed some of his followers to emigrate to *Abyssinia* (modern name Ethiopia). It was ruled by a just king Negus, named Ashama, who would not turn them away. In the first attempted Hijra eleven male and five female companions sought refuge from the Makkan persecution in the Kingdom of Aksum (modern day Ethiopia) in the month of Rajab of 7th year before Hijra (sometimes 613-14 CE). This is known as the **First Emigration to Habasha** (Abyssinia). The Qureshites tried to follow them, but before they could reach there they had already sailed away. However, after a few days the Makkans spread a rumour that most of the Qureshites had embraced Islam and many of the first group of Emigrants sailed back. Thus they returned after three months only to find out that the persecution had not halted. Therefore, they decided to return to Abyssinia and they again migrated Mecca. From among those who returned was Sayyeda Sauda bint Zama'a ؓ – whose husband had passed away in Abyssinia. This event is known as the first

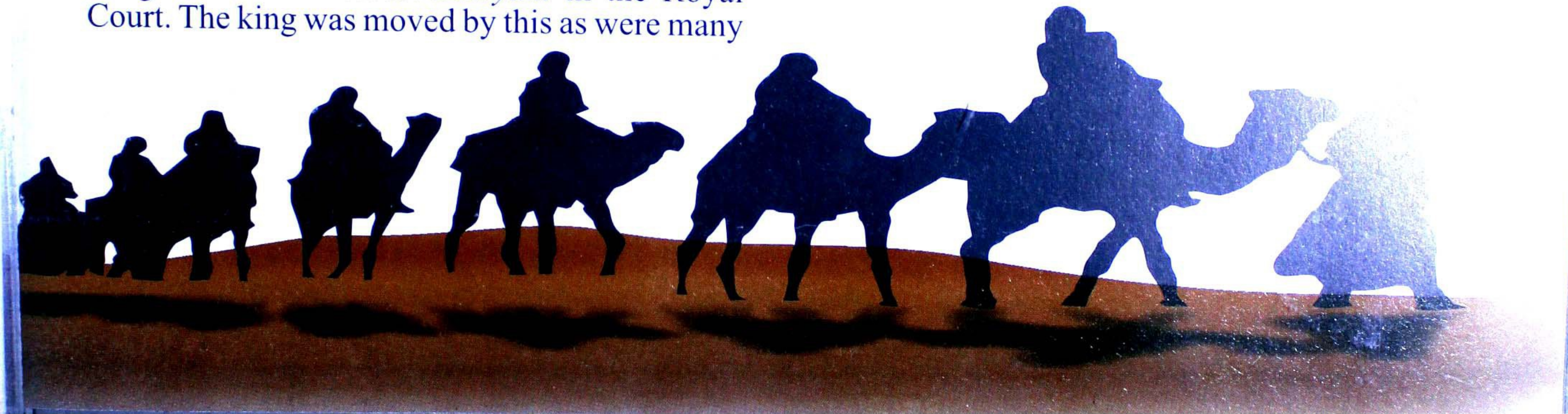
migration to Abyssinia. Later on, a bigger group of 83 men and 18 women emigrated to Abyssinia. This is called the **Second Emigration** to that country. Some companions took part in both the migrations. The second group of Emigrants was headed by Ja'afar bin Abi Talib ؓ. As soon as the Makkans came to know, they sent their envoys there to pressurize Negus to repatriate them. They had taken a precious presents for the King to gain his favour. Negus summoned the emigrants to listen to their point of view. The Prophet's cousin – Ja'afar bin Abu Talib ؓ – the leader of the first group of emigrants, made the following speech in the royal court:

“O king! We were an ignorant people, given to idolatry. We used to eat corpses even of animals that had died a natural death; we used to do all sorts of disgraceful things. We did not fulfill our obligations to our relations, and ill-treated our neighbours. The strong among us would thrive at the expense of the weak, till at last God raised this Prophet for our reformation. His lineage, his righteousness, his integrity and his virtue are well-known to us. He called us to the worship of God, and bade us to give up idolatry

and stone-worship. He enjoined upon us to speak the truth, to make good our trusts, to have regard for our kith and kins, and to do good to our neighbours. He taught us to shun everything foul and to avoid bloodshed. He forbade all sorts of indecent things, such as telling lies and misappropriating orphans' belongings. So we believed in him, followed him and acted upon his teachings. Thereupon our people turned against us and tried to subject us to tortures, thinking that we might give up our faith and revert to idolatry. When however their cruelties exceeded all bounds we have come to seek asylum in your country.”

Negus asked them if they had any example of the revelations sent to Rasulallah ﷺ. One of the emigrants recited *Surah Maryam* in the Royal Court. The king was moved by this as were many

others present. He proclaimed how close the new message was to his beliefs as a Christian. He then granted asylum to the believers. This was the first major international recognition of the Muslims who gained asylum on grounds of their faith. The Emigrants were the first fore-runners of the later groups of preachers. Some scholars do believe that their preachings had had a deep effect upon the later mass conversion of that Continent to Islam. The group of companions who were with Ja'afar Tayyar ؓ included companions such as Uthman b. Affan ؓ (along with his wife Ruqayya ؓ daughter of the Messenger ﷺ), b. Abi Waqas ؓ, Mus'ab bin Umair ؓ, b. Jahash ؓ etc.



Most of them had returned immediately upon Emigration of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ to Medina. However, some had stayed back. Many years later when the whole of Arabian Peninsula had come under the domination of the Holy Prophet ﷺ, a delegation was sent by the Negus to him. The Prophet ﷺ welcomed them warmly and personally served meals to them saying: They were good to my people.

The Year of Sorrows:

After three years the miserable period of confinement was over and the siege came to an end. During this period hunger, disease and harassment had all failed to demoralize the followers. Rather they turned out to be more resolute than ever. Truth triumphed and everybody heaved a sigh of relief. But alas! Their joy was short-lived, as the Prophet ﷺ had one grief after another. Immediately after the end of the siege, first his wife passed away and then his uncle bade him farewell. Both of them had supported him in the face of hardships. He felt sad. That year is known as the Year of Sorrows in the life of Rasulallah ﷺ. The spreading of the Message continued steadily.

The Message keeps on spreading:

One day Umar bin Khattab was resting against the wall of the Ka'aba. Somebody told him that Hamza, the youngest uncle of the Prophet ﷺ, had become the thirty-ninth person to enter the fold of Islam. Umar was outraged and burst out in a fury: By the idol Hubal, I will not let the number of these people reach the figure of forty. Holding a sword in his hand he marched towards the house of Arqam where he thought the Prophet ﷺ was present. On his way, a friend intervened and said: Where are you going with this unsheathed sword in your hand? Umar retorted: To eliminate the trouble once and for all! I want to kill Muhammad ﷺ today. His friend taunted him by saying, "First take care of Fatima your beloved sister and her husband Sa'id as both have embraced Islam". Umar felt the pinch of the insult and changed his direction towards the house of his sister and brother-in-law. Standing at their door he heard that one of them was reciting the Quran. He knocked at the door and called aloud for his sister. He was shouting in a rage. The inmates got scared and hid the paper that contained some verses of the Quran which they

were reciting. Then timidly his sister opened the door. He asked a straightforward question: What is it that you were reading? No answer! Both were silent.

In a rage, Umar started beating his brother-in-law. His sister tried to intervene but he pushed her aside. She fell down and was wounded but stood up as resolute as ever. Umar's eyes fell on her forehead which was streaming with blood. It occurred to him: Isn't it the same Fatima, my dear sister? With the flash of this question, he could not but feel ashamed!

The moment of decision had approached. Umar pondered for a while and said to himself: What is it that makes them so resolute? Then he asked them to show him the verses that they had been reading. These were the opening verses of the Chapter *Taha*! Umar was spell-bound by the recitation. The beauty of the Quranic verses had overpowered him. He was shaken to the depths of his heart and made up his mind to embrace Islam. He headed towards the House of Arqam where he thought the Prophet ﷺ could be found.

Seeing him coming to the house of Arqam, some inmates scaringly whispered: It is Umar! Their scare was well-founded. His reputation preceded him. But the Messenger of Allah ﷺ told them to let him in; he walked in with his sword hanging on his side. In a commanding voice the Prophet ﷺ asked him: Umar! Hasn't the moment yet come to acknowledge the ultimate reality, to believe in the Unity of your Creator? Dumbfounded, Umar was holding his head down with a sense of remorse over his past. After a while he recited the *Shahadah*: There is no deity worthy of worship except Allah and Muhammad ﷺ is His Prophet! Thus Umar ﷺ also got the first fold of Islam. The erstwhile enemy of Islam embraced Islam and in the years to come he proved to be one of the biggest defenders of the Faith.

Years later when he succeeded the Prophet ﷺ as the second Caliph, he took pride in saying: I am a slave of Muhammad ﷺ. He used to say: I feel ashamed of my past when I think that I had buried alive my own little daughter with my own

hands. His entry to Islam was no less than a big milestone. A bright future and a major role awaited him in the years to come.

The Holy Prophet ﷺ Visits Taif:

Tired of the atrocities, the Holy Prophet ﷺ decided to visit Taif to present Islam to the people of *Banu Thaqif*. He was aware of the age-old bilateral relations between *Quraish* and *Banu Thaqif* that were based upon mutual commercial interests. But he hoped that reason would prevail upon the people of Taif. He went there accompanied by Zaid bin Haritha ﷺ and met three chieftains of that tribe to preach Islam. However, his teachings fell over deaf ears and all of them mocked him. Also, they incited the street boys to pelt stones on him. As a result, he was grievously injured to an extent that his feet and hands were soaked in his blood.

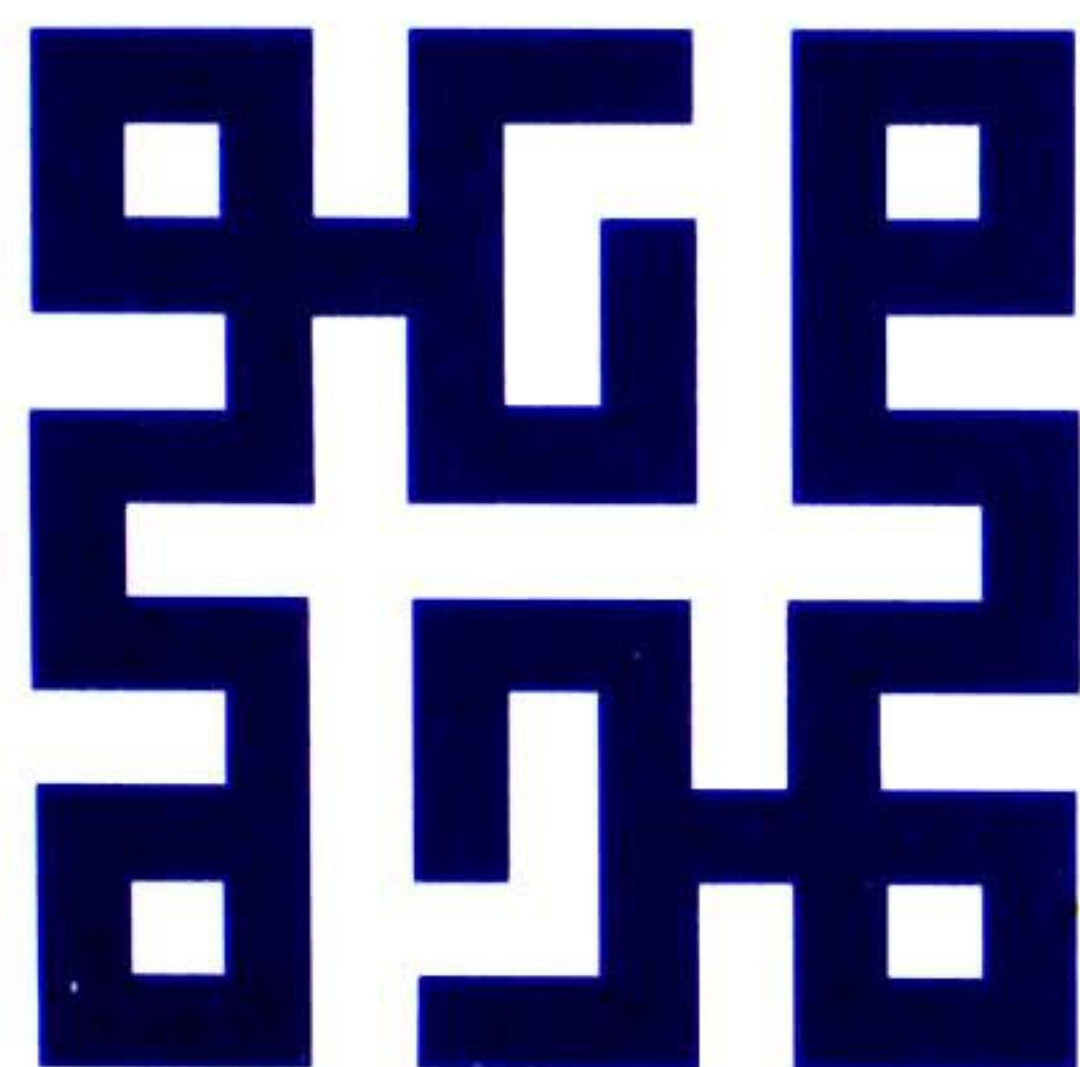
The Holy Prophet ﷺ relaxed for a while on a small hill in the back of a wall of a garden and prayed for the safety of the persecutors. It is narrated in the *Hadith* that Archangel Gabriel approached the Holy Prophet ﷺ and asked for his consent to destroy the

whole of Taif for what they had done to him. The Prophet of Mercy ﷺ simply said: They know not what they are doing. I hope one day these people will realize and shall become good Muslims. Overhearing this prayer, the owner of the garden sent a bunch of grapes through one of his slaves named Addas. Before having the grapes, the Holy Prophet ﷺ uttered: In the name of Allah. The slave boy who was a Christian was astonished to hear the name of Allah, as nobody in Taif had ever uttered such words.

The Prophet ﷺ told Addas: You belong to *Nenva* the area of the Prophet *Younas* son of *Matta* (Jonah son of Matthew). Surprised to hear this, Addas asked him: How do you know of Prophet *Younas* or his ancestry. The Prophet ﷺ said: "Yes, I know: we the prophets are brethren. He was a prophet and I am a prophet too." Addas kneeled down and kissed his forehead, hands and feet and entered the fold of Islam. The Holy Prophet ﷺ advised him to keep his conversion secret till a suitable time. During that trip Addas was the first and the only person to embrace Islam from Taif. Years later when the people of Taif made a treaty with the Prophet of Islam ﷺ, Addas

ﷺ was in the forefront leading the group of Taif's Muslims visiting Medina.

Rasulallah, the Prophet of Mercy ﷺ, left Taif full of grief, yet he did not lose hope. While leaving, he kept praying to Almighty Allah: 'O Allah, forgive my people. They know not what they are doing'.



A glowing blue galaxy with Arabic calligraphy in white and yellow. The calligraphy is arranged in a circular pattern around the galaxy. The text is a verse from the Quran: "سُبْحٰنَ الَّذِي سَخَّرَ لَنَا هٰذَا وَمَا كُنَّا لِنَشْكُرَهُ لَوْلَا رَحْمَةُ الرَّحْمٰنِ لَكُنَّا مِنَ الْخٰسِرِيْنَ" (Glory to the One who has made this for us, and we were not grateful. If not for the mercy of the Most Gracious, we would have been among the losers).

سُبْحٰنَ الَّذِي سَخَّرَ لَنَا هٰذَا وَمَا كُنَّا لِنَشْكُرَهُ لَوْلَا رَحْمَةُ الرَّحْمٰنِ لَكُنَّا مِنَ الْخٰسِرِيْنَ

*Glorified be He
Who carried His
servant by night
from the Inviolable
Place of Worship
to the Far Distant
Place of Worship
the neighbourhood
whereof We have
blessed, that We
might show him of
Our signs! Lo! He,
only He, is the
Hearer, the Seer.*

The Breeze of Change

The Ascension (Isra'/Me'raj) or the Journey to Heavens:

The Journey to Heavens (*Isra' / Me'raj*) is one of the greatest miracles of the Holy Prophet ﷺ when Allah ﷻ the Almighty took him to His Holy Presence. Defying the laws of nature and breaking all the material barriers, the Prophet ﷺ, with his corporeal body, was taken beyond the limits of time and space into the Divine presence. Traveling at a speed far faster than the speed of light he surpassed all dimensions of existence. This heavenly journey is such a miraculous phenomenon that human intellect, in spite of all its present day advancements, is not yet able to comprehend. Allah the Almighty says this in the Quran:

Glorified is He who carried His servant by night from the Masjid al-

Haram to the Masjid al-Aqsa the neighbourhood of which We have blessed, to show him Our signs! Lo! He is the Hearer, the Seer.

The heavenly journey took place at a time when he was feeling severe pangs of grief and loneliness due to demise of two of his best supporters: his beloved wife Khadijaؓ and his patron and uncle Abu Talib, both of whom passed away, one after another, soon after the end of the social boycott. His visit to Taif too had not been much of a success and severe injuries had made him return to Makkah dishearted. It was at this juncture that Allah sent Archangel Gabriel to take him to the heavenly journey into His Holy Presence to show him His signs and to give him glimpses into the bright future of Islam. On that heavenly journey he met with other Prophets as Ibrahim, Moses, Jesus etc. and the blessings of Allah be upon them all. He was shown glimpses of beauties of Paradise and horrors of the Hell. Allah Almighty spoke to him without any intermediary and let him comprehend the divine scheme of things from a better perspective. He went to the farthest realms

where even Gabriel cannot reach and was honored with the vision of God's 'Light' free from any dimensions.

Having seen a myriad of divine signs he was in a better position to move forward with more vigour. Those who did not believe in him denied this event just because they were unable to comprehend such a phenomenon, but those, who believed in every word of his, believed not only in it but after knowing a few details of this heavenly journey became more resolute in their faith.

The Covenants of Aqabah:

As time went by the Holy Prophet ﷺ used to visit the seasonal markets and fairs, such as Ukayyah (a trade center between Makkah and Taif where the caravans of the Arabs assembled for commercial and social activities) where he could spread the word of God to large gatherings. As the sixth year drew to a close, he met a group of seventy-five persons from Yathrib who accepted the invitation. They met him at a secure place called Aqabah in the Mina valley. The group was headed by a leader of the Aws tribe. The

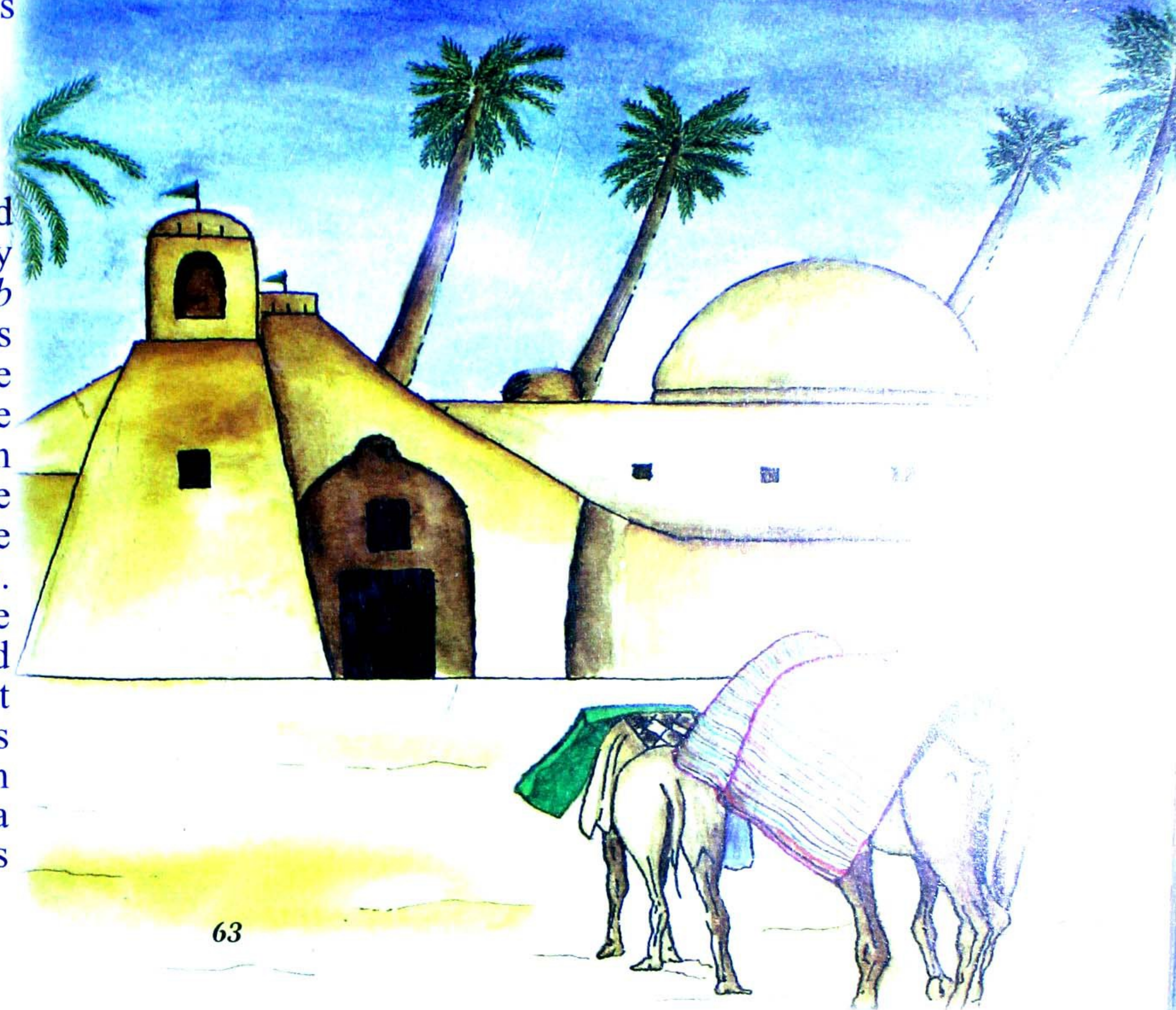
Messenger ﷺ handed him the Quranic revelations and asked him to invite the people of Yathrib to Islam. On their return home, one of the companions, *Mus'ab bin Umair* ﷺ, accompanied them to teach the basics of Islam.

Next year (622 CE) another group of seventy-five persons (including two women) from *Yathrib* came for pilgrimage. After the pilgrimage they met the Prophet ﷺ at the same place, i.e. *Aqabah*, and swore allegiance to him affirming that, if he agreed to go to *Yathrib*, they would defend him against his enemies just as they defended their own families. They extended a sincere invitation to the Holy Prophet ﷺ to emigrate to *Yathrib*. The event was witnessed by *Abbas bin Abdul Muttalib* ﷺ – an uncle of the Prophet ﷺ who had succeeded *Abu Talib* as custodian of the *Ka'aba*. He explained to them the seriousness of the pledge and what it stood for. They re-affirmed their pledge to stand by the Prophet ﷺ through thick and thin. Says *Ubadah bin Al-Samit* ﷺ who was one of them: “We pledged to obey the Apostle ﷺ standing firm with him under all circumstances, and promised that we would not wrong anybody, would always

“speak the truth, and that in the cause of Allah we would fear none.” This was a solemn pledge and later events proved that they stood with their words in letter and spirit. Both these Pledges are known as Covenants of Aqabah.

Emigration to Medinah:

Emigration to *Abyssinia* had been undertaken twice. But the Holy Prophet ﷺ had a longing for *Yathrib* which later on came to be known as *Medinatun Nabi* (the City of the Prophet ﷺ). Ever since the *Me'raj*, he had known that the final emigration would be to *Yathrib*, but as for the timing of the move, he awaited divine guidance to take the initiative. Ultimately, when he was allowed, he told his followers that the time had come to wind up at Makkah and set out to *Yathrib*. The Holy Prophet ﷺ told his followers: “Your place of emigration has been shown to me. I have seen a saline land, a plain where date-palms



grow in plenty and it is situated between two lava terrains (*Harras*).” Soon all believers were ready to move, leaving their hearths and homes behind. In the start of 623 CE the Muslims in groups of twos and threes started slipping away, under the cover of darkness of the nights. It was only Umar bin Khattab رضي الله عنه who left Makkah in broad day light after saying his prayers and making *Tawaf*. Braving all the odds, the Prophet ﷺ had decided to stay at Makkah along with two of his friends: Abu Bakr رضي الله عنه and Ali رضي الله عنه. When the caravans of emigrants started pouring into Yathrib, a tent city was set up in an open area at *Al-Usba* in the township of *Quba*. There the emigrants used to wait for the arrival of their beloved Prophet ﷺ.

On the other hand, the Makkans closely watched the march of events. They realized that Muslims were disappearing one by one. On the night that the Holy Prophet ﷺ had planned to leave his enemies had already plotted to surround his house. With drawn-up blood-thirsty swords the leaders of all the hostile clans surrounded his house to strike at him as soon as he came out. He instructed Ali رضي الله عنه to stay in his house. At daybreak, deliver all the trusts to their

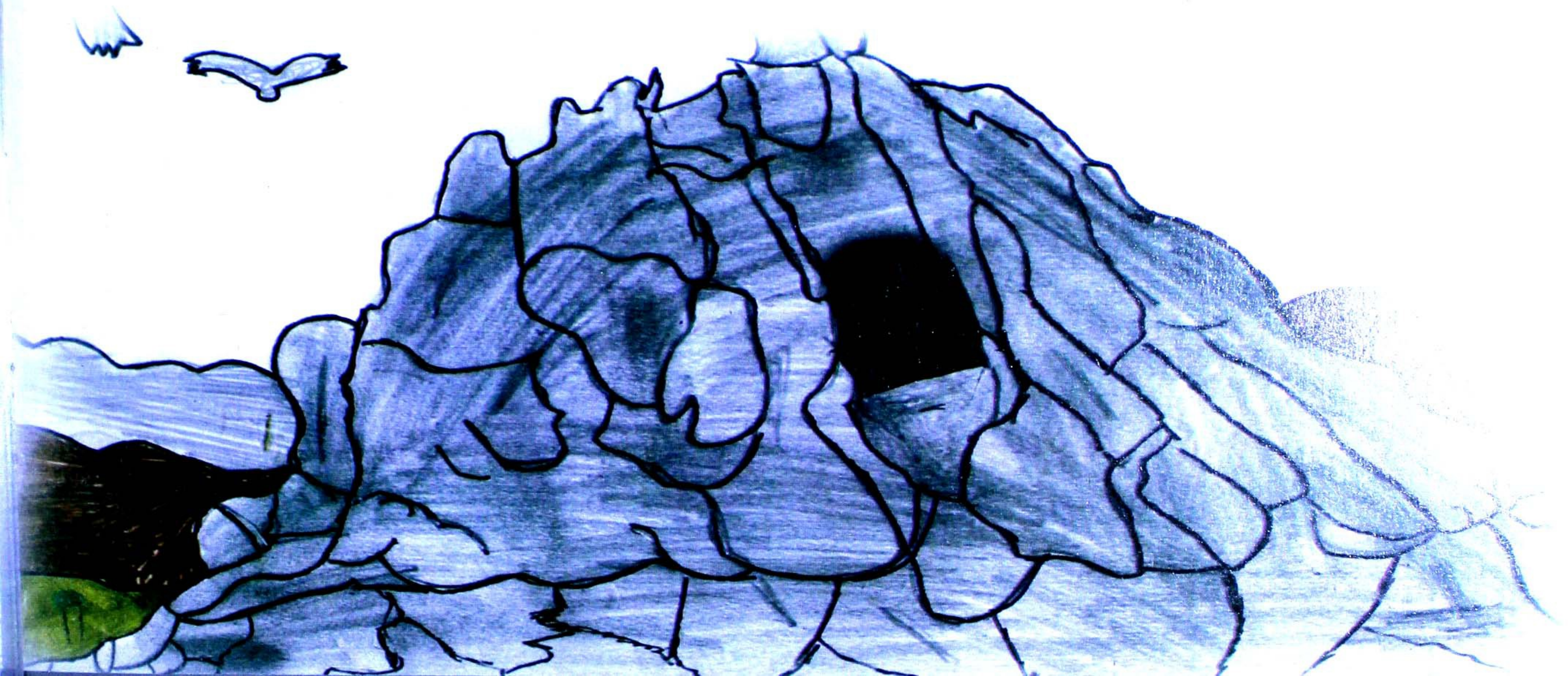
owners and then follow him. At midnight the Holy Prophet ﷺ opened the door and threw a handful of dust towards those who stood outside. Blinded by this miracle they could not see him going out. From his house he moved on to the house of Abu Bakr رضي الله عنه who was already waiting for him. He rested there for a while and then both set out. Fuhaira – a freed slave of Abu Bakr رضي الله عنه – was to lead them to destination. At the day-break, the Makkans were shocked to discover that the Prophet ﷺ had already left and the one lying in his place was his cousin Ali رضي الله عنه. Their plan stood foiled. The Quran mentions this incident as:

"And when the disbelievers plotted against you to imprison you, or to kill you, or to banish you (from your home) they were plotting and Allah too was plotting, and Allah is the Best of planners."

While reading this event, one must appreciate that even when his life was at great risk, he cared much to deliver the trusts that the people had kept with him. He instructed Ali رضي الله عنه to stay behind and hand over the valuables to their owners. For three days and nights, he and Abu

Bakr ﷺ preferred to stay in a cave atop a nearby mountain, known as *Thaur*. The Quraish despatched many search parties to track him. One of the search parties in fact did get very close to the cave which scared Abu Bakr ﷺ, but the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: Do not worry, Allah is with us. The holy Quran has immortalized this moment in the following words:

When the disbelievers drove him out and the second of the two in the cave said: do not grieve, for Allah is with us. So Allah sent down His peace upon him and supported him by soldiers you could not see and let the word of the deniers go under, and the word of Allah the highest. Allah is of the highest wisdom, of invincible will."





When a search party reached near the cave they found it covered by twigs of a wild tree covered with a spider's web. Besides, some pigeons had also built their nests on the mouth of the cave. The trackers saw some pigeons sitting on their eggs. It seemed as if nobody had ever entered the cave since ages. So the search party went away. During this period, Asma the daughter of Abu Bakr ﷺ used to provide fresh milk and foodstuff. After a stay of three days in that cave they decided to set out for *Yathrib*. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ bid farewell to his native city, saying: Much though had I desired to stay in this beloved city yet its people have made me leave it. O Allah, now take me to the city that You love most! They came down from the mountain and set out on a long journey. They were still being pursued by groups of trackers/informers. A reward of one hundred camels had been offered to anyone who would bring the Prophet ﷺ dead or alive. One of the trackers, named *Suraqa bin Jush'am*, was in fact able to spot them around Badr, but due to a miracle of the Prophet ﷺ he failed to come near them. When he approached them, the hoofs of his horse went deep into the rocky terrain as if it were a heap of sand. He fell

down but rode his horse again to get nearer to them, but the same thing happened again. Having been knocked down miraculously, he felt himself powerless and realized that it was impossible for him to do any harm to the Holy Prophet ﷺ. He promised to go back and not to disclose his whereabouts to the pagans. In return the Prophet ﷺ promised that when the Muslims would conquer Persia, he would be offered the golden bangles worn by the Sassanid emperor – a commitment that was fulfilled by Umar رضي الله عنه when Persian Empire was conquered during his caliphate.

The three travelers continued their journey on a zigzag route. On the way they spotted a few tents – the camp of a Bedouin and his wife Umm Ma'bad. She was then all by herself as the husband had gone out with his herd. The travelers wanted to relax for a while and quench their thirst. Water was so scarce in the desert that the lady was hesitant to offer some. The Prophet ﷺ asked if she could allow him to milk one of her goats. When she agreed the Prophet ﷺ went near the goat and said: In the name of Allah. He then asked for a bowl which was provided. He started

milking the goat which had apparently no signs of milk. The lady stood watching agasp. What a miracle! Her eyes could not believe it! Soon the bowl was full of milk which the Prophet ﷺ gave her to drink. He milked the goat again and gave the bowl to Abu Bakr رضي الله عنه and then to Fuhaira. He was the last one to drink. Then he milked the second goat and left the lady with bowls full of milk.

After they left, the lady told her husband on his return as to what she had seen. He curiously asked her: who was the saintly person who did such miracles? She said: "I saw a man who came here with two of his goats. His face was luminous like a full moon. His expression was serene. When he was speaking there was a strange dignity in him; when he spoke his words were like sprinkled pearls. He obeyed every word of his and listened to him to whatever he spoke."

In the meantime, the travelers kept on their journey on the lava-ridden route, and finally reached Quba (which was at that time a satellite town of Yathrib) on Monday the 12th of Rabi al-

Awwal (28th June 622 CE). The people of Yathrib welcomed him with open arms. A big platform had been raised as a stage for a grand reception. The Prophet of Islam ﷺ stayed with Kulthum bin Hidam. A large crowd of people flocked there to catch a glimpse of the Holy Prophet ﷺ. He laid the foundations of a mosque which came to be known as *Masjid al-Quba'* having the honour of being the first mosque where the believers could say their prayers with full freedom. The tribal chiefs attended his audience and announced allegiance to him. He honoured the township of Quba' for five days with his stay and then decided to move over to the centre of Medinah where the people had planned a very warm reception of the most-awaited Prophet of Allah ﷺ.

The caravan left Quba' amidst loud greetings of *Allah-o-Akbar*. Hardly a distance of a few meters was covered when the tribal chief of Quba' invited the Prophet ﷺ to grace his township with a visit for a while. It was the area of *Sal'a* – the maternal uncles of Abdullah – the father of Rasulallah ﷺ. He relaxed there for a few days. It being a Friday Rasulallah ﷺ led the Jumu'a prayer in the courtyard of that house.

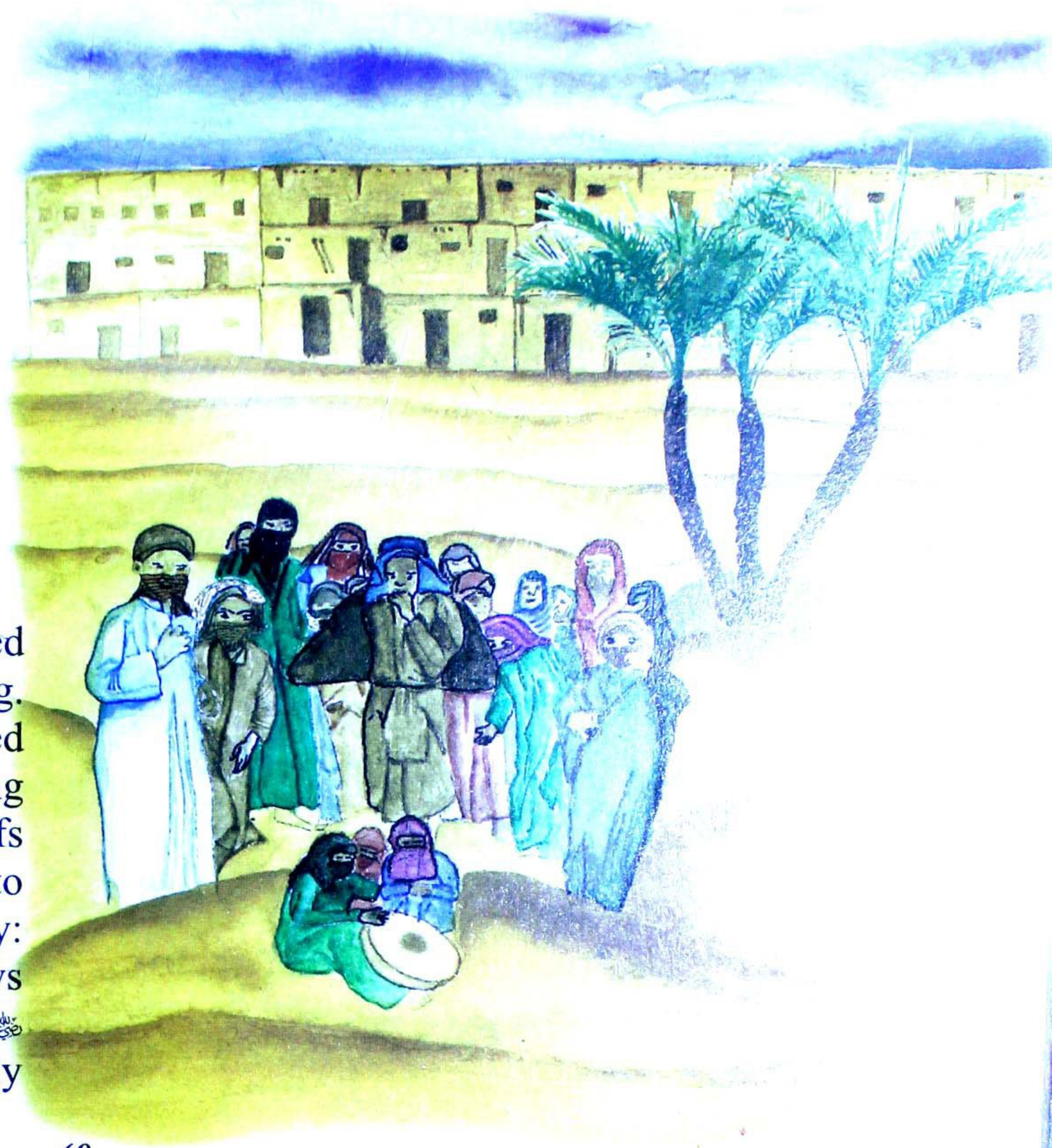
After that the Jumu'a congregational prayer was instituted as a permanent weekly feature and an article of faith. To commemorate the first Jumu'a prayer, that house/courtyard was converted into a Masjid which is even now a famous place frequented by the visitors to Medinah and is known as Jumu'a Masjid in the Quba' area.

After saying his Jumu'a prayer, the Prophet ﷺ resumed his onward journey. People of all ages lined up along the streets. The Ladies and children climbed upon the rooftops and, according to a tradition narrated by Anas bin Malik, the streets of Medinah were resounding with a singular chanting: 'Here comes the Messenger of Allah ﷺ!' Also, groups of small girls sang welcome songs in his honour. The residents dressed in their best attires and armed with shining swords and spears waited on roadsides as a protocol to the distinguished guest. He had stayed for five days at Quba and on Friday the 2nd of July he decided to move on to the main city. When the caravan passed over the heights of *Al-Wada'* – which was a narrow pass in the mountain of *Sal'a*, the children of Medinah gave him a warm welcome greeting and singing the

following song on tabor (*Duff*) beat:

The full moon has risen over us
From the heights of Al-Wada'!
We ought to be grateful to Allah
For having sent to us the Prophet
O the one sent to us for our guidance
You have come with the commands to be obeyed
You have come and graced Medinah with
your arrival
Welcome, O (you) the best of all the
Prophets!

The Abyssinians danced and performed their celebratory martial art of sword-wielding. Riding his camel (a she-camel which was named '*Qaswa*'), he passed through the crowd waving his hands to the jubilant Yathribites. Tribal chiefs competed with one another to have the honour to play host to him. He would simply smile and say: My camel (*Qaswa*) has been ordered (and knows where to go). Make way for her to go on. Bilal رضي الله عنه led the procession and Sa'ad bin Zarara رضي الله عنه lightly



held the nose-string of the ride (as a mark of respect to the distinguished guest). At times *Qaswa* glanced towards left and right as it stepped forward to ascertain the destination. At last the caravan reached a plain near a courtyard of dates.

The she-camel knelt down and squatted in front of the house of *Abu Ayyub Ansari* ﷺ and the Prophet ﷺ honoured him by being his guest. Soon the adjoining land was bought for twenty Dinars and foundations were laid for building the Prophet's Mosque with two small rooms for himself and his family. This Masjid got renowned as the Masjid of Rasulallah ﷺ. Everybody worked hard to raise that building and Rasulallah ﷺ also participated in this effort alike. The construction took about six months. Then the Prophet ﷺ called his family from Makkah and made his residence there. Later on, as time went by he married other ladies, rooms built for them by *Martha bin No'aman* ﷺ were presented to them. Thus over a period of ten years he had built several apartments on the eastern side of the courtyard of *Qaswa*.

A Quick Look at the History of Yathrib:

Now a word about ancient history of Yathrib! Situated amid uneven terrain of lava formations Yathrib consisted of many small villages belonging to various tribes. It was populated by Arabs – mainly of Aws and Khazraj clans. But before their arrival, a group of Jews had already settled in that region around the 6th century BC following the destruction of their temple at the hands of Babylonians. Another reason why they had chosen to migrate to this land was that they were awaiting the arrival of the holy Prophet ﷺ whose advent had been foretold in their books. They had adopted Arabic norms and language. The Jewish population consisted of three tribes: *Banu Qainuqa*, *Banu Quraidha* and *Banu Nadhir*. They had occupied fertile valleys. Each of their clans lived in a big compound. They had made a good place for themselves among the local Arabs through agriculture and trade. They were good artisans: goldsmiths and blacksmiths and were renowned for producing jewelry, ironwork and weaponry.

The Arabs were mostly farmers and used to

grow dates and grain. Yathrib was a city that longed for the Prophet ﷺ because for centuries the people of various races had spoken of it to be the final dwelling place of the Last Prophet. Now the time had come, the long awaited Prophet ﷺ had been ordained and everybody looked forward as to when he would grace that city. The Arabs had taken a lead over the Jews in offering their services to the Prophet ﷺ. When he graced this soil by his emigration, he found much peace and favourable response from the Arabs. From then on he chose that city to be his residence for all times to come. After the Emigration, *Yathrib* was renamed as *Al-Medina-tun-Nabi* (the City of the Prophet ﷺ), the City of Love, the City of Sacrifice and the City of Sanctity (*Al-Haram*) at par with the *Haram* of Makkah.

The Fruits of Migration:

At first the Emigration was thought by some to be a means of avoiding torture, suffering, belittlement and social boycotts. But *Medinah* embraced and absorbed all the emigrants with the compassion of a motherland. While the longing for the native town of Mecca never ceased, had

become a cherished destination for the believers. Even though Mecca had been conquered a few years later, yet neither the Prophet ﷺ nor his companions ﷺ ever returned to live there. The people at *Medinah* loved him and were ready to give their lives to *help* him. Therefore, they were called *Ansars* (the *Helpers*). They vowed to stand by him through thick and thin. They treated the emigrants like their real brothers and divided their possessions and means of livelihood equally among them. This unique bond of fraternity created between the emigrant Muslims and those of the *Aws* and *Khazraj* Arabs at *Medina* has been known in the history of Islam as *Muakharraj*. Those who came to *Medina* after the event of the Emigration and were in need of support, were allowed to stay in the *Masjid Nabawi* as a part of it was reserved for such homeless Companions who were called '*As'hab al-Suffa*'.

Said Abdullah b. Sallam رضي الله عنه, an *Ansari* Rabbi: When the Messenger of Allah ﷺ entered *Medina*, the people rushed to him. I was among them. When I saw his face and examined it, I realized that it was not the face of a liar – rather it was the face of the 'Leader of the

Messengers'. The first thing that I heard him say was: People! Spread peace and salutations, and feed one another, and maintain your family ties, and pray at night when others are asleep....and you will enter Paradise in peace.

Although much of the life of the Prophet ﷺ had passed in Makkah, yet there is no denying the fact that Medinah has the honour to be the soil where most important chapters of his Prophetic career were completed. Much of the Quran was revealed and implemented during Medinan period. Above all, it was the soil where the first Islamic republic was formed.

The first thing that the Prophet ﷺ did at Medinah was to form a bond of brotherhood among his followers. Each Emigrant was made a partner of one of the 'Supporters' (Ansars). One of the Emigrants was declared the partner of one of the Aws or Khazraj Ansars, who supported them with support and succour. Under this bond of fraternity, the 'Supporters' not only provided them with shelter but also shared their means of livelihood, such as date-palm. Before his arrival, the two major Arab

tribes (Aws and Khazraj) were often at war with each other and such was their enmity that men of one tribe dared not enter the area of the other. A never-ending feud had consumed much of their manpower. But the Prophet ﷺ injected in them a spirit of brotherhood that made them one community, which after assimilating in its fold members of other converting clans, races and colours, welded the divergent peoples into one nation – the *Ummah*. This brotherhood, unique in the history of mankind, transcended tribal kinships and loyalties and being race-blind and status-blind it welded the various cross-sections and groups of people into one brotherhood. This bond of brotherhood was based not on kinship or blood but rather on faith which linked them together in weal and woe. Islam is not specific to Arabs, but provides guidance to all the races, classes and peoples for all times. All are equal in the eyes of Islam. The only yard-stick to judge a person remains his or her piety.

Setting up the first City-State:

As stated above, it was very important to weld the divergent factions living at Medinah



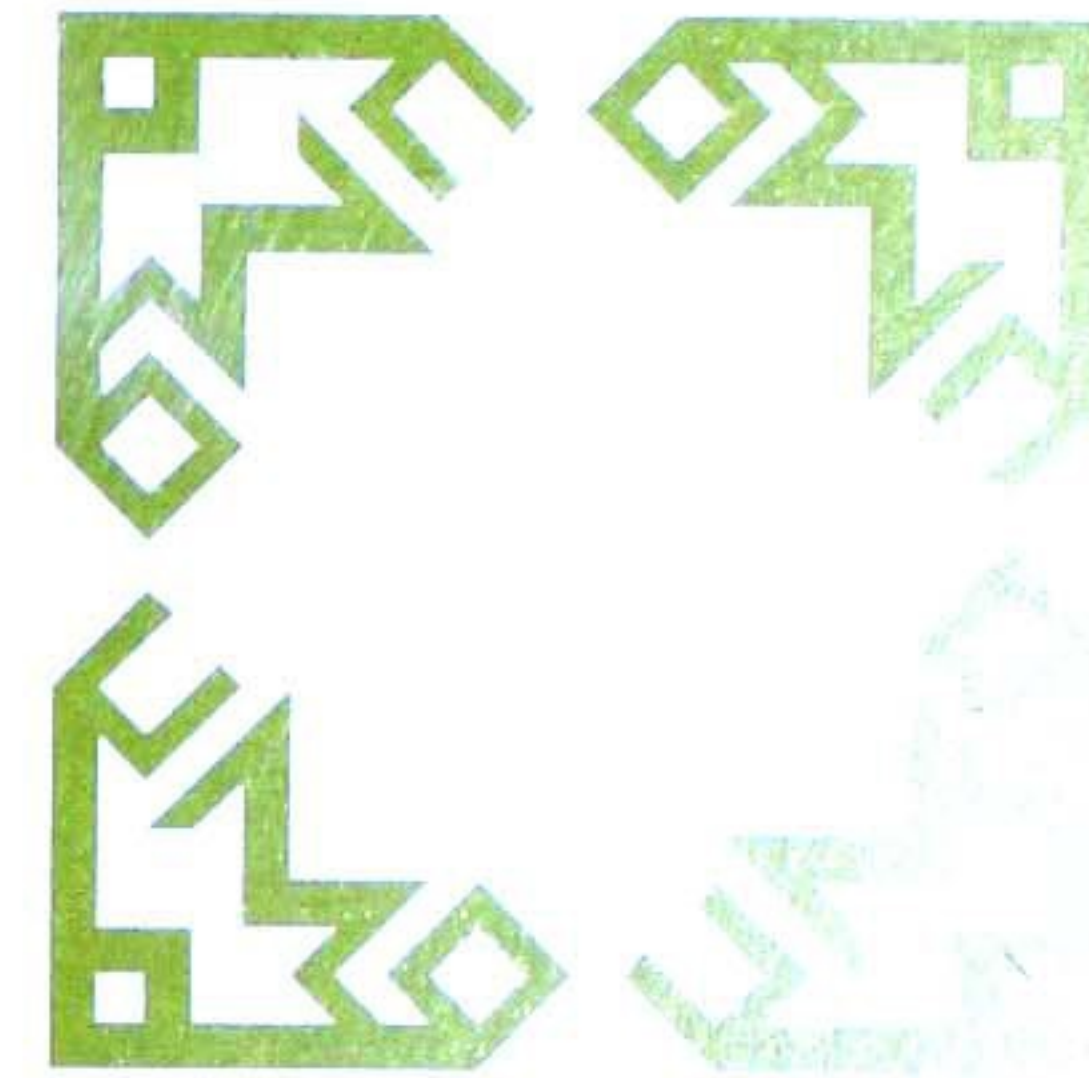
(Muslim and non-Muslim citizens) into a single nation so that an independent city-state could be formed to ensure the rule of law. Rasulallah ﷺ invited various leaders of all segments (Muslim Arabs, non-Muslim Arabs and the Jews) and stressed upon them the need for forming such a pluralistic commonwealth. He made a covenant with elders of all tribes laying down rights and obligations of all the citizens of that city state, the first Islamic Republic. The Covenant aimed at bringing about a political order out of chaos and strife thereby transforming its political, religious and civic life. It succeeded in establishing political unity by transforming the warring tribes of Arabs and Jews into a peaceful state/republic headed by the Holy Prophet ﷺ under the sovereignty of Allah ﷻ. The life and property of every citizen, Muslim or Jew, was protected by the Prophet ﷺ and Islam.

Under that covenant all citizens were considered equal in the eyes of the law, albeit different laws were to be applied to the respective communities. Cases of Muslims were to be decided according to the Quran and the verdict of the Prophet ﷺ, while those of the Jews were to be

decided according to their law – the *Torah*. Both communities were to be autonomous in their own affairs, but for the sake of security and solidarity, military and foreign affairs were agreed to remain with the central command. It was also agreed that an attack upon Medinah would be considered an attack on all, to fight which all resources would be pooled together to put up a joint defence – the expenses, however, to be borne by each segment. This great document which has been rightly acknowledged to be the first written constitution in the whole world laid down broader outlines for peace, justice and human freedom and autonomy. Before Emigration, there existed class hatred not only among the Arabs but also among the Jewish tribes. From amongst the Jewish groups, Banu Qainuqa were held in high esteem due to their monopoly on the market, but the Banu Quraidha, who were by profession tanners, were considered inferior to other Jewish tribes. Even the blood money for any member of Banu Qainuqa killed by somebody was half the amount of what was paid for any member of Banu Qainuqa or Banu Nadhir. With the signing of the Charter of Medina, every one of them was entitled to equal rights. This charter that consisted of 53 articles

was mutually agreed upon and signed by all parties.

The strong social bond, ethnic autonomy, political unity, and above all, unswerving loyalty to the state, were the main pillars upon which stood the edifice of the said Constitution of Medina, which was agreed upon between all the communities: the Arabs and non-Arabs and the Muslims and non-Muslims. A signed copy of this covenant was displayed at a central place in Medinah for general information and adherence. History will bear witness forever of the excellence of the Charter of Medinah for it was the first ever written constitution in the world to guarantee the rights and co-existence of the inhabitants of a state regardless of their colour, creed or race – a pluralistic Islamic concept sadly missing in modern times.



إِنَّ اللَّهَ وَمَلَائِكَتَهُ يُصَلُّونَ

عَلَى النَّبِيِّ يَا أَيُّهَا
الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا
صَلُّوا عَلَيْهِ وَسَلِّمُوا



The Struggle

The Wars (Ghazwas):

Although the Muslims had migrated from their homeland, yet there was no let or respite in the hostilities of the Makkan disbelievers that continued unabated as ever. The Makkans sent many threats to hypocrites and the Jews to repatriate the Prophet ﷺ and his companions ﷺ or be ready to face serious consequences. This threatening posture escalated the tensions and added fuel to the fire. There was a strong and well-founded apprehension that if no immediate steps were taken the Jews and the hypocrites would succumb to the threats and strengthen their hands to strangle the Muslim Republic in its infancy. As head of the State, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ could not ignore such a grave threat.

In spite of all sorts of persecutions, insults and social boycotts, never did the Prophet ﷺ nor

any of the believers pick up a quarrel what to speak of taking up arms in retaliation. However, when tyranny became extremely unbearable, first he allowed some of his followers to emigrate to Ethiopia and then to Medina. Allah had already allowed Muslims to take up arms to defend themselves. The command to fight against tyranny was clear:

“And were it not for Allah's repelling of some by means of others, the monasteries, the temples, the churches and synagogues and the mosques, wherever the name of Allah is mentioned, would have been pulled down.”

Another command ran as follows:

“Fight in the path of Allah against those who fight against you; but do not transgress. Allah does not love transgressors.”

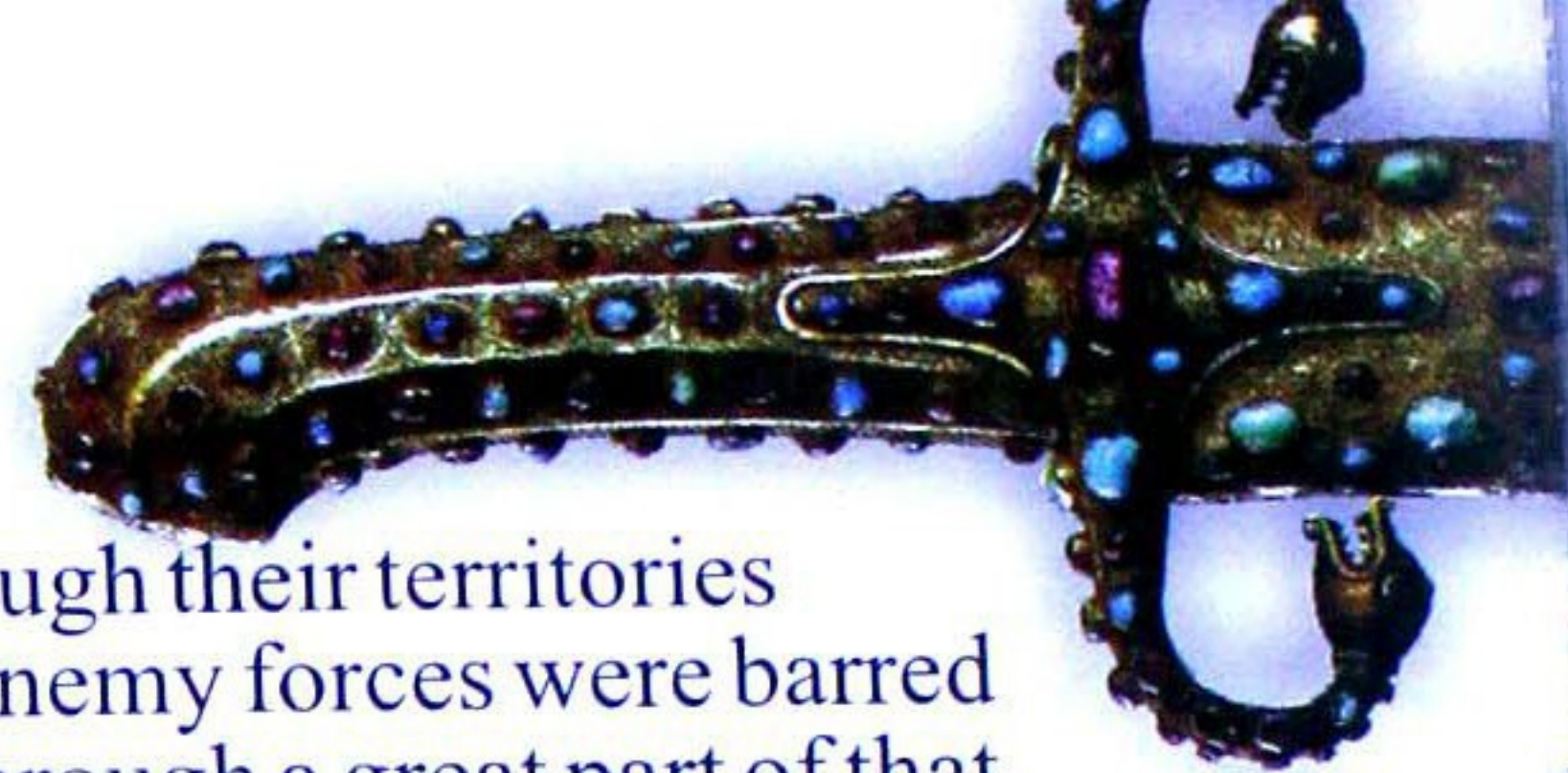
Emigration itself was a part of practical, unarmed and silent campaign against oppression. It was the first phase of the long-term strategy towards acting upon Allah's commands for armed

struggle. The Makkan threats were clear enough to signal the coming storm. An all-out war was being imposed on the Muslims, but as the war-specialists say, war is not waged at a moment's notice. It calls for deep thinking, thorough planning, proper preparations and mobilization of manpower and the necessary logistics and provisions, besides a number of diplomatic moves. The main objective of the Prophet ﷺ was to safeguard not only the territorial integrity of the newly formed commonwealth of Medinah but also to create an environment under which everybody could live in a state of "perfect and lasting peace". If ever there was a war that resulted in a 'perfect peace', it was the war that had to be fought by the holy Prophet ﷺ over the period of his ten years' stay at Medina.

The Prophet ﷺ visited chiefs of many surrounding tribes and entered into friendly pacts with them – a diplomatic move that neutralized them in case of an armed conflict. Such pacts were made with *Banu Nadir* to the south, *Banu Juhayna* in the north and *Banu Muzaina* in the west, which ensured their cooperation in case of foreign invasion.

Thereby the Muslim detachments could pass through their territories safely, but the enemy forces were barred from passing through a great part of that tribal belt. These pacts secured the tribal belt around Medina.

As for the fighters in the cause of Allah, the whole of the Muslim Ummah – the Emigrants and the Supporters – were at the beck and call of their beloved Master ﷺ. However, as for the material resources, they were scant and meager. About 150 Muslim souls had emigrated from Makkah and out of them, with the exception of Abu Bakr ﷺ and Uthman b. Affan ﷺ, no one had any means of his own worth the name. After facing a long drawn persecution at the hands of the non-believers for almost 13 years, everybody was forced to part with his home, belongings and arms, and emigrate to Medinah empty-handed. The Makkans had seized all their properties. Not only that but they also barred the Muslims from visiting Makkah for Umrah. Sa'ad b. Mu'adh ﷺ visited Makkah and wanted to complete Umrah



rituals but Abu Jahl stood in his way and did not let him perform the rituals until the repatriation of the Muslim emigrants by the Medinans. Sa'ad رضي الله عنه also made clear to Abu Jahl that if the Makkans barred the Medinans to enter Makkah for Umrah purposes, the Medinans would be forced to blockade the Makkan trade routes.

It was against this backdrop that the Muslims unanimously rose to the occasion and decided to face Allah's enemies: first near Medinah (Badr), then in the outskirts of Medinah (Uhud) and then in the very heart of Medinah (*Banu Nadhir, Khandaq* and *Banu Quraidha*, etc.) and, finally, when the Muslims had proven their mettle in all those fields, they set upon larger strikes on the strongholds of enemy or its collaborators which were situated far away from Medinah (such as Khyber, Makkah, and Tabuk, etc.).

He was not only the Prophet of Allah ﷺ but also the head of the 'Commonwealth' – an ideal Head of State who was setting examples and precedents in all walks of life to be followed by the believers for all times to come. Therefore, as

supreme commander he could ill-afford to underestimate or ignore the threats and then be taken unawares. He therefore, adopted a systematic defence strategy to be implemented in phases. In the first instance, he sent exploratory detachments of smaller strengths varying from 20 to 60 heads under the command of his companions رضي الله عنهم with the sole purpose of gathering information. Besides intelligence work, the aim of such expeditions was also to patrol the areas under Muslim influence to ensure continuous loyalty and support of the tribal belt around Medinah that had entered into alliances with the Makkans recently but were still not Muslims. At the same time, such expeditions were aimed at training the believers for the upcoming encounters.

The second round of expedition was more assertive in nature and was aimed at making the enemy know that Medinah was as good as an independent state as Makkah and a power to reckon with. Muslim parties started shadowing the Makkani caravans passing by Medina. Those expeditions had strict instructions not to shoot at the enemy but restrain to making themselves visible to the caravans so that the leaders at Makkah could

realize that Medinah had become a state in its own right and appreciate the new political realities. However, the purblind Makkans did not pay any heed to those signals. Their caravans were intercepted with minimal confrontation with no bloodshed. In due course of time, however, some of the expeditions did result in archery skirmishes which paved the way for full-scale engagements. Thus, the enemy was engaged in phases.

During the Medinan period the Messenger of Allah ﷺ either himself commanded or despatched twenty-seven military expeditions. He personally commanded the Muslim armies in seventeen battles out of which fighting took place in nine battles. In addition, he despatched more or less sixty small military detachments under the command of various companions. Nine of these ten years of the life of the Prophet ﷺ at Medinah were spent virtually in a state of war. It is an exaggeration to say that a constant emergency had prevailed at Medinah since the conquest of Makkah. There were seven major battles, Badr, Uhud, Khandaq, Khyber, Fath Makkah, Hunain and Tabuk. Of these the

Muslims won the first (the Battle of Badr, March, 624), lost the second (the Battle of Uhud, March, 625), and outlasted the third by making the invaders flee away disappointed (The Battle of the Trench and the Siege of Medina, April, 627). In March, 628, a treaty was signed between the two sides, which recognized the Muslims as a new force in Arabia and gave them freedom to move unmolested throughout Arabia. The Meccan allies breached the treaty a year later which paved the way for the fall of Makkah. At several places the Holy Quran has mentioned those battles (*Ghazwat*). For instance, *Al-Anfal* was revealed about Badr, while the last part of *Aal-e-Imran* was about Uhud. The beginning of *Al-Ahzab* was revealed about the battles of Khandaq, Quraidha and Khyber. *Al-Hashr* was revealed about Banu Nadhir, *Al-Fath* about Al-Hudabiya and the battle of Khyber. The conquest of Makkah was mentioned indirectly in *Al-Fath* and directly in *An-Nasr*.

The Prophet ﷺ won decisively in two battles, *Badr* and *Hunain*. In the case of Makkah, the Makkans virtually surrendered leading to a total victory without fighting. As the actual goal

of the Prophet ﷺ was not to destroy or kill the enemy, he never tried to do so. Peace was his mission. The Treaty of Hudabiya testifies to his desire and commitment to peace. He conquered Makkah without shedding a drop of blood. Had he wished it, he was at full liberty to put the Makkans to sword. But the Prophet of Mercy ﷺ vanquished them not by sword but won their hearts by a general clemency.

In almost all the battles, traditional weaponry was used: archery and swords as attack weapons and helmets, armours and shields as protective weapons. However, in one of the battles *Manjaniq* (catapult) was also used during the siege of Taif. In order to protect Medinah from the cavalry of the invaders, an almost 7-kilometer long and 20-foot wide trench was dug on the front lines during the Battle of *Khandaq*. There was no regular army at that time. Every Muslim was at the beck and call of the Prophet ﷺ and offered himself to fight in the cause of Islam as and when needed. It was customary for any Arab to have in his house a number of swords and other weapons – these weapons were inherited generation after generation and they took pride in it.

He always preferred to engage the enemy outside the city, be it Badr or Medina, which clearly shows that he was laying down the doctrine and ethics of war to protect the civilians, the innocent lives as well the environment from the ravages of war, which in the modern warfare is known as the collateral damage. The total number of casualties on the enemy side was not more than 250 whereas the number of Muslim martyrs did not exceed 150. One has to keep in mind that these casualties were not a result of one battle, but had happened in a series of battles spread over a span of ten years.

The First Battle at Badr:

The State of Medinah had emerged as an independent entity with its own constitution and a defined area of jurisdiction. The Prophet's expeditions were aimed at asserting its existence and making the Makkans understand the new political scenario. Like any other state, Medinah too had every right to secure its soil and ensure its integrity. The Makkans always thought of

pursuing the Muslims in their new homeland. They took it as a growing threat to their commercial routes as most of their trade caravans bound for the north passed through Medina.

In 624 CE when Abu Sufian was returning from Syria with his caravan, he spotted a group of Muslims. He diverted his route and escaped. But as he thought that the Muslims would pursue him he sent a message to Makkah on which Abu Jahl led a strong army of 1000 men and 200 horses and headed towards Medina. Rasulallah ﷺ decided to intercept them on their way with a much smaller army, hardly 313 companions, with no cavalry worth the name: they had only 3 horses and 70 camels on which they were riding turn by turn. On the 12th of Ramadhan the Muslim army marched from Medina. Reaching Badr (about 140 miles from Medina) in two days time, Rasulallah ﷺ decided to encamp there. He had two choices: to attack Abu Sufian's caravan or to wait for the Makkani army and engage them there. When Abu Sufian came to know that Muslim forces were encamped at Badr, he diverted the course of

his caravan to avoid encounter and sent word to Makkans to drop the plan of combat. The arrogant Makkans proud of their material strength refused to return and kept marching towards Medinah and finding that the Muslims were staying near Badr they pitched their tents there across the valley.

On the morning of Friday, the 17th of Ramadan 2 AH the two armies drew closer to each other. First one-to-one duals occurred followed by full-fledged combat and fierce fighting. This battle has been unique in a sense that there was a strong imbalance among the two armies in terms of warriors and weapons. The nonbelievers were fully equipped while the believers were ill-equipped to such an extent that some had even no sword to fight with. On top of it, they were fasting. Yet the lions of Medinah proved their mettle in the battlefield.

The Quran bears testimony that first three thousand and then five thousand angels aided the Muslims to vanquish their foes. Invisible to the human eyes, the angels landed on a mountain,

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which stands like a sand dune amidst the hard rocky terrain even today, and is known as *Jabl ar-Rahmah* (the Mountain of Mercy). In the encounter almost all the chieftains of the Quraish taking part in that battle were killed. They lost 70 of their stalwarts while the Muslim casualties were almost 1/5th. Abu Jahl was also among those who had fallen. Among others, the father-in-law, a brothers-in-law and one of the sons (*Hanzala*) of Abu Sufian were also killed. Seventy more were made captives, among them were Abbas the uncle and Abu'al Aas the son-in-law of the Prophet ﷺ. In spite of their prowess, the Makkans faced a bitter defeat with seventy of them falling captives in the hands of the Muslims. The captives were well and generously treated by the Muslims; those who could not pay ransom but knew how to read and write were allowed to redeem themselves by teaching the boys of Medinah to write.

The news of the Prophet's victory spread far and wide not only among the neighbouring tribes but also across the Red Sea. Rasulallah ﷺ sent a special message to King Negus to announce to the Muslims who had taken asylum

in Abyssinia that God had given them the promised victory and that whenever they return they would find safety and peace in the city of Medina. At the same time, the victory strengthened the resolve of the believers turning the tide on the non-believers. This was a turning point in the history of Medinah. Yet, in spite of the apparent defeat of the Quraish, the *Ummah* was still far from being secure. Although the Jews were citizens of the state yet the rise of Islam was not less than a thorn in their sides. They thought that the defeat of the Makkans at Badr could have serious fallout with the Muslims gaining an upper hand in the politics of the Peninsula. Some of the Jewish leaders, therefore, hastened to Makkah secretly to sympathize with their losses at Badr and started inciting them for a much bigger attack.

When Abu Sufian returned to Makkah he could see the impact of the debacle. Even Medinah was in mourning. The Jews added fuel to the fire and tried to instigate them and they started planning to attack Medinah with all their might. Within a year they were able to mobilize a much bigger and stronger army. All sorts of incentives

were announced to gear up their war machinery. They wanted to take revenge and wash the stains of humility. Their war planners thought that for such a punitive strike a surprise attack would be proper to eliminate the Muslims.

The Battle of Uhud:

In a year's time they were again on the march towards Medinah with an army of 3,000 of whom 700 were mail-clad warriors. When their army set out, Abbas the uncle of the Prophet ﷺ sent him a word. By the time the message arrived, the Makkans had already reached the suburbs of Medinah and encamped in *Dhu al-Hulaifa*. Rasulallah ﷺ summoned his companions ﷺ to chalk out a defence plan. First he ordered to gather intelligence about the strength of invaders. Some boys were sent to the area in the guise of herdsmen who provided feedback on the strength and numbers of the invaders. It was the month of Rabi-ul-Thani 625 CE. The harvesting season was not over. Therefore the invaders let loose their soldiers and vagabonds to rob whatever they could find. They cut the trees and shrubs to pitch their tents. Rasulallah ﷺ wanted to put up

defence from within the city, but on the advice of some of his companions ﷺ, he consented to march out and engage the enemy four miles away from the city in the foot of the Mount of Uhud.

Medinah had a sleepless night and a sort of emergency prevailed as the enemy was just at the door. On a short notice a force of 1,000 warriors was ready to fight and drive away the invaders. On the way to the battlefield, however, 300 hypocrites defected. Thus only 700 foot-soldiers, with only two horses remained with the Prophet ﷺ. The Jews, who were committed under the Charter of Medinah to put up a joint defence in case of an attack, also backed out. The Prophet ﷺ was facing three crises: firstly a sudden attack, secondly the defection by the hypocrites, and thirdly the betrayal by the Jews. There was no time to re-draw the battle plans as the enemy had already encamped on the plains in the south-west of the mount of Uhud.

After saying the Fajr prayers in an open area when it was still dark, Rasulallah ﷺ led his

army and stationed them in a secure area amidst the zigzag passes of *Uhud* from where they were to join the battlefield in small groups as and when needed. Rasulallah ﷺ deployed fifty archers on a small hill, under the command of Ibn Jubayr ؓ, to shoot at the invaders and keep volleying them with arrows to thwart their advance. They were instructed not to leave that post. He ordered: When the cavalry of the nonbelievers tries to outflank us repulse them with showers of your arrows. Whether the enemy should be above or below us, remain steadfast at your posts and whatever befalls us do not come down from the hilltop.

On the other side, under the command of Abu Sufian, Khalid ibn Walid was in charge of their cavalry. He did his best to mount one attack after another, but in the face of the volleys of arrows he could not do much. The enemy thus suffered a setback and was put to route, their lady soldiers ran hither and thither screaming. The balance of victory looked clearly in favour of the believers. Their eight standard-bears were killed one after another, leaving nobody to raise their flag. It fell on the ground close to a heap of their

dead bodies, and the Makkans did not dare come forward to raise it. The Muslims had reached the enemy camps and for a while it looked as if the war would soon be over with the battlefield remaining in the hands of the believers. This misled the archers on the mountain post who came down the hill to join that advance. In so doing they left their posts unattended. Khalid ibn Walid, who was a strategic expert and a warrior par excellence, took the opportunity and made a whole-hearted surprise attack on the archers killing them in a sweeping ambush. With the Muslims in disarray, the first signs of victory faded into a serious setback. In the words of the Quran:

Already had Allah made good to you His Promise, when by His permission you destroyed your foes, until your backs were to the walls, and you were in a state of despair, He failed you, and you disputed against Him about the order, and disobeyed, after He brought you within sight of that for which you longed.

A severe battle followed. The Muslim stalwarts started falling one by one. *Hamza* ؓ

was martyred near the archery post. Then *Mus'ab bin Umair* ﷺ who had a great resemblance to the Prophet ﷺ also fell and a rumour spread that the Prophet ﷺ too had laid his life. This gave a severe blow to the resolve of the Muslims in putting up a proper defence. As the battleground was very wide, the warriors had to thin out to engage the enemy. Those who were around the Prophet ﷺ fought valiantly. Ali and a few others surrounded the Prophet ﷺ with their bodies as human shields against the shower of arrows. Seventy of the faithful laid their lives while hundreds got wounded. The Prophet ﷺ too was injured: his face bled profusely. He lost two of his teeth. Umm-e-Ammara, an Ansari heroine, with a goat-skin on her back, flew along the ranks of the wounded believers, pouring water in their mouths to refresh them. At one stage, she seized a spear and fought with manly vigour around the Prophet ﷺ until she fell badly wounded.

The remaining faithful took the Prophet ﷺ to a safe place in *Uhud*. Some busied themselves with tending to him; the rest climbed up and fought the enemy with arrows. When the Prophet ﷺ saw that the Muslims had regrouped and

were strategically better off due to the higher terrain where it was hard to beat them, after many failed attempts and losing many of his warriors, Abu Sufian announced the end to the combat crying out that the final round would take place at *Badr* after a year.

The death toll was high. Seventy of the faithful had laid their lives, while the enemy had suffered twenty-seven casualties. When the enemy was still pursuing the believers on the slopes of the mountain, the Makkan female warriors, like vampires, were taking revenge from the dead bodies of martyrs. Hinda, the wife of Abu Sufian, ripped open the stomach of Hamza ﷺ, the uncle of the Prophet ﷺ, smearing his dead body by mutilating his ears and nose, and in a savage frenzy of revenge she swallowed his liver. Such was the ethical standard of the enemy.

The Prophet ﷺ relaxed for a while in a cave in *Uhud*, where his daughter *Fatimah* ﷺ came to see him. When she saw him bleeding, she burnt a piece of a mat and applied its ashes to the wound. The dressing put a stop to the bleeding. After that the believers came down the hills and the Prophet

of Allah ﷺ led the prayers while seated due to the injuries. Then he took a round of the battlefield and ordered the burial of the martyrs. Although the blow was severe, yet it could not break the courage of the believers, as the very next day seventy of them were sent as far as *Hamra al-Asad* to pursue the fleeing enemy. The following verse of the holy Quran provides the best critique for the event:

If ye have received a blow, the (disbelieving) people have received a blow the like thereof. These are (only) the ups and downs which We cause to follow one another for mankind, to the end that Allah may know those who believe and may choose witnesses from among you; and Allah loves not the wrong-doers.

The enemy had fled the scene with an inconclusive outcome. From the military standpoint 'the strategic aim of the Makkans was nothing less than the destruction of the Muslim community and the removal of Muhammad ﷺ from the position of influence from Medina. This

aim they completely failed to achieve.' It was a 'non-win, no-lose' situation ending in a sort of a draw. However, the combat did provide many 'lessons-learnt' to the Muslims, the first and foremost being the importance of discipline and obedience to the commander. Had the believers obeyed the orders of the Prophet ﷺ, victory so apparent in the beginning could not have turned into a nightmare. A critical analysis of the combat reveals that the role of the Prophet ﷺ as a commander remained supreme throughout the operations. With dauntless courage he was able to manage the crises and re-mobilize his army in such a way that the enemy had no choice but to flee away with only a challenge for the next combat at Badr in the coming year. The boast that they failed to keep.

Sometime before the Battle of Uhud, the Prophet ﷺ had some respite from the hostilities of the non-believers. He attended to some of his family affairs. He married off his daughter *Fatimah* ﷺ to his cousin Ali bin Abu Talib ﷺ. The wedding ceremony was the simplest of the time. The dowry of his beloved daughter

consisted of a mattress, a pillow stuffed with palm-fiber, a goat-skin for water and a few earthen-wares, some perfume and a pair of silver bangles.

The Battle of the Trench (Khandaq)

The Battle of Uhud remained inclusive. The Makkans knew that the Muslims would never be the first to invade Makkah. However, they were sure that, with Medinah under Muslim control, their trade routes to North and East were no longer safe. Therefore, they kept up their war plans and were in constant contacts with the tribes around Makkah to drum up a much greater force to launch a bigger attack. At the same time, they were in contact with the Jewish community of Medinah who had assured them that if they came into Medinah they would not only betray the Muslims but would also mount an attack from the rear. Huyayy bin Akhtab, the leader of the Jewish community of Yathrib (Medinah) visited Makkah along with other Jewish leaders to assure them full Jewish support. It took them two years to muster a great army of 10,000 men drawing warriors from ten Bedouin and nomad tribes who fielded 4,000

foot-soldiers, 300 horsemen and around 1,000 to 1,500 camel riders.

Medinah was protected by a long mountain range in the south while on the eastern and western sides there was uneven hard-to-cross rugged lava terrain. Thus the city was safe on three sides. The only vulnerable side was on the north where there was no natural obstacle. As before, the Prophet ﷺ got the intelligence that a huge army was about to march. He consulted his companions ﷺ and on the advice of Salman Farsi ﷺ he decided to dig a huge trench – too wide for any horse to jump over and too deep for any invader to cross it without paying its price. Such a defence line was a strategy that the Arabs had never seen.

The Makkans, armed to their teeth, depended much on their cavalry. In the month of March 627 CE, with ten thousand men Abu Sufian set out on another adventure to crush Medina. He had been able to drum up support from various Bedouin tribes, such as *Banu Kinana*, *Ghatfan* and various tribes of *Tihama* and *Najd*. That is why this campaign is also called

Al-Ahzab (the Confederates). As against this, with merely 3,000 companions ﷺ at his disposal, Rasulallah ﷺ ordered the digging of the defensive trench; himself joining his companions ﷺ in the hard work. The rocky terrain of Medinah made it all the more hard for the believers to crush the rocks to dig the wide trench. At one stage Salman Farsi ﷺ encountered a very hard rock difficult to break. He requested the Prophet ﷺ to come to his help. The Prophet ﷺ picked up the shovel and hit the rock. A bright lightning sparked from the rock which was broken into two pieces. He hit it the second time and another glittering flash of light sparked. On the third hit the whole rock was broken into pieces with a similar lightning spark. In his prophetic tone, Rasulallah ﷺ explained that with the first hit and the light of the spark, he was shown the palaces of Yemen, with the second lightening of the spark he had seen the royal palaces of the Sham and the western kingdoms, while with the third flash of lightening he was shown the palaces of the east (Iran). No doubt it was an uphill task but the faith and determination of the believers was insurmountable. In just a few days the mission impossible was an accomplished reality.

Riding their war-proven horses the invading confederates rode as fast as they could to take the Muslims unawares. However, a wide and deep trench around the Mount of Sal'a awaited them to give them the worst surprise. They had never dreamt that the Prophet ﷺ would use an altogether novel tactic. Many of their stalwarts and riders fell into the deep and wide trench never to rise again as the Muslims swarmed them with volleys of arrows and stones from across the yawning ditch. They made several daring attacks in the darkness of the nights but, to their dismay, each time they found the ditch well guarded by the vigilant Muslims who repulsed every attack. When their first attack failed they tried another alternative but they had to pitch up their tents far from the rear of the city and lay siege to the city.

The initial enemy plan was focused on a sudden and severe attack – an operation that could at the most last two or three days. As against this, they had to pitch their tents and mount a siege for more than a fortnight waiting

for the promised move by the Jews from the rear. The halt of the enemy away from Medina, with a wide and yawning trench lying in between, disabled their communication and contact with the Jewish collaborators with the result that in spite of all their readiness, the Jews failed to keep their promise. In the beginning when some of the Muslims leaders (among them were: *Sa'ad bin Mu'adh* and *Sa'ad bin Ubadah*) visited the Jewish leaders to remind them of their obligations under the Charter of Medinah for putting up a joint defence, they just laughed at them and backed out, saying: "Who is this Prophet of Allah of whom you are speaking? There exists no treaty between him and us." They made no secret of their breach of the trust in violation of the Charter of Medinah. It was a downright treachery.

Nevertheless, as the siege prolonged and at the height of the Jewish attempts to break into the Muslim housing complexes (where women and children were housed with minimal provisions, all men were busy at the front) were it not for their brave female inmates, the Jews could not have provided any military assistance to the

invaders. The Jews of Khyber did, however, send some camel-loads of grain to assist the invaders which fell into the hands of the Muslims and could not reach the enemy. The Jews thus stood exposed and having read the writ on the walls, they were fortifying themselves to face the consequences of their breach of the covenant.

The provisions of Makkans started depleting. Their men and animals were on the verge of starving. The confederacy stood on the verge of collapse. The superior diplomatic moves of the Prophet ﷺ had outwitted their plans. The morale of the enemy forces started sinking day by day and the confederates became weary of the adventure. As they were aware of the superiority of the Muslim infantry, they had relied much on their cavalry battalion of 600 horses, but the defence line of the trench foiled all their war plans. There was, therefore, no major combat except the feats of archery from across the trench. At the most it proved to be a war of nerves and wits and an exercise in futility on the part of the enemy. Moreover, the winter was severely cold and their tent-city was ill equipped to ward off the biting chill of the freezing winter.

The Prophet ﷺ prayed to Allah and the same night a severe storm dashed in to uproot their tents leaving them at the mercy of the lashing winds. Its warriors were screaming in the dead of the night. In such a fiasco, Abu Sufian was the first to pack up and mount on the horseback telling others to follow him suite. With all their plans falling to the ground, they had no option but to flee from the battlefield dejected and humbled. After this horrible debacle, the idol-worshippers of Makkah gave up for good any misadventure again. The Prophet ﷺ declared, to the great solace of the Muslims, that the Makkans would never dare march on Medinah again. He was right! The Battle of Ditch proved to be their last military adventure on Medina.

The Treaty of Hudaibiya:

After this the Muslims dealt with the Jewish conspirators. Some having been banished and others eliminated, the nominal Jewish presence in Medinah was neutralized easing up the situation to a great extent. The believers

consolidated their position and the Prophet ﷺ paid greater attention to the administrative matters. In 628 CE the Messenger of Allah ﷺ decided to visit Makkah for lesser pilgrimage (*Umrah*). As it is prohibited to carry arms in the holy area, Rasulallah ﷺ decided to walk into the holy city unarmed amid his worst enemies. He was accompanied by almost 1.600 companions to perform *Umrah* wearing the ritual *Ihrams* – a symbol for a peace initiative rather than a posture of war. He made a stopover at *Hudabiya* on the outskirts of Makkah.

When the news reached the Makkans they thought that the Muslims intended to march on the city, and sent several spies, such as *Uthman bin Mas'ud*, to confirm the intent of the Prophet ﷺ's arrival. To allay their fears, Rasulallah ﷺ sent *Uthman bin Affan* ﷺ, as his emissary to tell them that he had no such intention. *Uthman* ﷺ made an offer to *Uthman* ﷺ that being a Quraysh kin he was free to make *Tawaf*; but he refused to do so until the Prophet ﷺ was allowed to do so. Ignoring all diplomatic protocols, the Makkans put him into a prison. The delay in his return created misgivings in the hearts of the believers

who thought that he might have been murdered; so all of them took an oath on the hands of the Prophet ﷺ under the shadow of a tree to avenge his blood, come what may. That oath is known as *Bayat ar-Ridhwan* (*Ridhwan Oath*). However, Usmanؓ was soon released and he returned to the camp safely.

When the non-believers became pretty sure that the purpose was just to perform *Umrah*, they sent their emissaries to negotiate a sort of compromise. Suhail bin Amr came with a flag of truce with the following directions: “Offer peace to Muhammad ﷺ on the condition that he turns back this year because never could we put up with the taunts of the Arabs who will maintain that he came to our city in spite of all that we had said or done. Next year, around the same time, he may perform pilgrimage to the holy sanctuary as it pleases

were not willing to let the Muslims enter Makkah there and then, but did seem willing to put an end to hostilities should the Muslims go back at that time. They agreed that the Prophet ﷺ and his followers would be allowed free access to Makkah for three days for pilgrimage in the following year, and in return they were eager to sign a sort of no-war pact. Although the terms were not equitable, yet Rasulallah ﷺ accepted their proposal and a treaty was signed, the major points of which were:

1. War should cease for ten years. Other tribes and individuals should be free to ally themselves with either party;
2. Minors going from Makkah to Medinah without consent of their guardians should be sent back but any Muslim returning to the Quraish would not be sent back.
3. The Prophet ﷺ and his followers would not enter Makkah that year, but would be free to visit the holy city in the coming year for three days with the minimum of normal weapons considered necessary for pilgrims.

In any matter of fact, they were not ready to let the Muslims enter Makkah freely, but at the same time they were convinced that some sort of compromise needed to be found with the rising star of Islam, the power centre. For face saving they

On the face of it, the terms did not seem much favourable, but it did establish beyond any doubt that Medinah had been recognized as a geo-political entity. According to the terms of the treaty, the neighbouring Arab tribes were free to form alliances with either party. Once such alliances were made known, it was agreed by both parties that the same terms would be applicable to the allies. The Prophet ﷺ stayed at Hudabiya for some days and returned. As per the treaty, Rasulallah ﷺ visited Makkah along with his companions for *Umrah* in 629 CE.

Inviting the then Imperial Powers to Islam:

After entering into a truce with Quraish the situation was relatively calm and peaceful. The Prophet ﷺ paid more attention to strengthening the foundations of the State. By that time, the tribal belt around Medinah had also acknowledged his leadership by entering into the fold of Islam. The state of Medinah had thus won full recognition within the Peninsula. At that stage, Rasulallah ﷺ wrote personal letters to the emperors of the then imperial powers such as Heraclius the Caesar of Rome, Negus of Abyssinia, Chosroes of Persia and Maqauqas of

Egypt and some important rulers of Arab states in the east. This initiative was aimed at announcing the status of Medinah as a new political entity in its own right, inviting them at the same time to the fold of Islam with Muhammad ﷺ being the Messenger of Allah for all mankind. Not all the addressees reciprocated favourably. While Negus, Maqauqas and Heraclius gave due protocol and honour to the ambassadors, one of the Ghassani princes, in utter breach of the international norms and protocols, assassinated the Muslim envoy. The Chosroes of Persia tried to tear the letter of the Prophet ﷺ but returned the envoy back. When the news reached the Prophet ﷺ, he observed: Thus will the empire of Chosroes be torn into pieces! And that indeed happened shortly thereafter.

The Conquest of Khyber

Besides the above political moves, the Prophet ﷺ paid equal attention to ensure integrity of the frontiers and provide peace and security to the citizens. On getting an intelligence lead that the Jews of the northern areas were conniving with the people of Taif to launch a joint attack, he despatched an expedition towards Fadak area. This expedition

confirmed the news because a group of Banu Hawazin was found to have fallen prey to the Jewish trap. After having confirmed reports, Rasulallah ﷺ decided to launch a pre-emptive strike at Khyber which was a stronghold of the Jews and had become a centre of conspiracies ever since the banishment of Jews of *Nadhir* and *Qainuqa* and execution of the *Quraidha* tribes. The banished Jews had mostly settled in and around Khyber. Thus all factions of the Jews were in league with the hostile Bedouin elements.

The Makkans had been neutralized by the peace Treaty and were not willing to jump into the arena again, but a host of other tribes who still had a grudge towards Islam were on the lookout for such an opportunity. The Khyberites were in league with such elements and, given time, their rebellion would have gathered further momentum. Rasulallah ﷺ therefore prepared an army of 1,400 men and marched on to Khyber in the month of Karab the 7th Hijra year (629 CE). The region is a lush green field, Khyber is a major city about 80 kilometers in the north of Makkah where the Jews lived in big

compounds and forts. Their chief named Marhab lived in a huge fort atop a hill that was not easily accessible. They had ample provisions to live by with no shortage of arms to fight with.

An invitation either to embrace Islam or to pay tribute to the State of Medinah was turned down by the Khyberites. Their elders opted for a pitched battle which took place. Khyber had many fortresses which fell to the lot of the Muslims one by one. But the strongest fort was that of Qamus situated on the top of a hill. On the first day Abu Bakr ﷺ and the second day Umar ﷺ commanded the attack on that stronghold but the Jews remained holed up in that fort. On the third day Ali ﷺ commanded the attack. The Jews were forced to come out in the open area where a hand-to-hand fight took place. Ali ﷺ killed Marhab and conquered the fort that was considered invincible. This fort still exists on the hill as an archaeological site. After fourteen centuries, its remains still tell the tale of its grandeur and strength. The Jews surrendered and begged for peace. Khyber was conquered on 24th of Rajab in the 7th Hijra year (629 CE). Their lands and immovable properties were secured to them and

they were given full freedom to practice their religion. On agreeing to pay one half of the produce in recognition of the Muslim rule, a peace agreement was signed with them. After that another stronghold of the Jews, namely Fadak, also fell to the lot of Muslims without fighting and a similar peace settlement was made with them.

After conquering Khyber and, in the wake of the treaty of Hudaibia, Rasulallah ﷺ set out to Makkah to perform Umrah in the company of a number of his companions. The Quraish evacuated the holy city for three days to let the Muslims perform their rituals freely. After three days the Muslims left Makkah. This peaceful visit resulted in converting some of the important Quraishi figures who, years later, played an important role in the expansion of Islam. Khalid bin Walid and Amr bin al-Aas were among the Makkans who came into the fold of Islam at that time.

The Northern Front:

With the downfall of the Jews the northern side was secure to a great extent, but farther up in

the north there was situated a small Arab Christian kingdom of Ghassanids, which under the suzerainty of the Romans, used to be a buffer state between the Romans and the Arab Bedouins. In the eight year of Hijra Prophet Muhammad sent a letter to the heads of the surrounding states and, among them, one to the governor of Busra through his emissary Haris Ibn Umair ﷺ. When Haris ﷺ arrived at a place called Muta he was killed by Shrahbeel, one of the commanders of the Byzantium Empire. Breaching the international diplomatic protocols, the Ghassanids had killed the Muslim emissary, which had caused great resentment in the ranks of the Muslims making the situation tense. In response to this situation, some hypocrites from Makkah joined hands with the Christians and started plotting against the Muslims. Rasulallah ﷺ was well aware of these intrigues and sent a mission to some Arab tribes in the areas near the northern border. The role of the mission was peaceful. However, emboldened by their previous crime, they acted in a manner which was completely in violation of all international norms and protocols, the Ghassanids went a step further and killed fifteen Muslims near *Zat Tala*. Only *Ka'ab Al-Ghifari* ﷺ, the head of the team, could escape.

Further up in the north, the Christian governor of *Busra* working directly under the Roman Empire killed another emissary of the Prophet ﷺ. Therefore, to arrest the situation from further deterioration, Prophet Muhammad ﷺ decided to send a strong army of 3,000 men in August 629 CE.

The Christians came forward with an army of 100,000 persons. Caesar also directed his brother Theodor to join them with another 100,000 strong army consisting of Bedouin Arabs. Thus at *Ma'uta* near *Ma'an* (today this area is in Jordan) the 3,000 companions ﷺ waited for a 33-times bigger army. With the ratio of 1:33 the Muslims fought relentlessly. It was a fierce battle with some initial setbacks to the Muslims. *Umayyad bin Haritha* ﷺ laid his life and then *Abdullah bin Abi Talib* ﷺ and then *Abdullah bin Mas'ud* ﷺ were martyred. The Muslims decided to retreat. This upset was temporary as soon as the Muslims under the command of *Khalid bin Walid* ﷺ (who had entered the fold of Islam only a few months earlier) another vigorous attack was launched that made the enemy flee. The *Ma'uta* field remained in the hands of the Muslims. It may not be out of place to mention here that

while the battle was still raging, a thousand kilometers away at Medina, the Prophet of Islam ﷺ stood on his pulpit in Masjid an-Nabawi and said: “*Zaid* ﷺ held the banner and was killed. Then the banner was carried by *Ja'afar* ﷺ who was also killed and then it was carried by *Abdullah bin Rawahah* ﷺ who was also killed. Then the banner was carried by a Sword from Allah (*Khalid ibn Walid* ﷺ) and the opening (the conquest) would occur on his hands. This took place in *Jamadi Awal* 8 AH. As a result of the defeat of the Romans many tribes of the Northern areas entered the fold of Islam.

Besides a great number of the common folks, one of the generals of Caesar also embraced Islam. The emperor, who had defeated the Iranians some years ago, felt too much humiliated. As a seasoned emperor with a huge experience of men and matters, he was very well reading the writ on the wall. However, to avenge the debacle and to arrest the rising tide of Islam, the Romans started making further preparations. There used to be some Christians at Medina, though in minority. Along with the hypocrites amidst the Muslims, they also sent the Romans

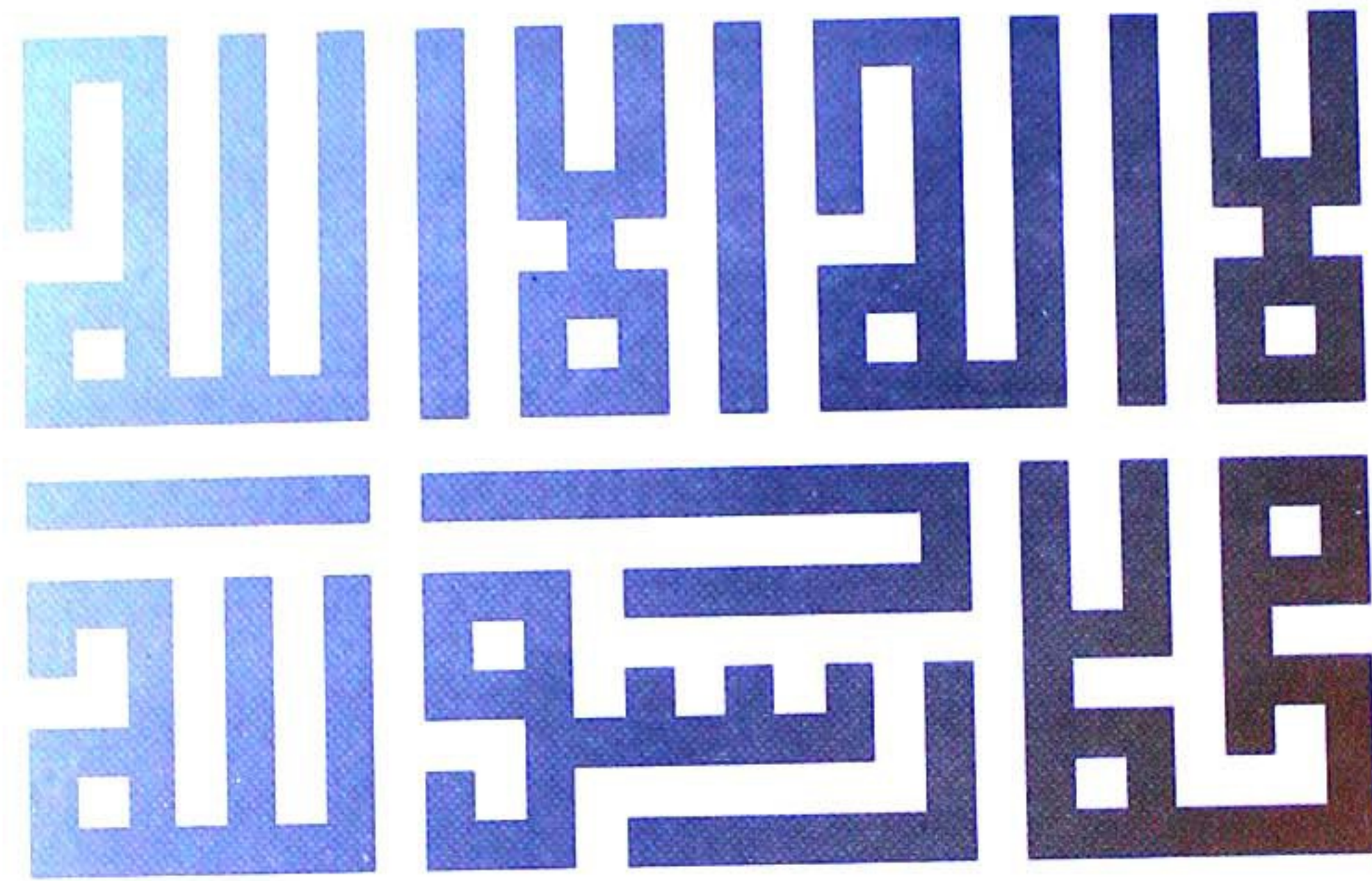
their assurances that they would stand by them in case of an attack. The hypocrites of Medinah had built a pseudo-mosque (*Masjid Zarar*) in the *Quba'* area where they used to hold secret assemblies. Caesar fell into their trap and counting much on the support of *Ghassani* and *Kindi* Christians who had assured him that they were ready to die for their Roman masters, he decided to launch another attack.

When the Prophet ﷺ got an intelligence lead, he asked his followers to rise up to the occasion – a challenge to face the biggest of the then imperial powers. Medinah was already facing a drought that year and there was severe shortage of provisions. Yet the insurmountable belief in Allah and His Prophet ﷺ made the companions ﷺ rise to the occasion and they started pooling up their resources. Thousands of volunteers, burning with the desire of sacrificing their lives in the cause of Allah, rallied and enlisted in large numbers for conveyance and weaponry. Vying with one another, everybody contributed whole-heartedly to the campaign. Abdul Rahman bin Auf ﷺ and Uthman ﷺ provided 1,000 camels along with provisions and

weaponry. Umar ﷺ brought half of his belongings to the fore. But Abu Bakr ﷺ surpassed everyone and gave away whatever he then possessed in the cause of Allah. In the scorching sun of the desert summer, in the 9th Hijra year, thirty thousand lions of Medinah set out on a campaign to fight many times bigger and well-equipped army of the Roman Empire.

The Prophet ﷺ did not cross into the Syrian territory and remaining within the borders of Arabian Peninsula he decided to camp at Tabuk to engage the aggressors there. After a few days he was informed that the forces of Caesar and his allies had retreated backwards. The withdrawing from the Syrian border and stopover at Tabuk forestalled the Romans who, having learnt a lesson from their previous failure, did not dare risk another misadventure in the steppes overlying the great *Nefud*. The Prophet ﷺ remained stationed at Tabuk for twenty days and took the opportunity to convert several Bedouin tribes living in that border belt. Some of them embraced Islam while others were neutralized and thus became a buffer between the two powers – the Romans and the Muslims.

These steps not only secured the borders but also led to enhancing the political status of the state of Medina.



The Triumph

The Conquest of Mecca:

According to the Treaty of Hudaibia the Arab tribes were free to form alliances with any of the two parties to the treaty. Accordingly, Bani Bakr opted to join the Quraish while Bani Khuza'ah had become allies of the Muslims. Shortly afterwards, some people of Banu Bakr attacked Banu Khuza'a and killed some of their people while they were in the holy sanctuary of the Ka'aba. The Khuza'a leaders invoked the Muslim's assistance. Under the terms of the Treaty, therefore, the Prophet ﷺ contacted the Quraish and offered them three alternatives:

1. To pay blood money to Banu Khuza'a for the innocent victims who were killed; or
2. To terminate their alliance with Banu Bakr as a punishment, or otherwise

3. To abrogate the Hudaibia Treaty.

Rejecting the first two options, the Quraish chose to abrogate the Treaty itself. They declared the no-war pact null and void without weighing the consequences of their hasty decision. Later on when they realized their folly, Abu Sufian visited Medinah to make a compromise but it was too late; the damage done could not be repaired. Rasulallah ﷺ was out of Medinah at that time and Abu Sufian sought the help of many important figures to arrange a patch-up, but he could not succeed. Rasulallah ﷺ was left with no option but to listen to the call of his ally Banu Khuza'a to punish the Makkans for their breach of the Treaty. He ordered the Muslims to make necessary arrangements. A valiant force of 10,000 Muslims immediately responded to the call. On the night of *Ramadhan* in 8th Hijra year, Rasulallah ﷺ led his army towards Makkah. After a journey of five days the Muslim army encamped at *Zahran*, a valley near Makkah.

Rasulallah ﷺ sent his uncle Abbas ra on a diplomatic mission to Makkah. He met Abu Sufian and advised him that the best option for

Quraish was to surrender. After long negotiations, Abu Sufian consented and, shy of facing the timid Makkans, in the dark of the night, he came to the camp of the Prophet ﷺ and proclaimed his conversion to Islam. The following day, the Day of the Opening (*Fat'h*), witnessed the march of the triumphant Muslims through the streets of vanquished Makkah on to the holy Ka'aba with no resistance whatsoever. Realizing their inability to give battle with any hope of victory, the Makkans in large numbers were surrendering themselves to the Prophet's mercy, which proved infinitely greater than many a victor's before or since. Although, the scared Quraishites were expecting severe punishment for what they had been doing in the past, yet the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, the Mercy for All, announced a general clemency. The city that had been ordered to find an alternate home in a distant land was now good conquered without an injury or a loss to any of his arch enemies. The announcement of the general amnesty marked the end of the campaign. The Makkans embraced the Prophet ﷺ and were extremely happy. In the company of his jubilant companions, the Prophet ﷺ entered the sanctuary of the holy

Ka'aba. One by one the false deities, the idols, the icons of *Satan*, were smashed and sanctity restored to the House of Allah. While doing that, the Prophet ﷺ was reciting the verse: "Say the Truth has come and the falsehood gone; no doubt the falsehood is doomed to vanish."

The defeated Makkans crowded the sanctuary, with every eye fixed on the Prophet ﷺ to see how he would decide their fate. The Prophet of Mercy ﷺ broke the silence by reciting the following verses:

"O human beings! We have indeed created you of a male and a female and made you into nations and tribes so that you may know one another. Surely the most honorable of you with God is the one among you who is the most pious. Surely, God is Knowing, Aware."

Then he delivered the following address:

"There is no god but Allah. He has no associate. He has made good His promise that He had held to His slave and helped him defeat all the confederates. Bear in mind that every claim, be it of blood or

property, stands null and void today except that of the custody of the holy sanctuary Ka'aba, and of supplying water to the pilgrims. Bear in mind that for anyone slain unjustly the blood money is a hundred camels. O people of the Quraish! Surely God has removed from you all arrogance of the times of ignorance as well as all pride in your ancestry, because all have descended from Adam, and Adam was made of clay." Turning to the crowds, the Prophet ﷺ said in a voice full of compassion and magnanimity:

'O people of Quraish! What do you think I will do with you?'

Suhail ibn Amr, who had repeatedly fought against the Prophet ﷺ, replied on behalf of them all:

'We think that you will treat us well, noble brother, son of a noble brother.'

A radiant smile flashed across his face and, in a spirit of gratitude to Almighty Allah, he said:

"I shall speak to you as Yusuf (Joseph – Peace be upon him) spoke unto his

brothers: "There is no reproach against you today; God will forgive. He is the most Merciful and the most Compassionate."

And he added: 'No more responsibility burdens you today. *'Idhhabuu... wa antum at-tulaqaa* – Walk away, as you are free to go.' The throbbing hearts of the Makkans were won by these words of magnanimity. He then turned his face to the Helpers (*Ansars*) of Medinah and said: God forbid that I should leave you! Where you live shall I live too and there shall I die!

As soon as the Ka'aba was purged of its idols, Bilal ؓ was ordered to climb on top of the holy Ka'aba to announce the glad tidings to the Makkans and the Medinans – the arch-enemies of Allah yesterday – stood side by side like reeds around the holy Ka'aba, all lined up with Rasulallah ﷺ leading the congregation. He had accomplished his mission. Allah's worship had been restored in its pristine pure form. The honour and sanctity of Makkah stood restored and ever since then it is known as *Makkat-al Mukarramah*.

The Battle of Hunain and the Siege of Taif:

The Prophet ﷺ stayed at Makkah for two weeks and after appointing Abu Sufian ؓ as a governor, he decided to go back to Medinah. On his way back he had to pass through a large area of Taif where various clans of *Banu Hawazin* (*Banu Sa'ad*, *Banu Zahran* and *Banu Thaqif*) held their sway. With Makkah falling to the lot of the Muslims, there was no choice for such tribes but either to be at peace with Muslims or to keep up hostilities with no chance of success. Those tribes were jealous of the increasing power of the rising star of Islam and opted for the second course of action, i.e. to be at odds with Muslims. Under the command of Malik bin Auf, these tribes mustered a considerable strength in *Awtas* in the west of Makkah. When Rasulallah ﷺ came to know of this, he decided to confront them. In his orders, a 12,000 strong Muslim force was ready to fight them back. The ten thousand warriors of Medinah were joined by another ten thousand from the new-converts of the Arabian Peninsula. The Muslim forces left Makkah in 629 CE. When they were passing through a mountain pass in the valley of *Hunain*,

a group of enemy archers attacked the advance guards from the mountains causing panic and confusion. The Muslims ran hither and thither to stave off the volleys of arrows. However, on orders of the Prophet ﷺ, Abbas ؓ shouted at the top of his voice and called the Muslims to rally around the Prophet ﷺ. When the Muslims heard the call, they rushed to the spot and a fierce hand-to-hand battle followed that put the enemy to route.

Many clans of Banu Hawazin surrendered at a place called Ja'arana. A lot of booty fell in the hands of the Muslims. But the magnanimity of the Prophet ﷺ can be seen by his generosity to the vanquished. All the booty was given away to them. Virtually all of Banu Sa'ad had come into the fold of Islam. It was at this place that Halima Sadia ؓ, the wet nurse of the Prophet ﷺ and her daughter, Shayma ؓ his foster sister – met him. He greeted them with utmost compassion and affection and freed all their prisoners as a gesture of goodwill towards Banu Sa'ad.

However, the hard-hearted enemy fighters fled the battlefield to continue hostilities, but they

were followed up to *Awtas* valley where a more fierce combat took place. The enemy could not face the wrath of the lions of Medinah and retreated to the nearby walled city of Taif only to be followed by the pursuing Muslim forces. The enemy then preferred to lock up in the Taif fort. It was for the first time that the Muslims made use of *Manjaniqs* (catapults) to sling stones to make them come out of their stronghold into the open battlefield, but to no success. The Prophet ﷺ besieged the city for two weeks. As the situation remained inconclusive, he preferred to lift the siege and set out to Medinah. After some time, however, the Taif chief, *Urwa*, visited Medinah and embraced Islam. On his return, he was murdered by some mischief-mongers, but soon thereafter a sense of reason prevailed upon them and the city elders sent another delegation to Medinah to sign a peace treaty. The delegation was well received and all of them embraced Islam and thus the entire area of Taif became Muslim. The Prophet ﷺ sent a party under Abu Sufyan and Mughira to destroy various idols in Taif. Another party was sent under the command of Ali b. Talib to *Qudaid* (*Mushallal* valley) where he preached Islam and succeeded in converting the

Bedouin tribes. He smashed the famous idol of *Manat*.

The First Hajj

After the conquest of Makkah, the Muslims were free to perform pilgrimage. Makkah was ready to receive the pilgrims from all corners of the Peninsula. Although the House of Allah had been cleansed of idols and polytheism, yet the fifth pillar of Islam still remained to be established. In the ninth year of Hijra (631 CE) Hajj was made obligatory, a pillar of Islam, for those who could afford it. The Prophet of Allah ﷺ allowed his companions to perform Hajj under the leadership of *Abu Bakr Siddiq*. It was the first Hajj by the Muslims and there appeared great enthusiasm in the city to perform it. In the past the last three months of the year were known as months of the Pilgrimage, the *Quraishites* used to announce when the pilgrimages were to start. That year it was announced to start in the eleventh month (*Dhu Al-Qa'dah*). *Rasulallah* ﷺ sent a large number of Muslims to Makkah to perform Hajj. After the departure of the Muslims from Medina, the Chapter

'Repentance (*At-Taubah*)' was revealed. Rasulallah ﷺ despatched Ali ﷺ to follow them and announce the revelation barring the pagans and non-Muslims from entering the sacred city of Makkah from the next year onwards. In the plains of Mina, Ali ﷺ announced the new commandment that starting from the coming year no pagan would be allowed to enter the holy precincts of *Makkat al Mukarramah*.

The Year of Delegations:

The Hajj ceremonies were over with solemnity. It brought in its train complete sway of Islam on almost all the Arabian Peninsula. It was clear to all the stake holders in the Arabian societies that the event had stamped sole supremacy of the rule of Medinah in the whole region. Therefore, people from all corners of Arabia were rushing in great numbers to Medinah in the fold of Islam. The tribes so far outside the fold of Islam sent their delegations to Medinah to pledge their allegiance to the Holy Prophet of Islam. Yemen had also formally come under the sway of Islam and Ali ﷺ was sent there as its first governor. The only pocket that remained outside the influence of Islam was the area of

Najran in the south-east. Their leadership did visit Medinah but instead of embracing Islam they preferred to pay tribute and accept the suzerainty of the Islamic state and stick to their religion. The Prophet ﷺ signed a treaty with them and allowed them to follow their own religion as '*People of the Book*' without any coercion.

Leaders of various other tribes, from far and near, poured into Medinah to embrace Islam and on their return they were accompanied by companions of the Prophet ﷺ to teach Islamic principles to the new converts. When dispatching these teachers, the Prophet ﷺ always instructed them: 'Deal gently with the people, and be not harsh; cheer them, and do not look down upon them. You will meet with many believers in the Holy Scriptures, who will ask you: 'What is the key to heaven?' Answer them it is to bear witness to the divine truth and to do good.'

More about his Miracles:

As already briefly stated elsewhere earlier, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ performed a number of

miracles during his prophetic career. The greatest of his miracles is the Holy Quran itself which is his living miracle. Its 'Divine Style' is unlike any human styles of writing and is inimitable in every respect – its linguistic perfection and beauty in which brevity, rhetoric and eloquence mingle together to convey the Divine Message, and, above all, its scientific disclosures and prophecies make it a standing miracle of the Holy Prophet ﷺ to last till the 'Last Day'. While this super miracle alone is enough to provide adequate proof of his prophethood, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ did perform quite a number of other miracles during the course of prophetic mission.

Of many of the miracles wrought by him, his Night Journey, or Ascension to Heavens and Splitting of the Moon have been mentioned in the Holy Quran also. Once, holding some pebbles in their hands, the non-believers asked him about what they were hiding. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ just gave them a pleasant smile as the pebbles had started reciting the *Shahadah* (a declaration of his prophethood) leaving the non-believers dumb-founded. At times, he would move huge trees without uprooting them, and cause a small

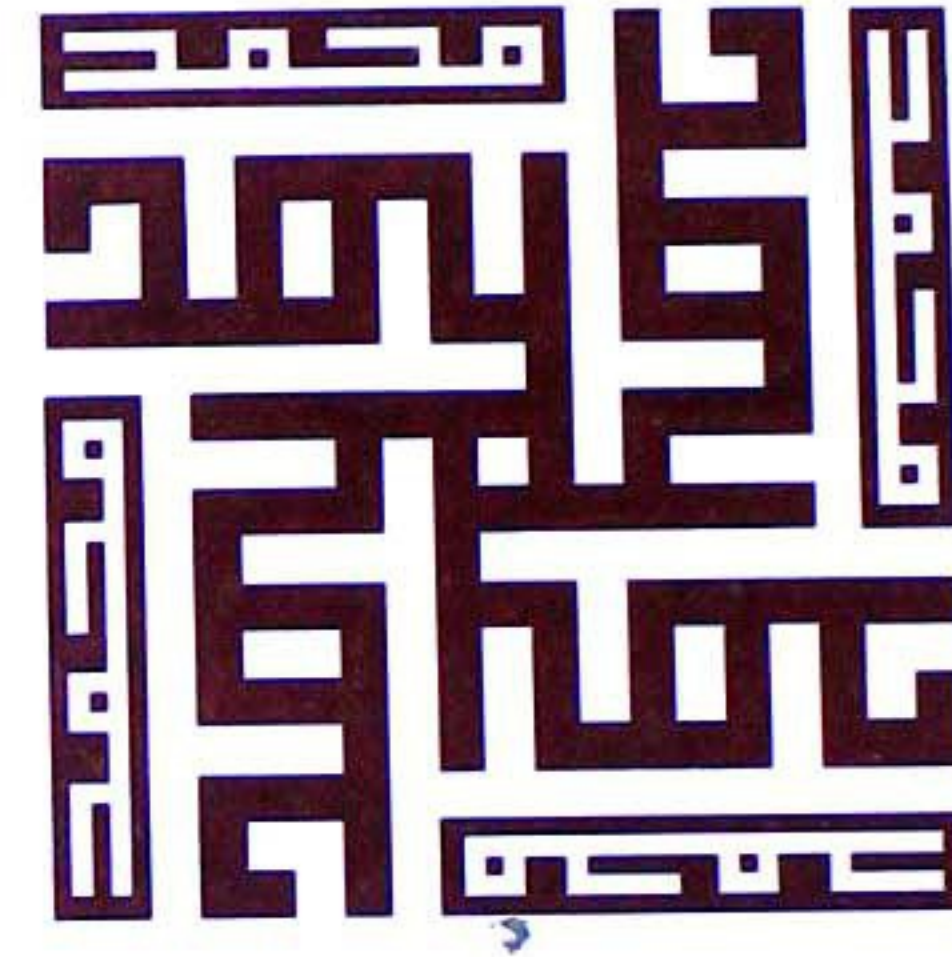
amount of food suffice for feeding thousands of his Companions. Narrated Abdullah b. Masud رضي الله عنه: "We used to consider miracles as Blessings of Allah ﷻ, but you people consider them to be a warning. Once we were with Allah's Apostle ﷺ on a journey, and we ran short of water. He said, "Bring the water remaining with you." The people brought a utensil containing a little water. He placed his hand in it and said, "Come to the blessed water, and the Blessing which is from Allah ﷻ." I saw water flowing from the finger tips of Allah's Apostle ﷺ; and no doubt, we used to hear the morsels and/or pieces of yeast glorifying Allah ﷻ, when sometimes we ate our meals with him.

If somebody approached him for rain, he would pray for rains during the periods of drought and rain would fall immediately. Whenever he came out from the Arabian sun, a speck of cloud would appear in the sky, a sudden to hover in the skies to provide shade from the severity of the weather. It is also narrated in many Hadith books that once two of his Companions (Usaid b. Hudhair رضي الله عنه and Bishar b. Ubadah رضي الله عنه) departed from him on a dark

cloudy night, he ordered his walking stick to go in front of them. Thus they were led by his stick which shone like a lamp (going in front of them) lighting the way till they reached a point where their paths were to separate in the Quba area into two different directions; that light split up into two and remained so till they reached their respective homes.

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ used to deliver his sermons while standing beside a trunk of a datepalm in the Masjid Nabawi. When some of the Companions made a wooden pulpit for his convenience and he started using it, the dead and dry trunk of the date palm started crying and the Holy Prophet ﷺ went to it, rubbed his hand over it and it stopped crying.

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ also foretold many important events that had yet to occur – some of which have already taken place while others that will occur towards the end of the world.



The Last Days

The Farewell Pilgrimage:

Rasulallah ﷺ was in the sixty-third year of his life when in the tenth year of Hijra (corresponding to 633 CE) he decided to perform Hajj which in history of Islam goes by the name of *Hajjatul Wa'da* (Farewell Pilgrimage). By then his mission had been accomplished for all intents and purposes. A complete code of life had been laid down and delivered in the form of the holy Quran and the personal precept of the holy Prophet ﷺ (*Sunnah*). Having reached the culminating point in his prophetic career, he was looking forward to bid farewell to his faithful followers.

Towards the end of the month of *Dhu al-Qa'da* the Prophet ﷺ left for holy Makkah in the company of his 114,000 companions ﷺ. All his family members also accompanied him. He put on *Ihram* at *Dhu al-Hulaifa*. As he rode his she-

camel, he recited, "*Labbaik! Allahumma Labbaik! Labbaika Laa shareeka Laka Labbaik, Innal Hamda wann'imata laka wal mulk, la shareeka lak*" signifying, "Here I am at Thy service, here I am, O' Lord, here I am to declare that there is no partner with Thee. All praise and blessings belong to Thee and all sovereignty is Thine. I am here at Thy service, and Thou hast no partner." All his Companions ﷺ repeated the same loudly. He entered the city from the north and, as he rode in, he prayed: "Lord! Increase the dignity and glory, the honour and reverence of Your House; and greatly increase the honour, dignity, piety, goodness, and glory of those who visit it for Hajj or Umrah!" On the 5th of *Dhu al-Hajjah*, he made *Tawaf* of the holy Kaaba and two *Rak'as* of prayer at the Station of *Ibrahim* (*Muqam-e-Ibrahim* ﷺ).

On the 8th of *Dhu-al-Hajja*, the Prophet ﷺ left with his Companions for Mina and spent the night there, and on the 9th, after the *Tawaf* (Morning Prayer), he proceeded to the plain of *Arafah* where he made a stop-over (*Wuquf*) all the day. With his personal example he was teaching various rituals of Hajj which is the fifth pillar of

Islam. On the day of Hajj in the plains of *Arafah* he delivered his last address to the pilgrims summarizing the central points of his illumined teachings. The last sermon is known as *Khutbatul Wada'* (Farewell Address). Wrapped in sublime eloquence, the prophetic sermon is a declaration of human rights and a charter for the rights of womenfolk, slaves and the downtrodden. The Prophet ﷺ dwelt on mutual rights and obligations: human equality, fundamental human rights, right to live, right to economic security, right to merit and right to justice as well as the rights of women and the rights of slaves. Divine religion had been perfected with the revelation that he recited to the large gathering: This day have I perfected your religion for you and completed My favour unto you, and have chosen for you Islam as religion.

Farewell Sermon of the Holy Prophet ﷺ

2004:

Here is the text of the Farewell Address delivered by the Prophet ﷺ at Mount Arafat:

All praise is due to Allah, so we praise Him and seek His pardon and we turn to

him. We seek refuge with Allah from the evils of ourselves and from the evil consequences of our deeds. Whom Allah guides aright there is none to lead him astray; and there is none to guide him aright whom Allah leads astray. I bear witness that there is no God but Allah, the One, having no partner with Him. His is the sovereign and to Him is due all praise. He grants life and causes death and is Powerful over everything.

There is no God but Allah, the One; He fulfilled His promise and granted victory to His bondsman, and He alone routed the confederates (of the enemies of Islam).

O' People! Listen to my words, for I do not know whether we shall ever meet again and perform Hajj after this year.

Allah says, O' people We created you from one male and one female and made you into clans and tribes, so that you know each other. Verily in the sight of Allah, the most honoured amongst you is the one who is most God-fearing. There is no superiority

for an Arab over a non-Arab and for a non-Arab over an Arab, nor for the white over the black nor for the black over the white except in piety.

All mankind is the progeny of Adam and Adam was formed of clay. Behold! every claim whether that of blood or property, is under my feet except that of the custody of the Ka'ba and supplying of water to the pilgrims, O' people of Quraish, don't appear (on the Day of Judgment) with the burden of this world around your necks, whereas other people may appear (before the Lord) with the rewards of the hereafter. In that case I shall not help you.

Behold! All practices of the days of ignorance are now under my feet. The blood revenges of the days of ignorance are remitted. The first claim on blood I abolish is that of Ibn Rabi'ah bin Harith who was brought up in the tribe of Sa'ad and whom the Hudhails had killed. All interest and usurious dues accruing from the times of ignorance stand wiped out. And the first

amount of interest that I remit is that which was due to Abbas ibn Abdul Muttalib رضي الله عنه. Verily it is remitted entirely.

O' people! Verily your blood, your property and your honour are sacred and inviolable until you appear before your Lord, as the sacred inviolability of this day of yours, this month of yours and this very town (of yours). Verily you will soon meet your Lord and you will be held answerable for all your actions.

O' people! Verily you have got certain rights over your women and your women have certain rights over you. It is your duty upon them to honour conjugal rights and not to commit acts of impropriety. If they do, you are authorized by Allah to separate them from your beds and to chastise them, but not severely, and if they are poor then clothe and feed them properly. رضي الله عنه It is not permissible for a woman to give anything from the wealth of her husband to anyone but with his consent.

Treat the women kindly, since they are your helpers and not in a position to manage

their affairs themselves. Fear Allah concerning women, for verily you have taken them on the security of Allah and have made their persons lawful unto you by words of Allah.

O' people! Allah, the Almighty and Exalted, has ordained to everyone his due share (of inheritance). Hence there is no need (of special) testament for an heir.

The child belongs to the marriage-bed and the violator of wedlock shall be stoned. And Reckoning of their (deeds) rests with Allah. He who attributes his ancestry to other than his father or claims his clientship to other than his master, the curse of Allah is upon him.

All debts must be repaid, all borrowed property must be returned, gifts should be acknowledged and a surety must make good promises to the assured.

Beware! No one committing a crime is excusable for it but himself. Neither the mother is responsible for the crime of his son, nor the father for the crime of his

child.

Nothing of his brother is lawful for a Muslim except what he himself gives willingly. So do not wrong yourselves. O' People! Every Muslim is the brother of every other Muslim, and all the Muslims form one brotherhood. And your slaves; see that you feed them with such food as you eat yourselves, and clothe them with the similar clothes that you wear.

Take heed not to go astray after me and do not strike one another's necks. He who has any trust with him, must return it to its owner.

O' people! Listen and obey, even though a mangled Abyssinian slave is appointed your chief, provided he executes the commands in Book of Allah.

O' people! No Prophet would be raised after me and no new Ummah (would be formed) after you. Verily I have left amongst you that which will never lead you astray, the Book of Allah, which if you hold fast you shall never go astray.

And beware of transgressing the limits set in the matters of religion, for it is transgression of religion that destroyed many people before you.

Verily, Satan is disappointed at ever being worshipped in this land of yours, but he will be pleased by your obedience to him in matters that you may think insignificant; so beware of him in your matters of religion: it is in the small matters that Satan leads astray and small matters adds up.

Behold! Worship your Lord; offer prayers five times a day; observe fasting in the month of Ramadhan; pay *Zakah* (poor due) on your belongings; and perform pilgrimage to the House of Allah and obey your rulers and you will be admitted to the Paradise of your Lord.

Let him that is present, convey it unto him who is absent, for many people to whom the message is conveyed may be more mindful of it than the audience.

And if you were asked about me, what would you say?"

They answered, "We bear witness that you have conveyed the trust and discharged your mission of Prophethood and looked after our welfare."

Thereupon Allah's Messenger ﷺ lifted his right hand forefinger towards the sky and then pointing towards people said:

"O' Lord: Bear witness unto it. O' Lord: Bear witness unto it."

With the Prophet's pilgrimage as a model, the fifth pillar of Islam had been established which completed the grand edifice of Islam. Earlier when the chapter '*Nasr*' (the help) was revealed at Medina, it was an indication to the Prophet ﷺ that his mission was an accomplished task and that he should busy himself in praising the Lord: "When Allah's help and triumph has come and you see people entering the religion of Allah in troops (groups), then hymn the praises of your Lord and seek forgiveness of Him. Lo! He is ever ready to show mercy". But the revelation of the verse at the time of his

Farewell Address “Today We have completed for you your religion and allowed Islam as your religion” made a final declaration that his mission had been successfully completed. Everybody expected that his departure was imminent. Count down had started. The clock of the 30th verse of the *Surah al-Zumar* (*Surah* Number 39 – *Innakum Mavayitun* – verily, you are to die) was ticking and bringing the appointed hour nearer and nearer.

The Last Days of the Prophet ﷺ:

Hardly two months had gone by after the Hajj when Rasulallah ﷺ fell sick. He continued to lead the prayers. After one of the prayer sessions, he prayed for the martyrs of Uhud and addressed:

“There is a slave among the slaves of Allah to whom He has offered the choice between this world and that which is with Him, and the slave has chosen that which is with Him.”

Upon hearing this Abu Bakr ﷺ burst into tears. It was understood that the beloved Prophet ﷺ

was talking about himself and that the choice signaled his imminent departure. Thereafter he visited the graveyard of the martyrs at Uhud, and a stage was made for him to deliver his sermon. Among other things, he said:

I go before you and be your witness. Your meeting with me will be on the bank of river Kawthar. I fear not for you that you will commit polytheism after me but I do fear for you that you will rival one another in worldly gains.

This proved to be his last public appearance outside the holy city.

In the last three years after the conquest of Makkah, he consolidated most of the Arabian Peninsula under Islam. In March, 632 CE, he returned to Mecca one last time to perform the Farewell Pilgrimage when tens of thousands of Muslims had joined him. His health was deteriorating fast. On his return to Medinah he continued to lead the prayers for almost two

months. His earthly mission had been accomplished and he was looking forward to the verdict of Allah. He fell sick and complained of severe headache. In one of his last lectures, he made it clear to the audience, "I go before you, and I am your witness. Your meeting with me is at the Pool." He chose to stay in bed in the apartment of Sayyeda A'isha رضي الله عنها, from which he used to make his appearance/audience to his followers. However, soon he felt too weak to lead the prayers and, therefore, appointed Abu Bakr رضي الله عنه to lead the prayers. Every day his sickness became more and more serious.

His Last and Farewell Smile:

Under his instructions Abu Bakr رضي الله عنه was leading the prayers. On Monday when the Believers lined up for their prayers, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, lifted up the curtain of his apartment and, despite the seriousness of his illness, he smiled at the sight. He felt contented that his mission had been achieved. Anas bin Malik رضي الله عنه notes that everybody was delighted and excited at the sight of the Beloved Prophet ﷺ. Abu Bakr رضي الله عنه wanted to step back thinking that the

Beloved Messenger of Allah ﷺ might like to lead the prayers, but he gestured with his hand for them to continue with their prayer and then with a pleasant smile he went back into his apartment. He left this worldly life that very day. He bade farewell to his beloved Ummah with a parting smile.

He died on the Monday evening of the 12th of *Rabi al-Awwal* (according to some the 9th of *Rabi al-Awwal* (June 632 CE) at the age of sixty three. In the words of Martin Lings, "Having delivered his message in this world, he had come to fill it in the Hereafter, where he would continue to be, for them and for others, but without the limitations of life on earth, the Key of Mercy, the Key of Paradise, the Spirit of Truth, the Happiness of God". The news of his death was hard upon the companions رضي الله عنهم that some even refused to believe that he had passed away. On his deathbed, he looked youthful as if he were in his forties and his face was radiant. The Holy Prophet ﷺ was buried at the same place where he had breathed his last on the third day (Wednesday) as everybody at Medinah wanted to

save a glimpse of him in his memory before his radiant face disappeared from them for good. People, young and old, ladies and gentlemen, masters and slaves, all had the opportunity to have a glimpse of their beloved Prophet ﷺ. In small groups people kept entering the blessed *Hujra* to offer greetings (*Durood*) and *Salam* on him.

Maqsurah Sharif with a green dome over it, in the south-eastern corner of the blessed *Masjid an-Nabawi*, is his eternal resting place, which is visited by millions and millions of his followers. Day in and day out, thousands of believers visit this sacred place to pay homage to their beloved Prophet ﷺ and send greetings to him. It is now more than fourteen centuries since the Prophet ﷺ passed away, but the religion that he had founded and the way of life that he had prescribed still rules over the hearts and lives of one and a half billion souls of the human

With the divine message having been revealed in its entirety, the process of revelation

which had started twenty-three years earlier came to an end on the passing away of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ. By then all tenets of Islam had been revealed and fully explained to the adherents. The great edifice of Islam had been raised on the following five pillars of faith:

The Articles of Faith:

Islam is a faith as simple and easy as all what it entails can be summed in its five tenets or articles of faith. At the same time it is so elaborate that the divine book "the Holy Quran" and the entire life of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ becomes a complete guide for expounding not only these primary tenets but also it guides the follower on the path to complete submission to the Creator, Allah ﷻ. Primarily, 'Islam' stands for peace and to achieve this 'perfect peace' one is required to worship One True Allah ﷻ and obey His Beloved Messenger ﷺ. The grand edifice of Islam stands only on 'Five Pillars'. As a minimum, a Muslim is obliged to do the following:

- 1) **The Creed (*Shahadah*):** To enter the fold of Islam, the prime requirement is to

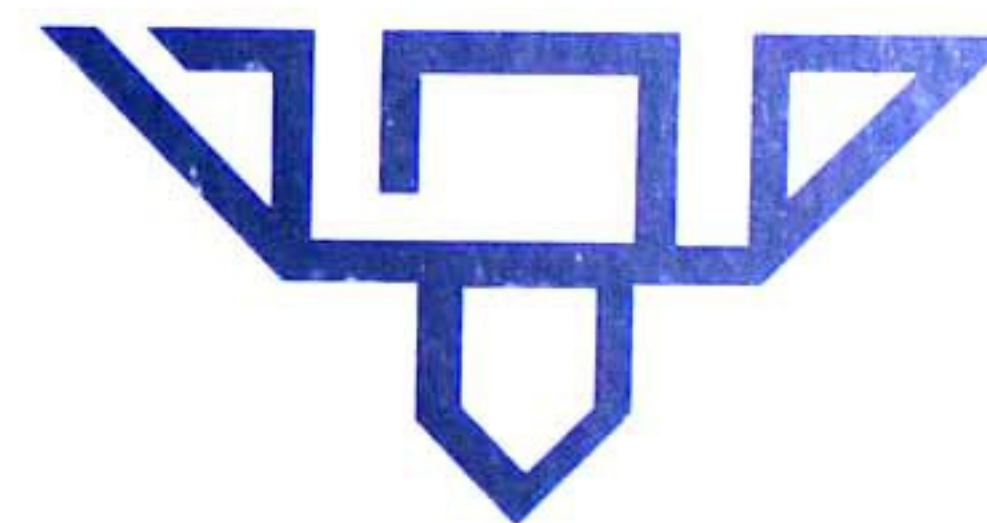
announce one's belief in the Unity of Godhead (pure monotheism) and the prophethood of Muhammad ﷺ by saying: "There is no god but Allah and Muhammad is His Prophet." This means unswerving belief in the Unity of Allah ﷻ, Unique in His Unity with no partners whatsoever. At the same time, one has to believe in the prophethood of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ as the last of the Prophets and believe that the Holy Quran is the final testament revealed by Allah ﷻ.

- 2) **Prayer:** It is obligatory for a Muslim to say the prescribed prayers five times a day facing the *Ka'aba* (upon rising; at noon; in mid-afternoon; after sunset; and before retiring). The worshipper must recite the Quranic verses in Arabic (the first *Surah* along with other verses of the holy Quran).
- 3) **Almsgiving (*Zakah*):** Islam requires its adherents to pay 2.5% of their savings every year to help the poor.
- 4) **Fasting (in *Ramadhan*):** All major Muslims are required to fast from dawn to sunset for the whole month of *Ramadhan* (the ninth month of the Islamic Hijri

Calendar). The sick and the traveler and the ladies during their impurity have a concession not to fast but will have to make up the missed days by fasting the number of days thus missed later on.

- 5) **The Pilgrimage:** The Pilgrimage to Makkah is obligatory on every major and sane Muslim at least once in his or her lifetime, if he/she has the necessary means of travel.

The charisma of his personality has endured through ages and the light of his faith/teachings has lost none of its luster. Within a few hundred years of his death, his teachings and way of life had spread from the remote corners of Arabia to the farthest corners of the inhabited world. As for today, the analysis is rightly observed that at the start of the new Millennium by far the most and the most spreading religion of the day is Islam.



بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ
 اللَّهُمَّ صَلِّ عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ
 وَعَلَى آلِ مُحَمَّدٍ كَمَا صَلَّيْتَ
 عَلَى إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَعَلَى آلِ إِبْرَاهِيمَ
 إِنَّكَ حَمِيدٌ مَجِيدٌ
 اللَّهُمَّ بَارِكْ عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ وَعَلَى
 آلِ مُحَمَّدٍ كَمَا بَارَكْتَ عَلَى
 إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَعَلَى آلِ إِبْرَاهِيمَ
 إِنَّكَ حَمِيدٌ مَجِيدٌ

O Allah! Send Your Mercy on
 Muhammad ﷺ and on the
 descendants of Muhammad
 ﷺ, as You sent Your mercy
 on Abraham and on the
 descendants of Abraham, for
 You are the Most Praise-
 worthy, the Most Glorious. O
 Allah! Send Your blessings
 on Muhammad ﷺ and the
 descendants of Muhammad
 ﷺ, as You sent your blessings
 on Abraham and on the
 descendants of Abraham, for
 You are the Most Praise-
 worthy, the Most Glorious.

His Personality

His Complexion and Personality:

It is narrated that the Beloved Holy Prophet ﷺ had a very handsome complexion; in a well-formed body all his limbs were in perfect proportion. His neck was slender and pure as silver. With a strong build, he was of a middle height, with broad shoulders and wide chest. He bore the Seal of Prophethood on his back between his two shoulder blades. He had thick and slightly curly hair that sometimes fell to his shoulders. On hair-cut his hair reached to his ear-lobes. His hands and fingers were thick and fleshy and his skin was softer than silk. He had curved eyebrows both close together; he had a long nose and an oval face. He was neither light nor dark, but somewhere between the two, white like a red rose. His teeth were white as pearls, and sometimes light gleamed from his front teeth as he spoke. Stated Anas b. Malik رضي الله عنه: "I never

touched silk or any soft fabric equal to the softness of his palm, and I never smelled a scent more pleasing than his." His body was clean and his scent beautiful. Whether or not he had used scent his skin always had a lovely fragrance to it. If someone shook hands or conversed with him, or showed his friendship or affection, he would smell that sweet fragrance all the day long, and if he laid blessed hand on a child's head, that child could be distinguished from other children by that clean scent. Said Jabir bin Samura رضي الله عنه: Whenever the Holy Prophet ﷺ trod on any path when someone passed by that street or lane they could recognize that the Beloved Prophet ﷺ had passed that way because they could smell the sweet fragrance of his blessed body in the air.

Describing the beauty of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, in his famous Qaseedah, Thabit رضي الله عنه wrote:

*My eyes have not seen anybody more
beautiful than you;
And no lady has ever given birth to any
man better than you;*

Verily, O Messenger of Allah, you have been created free from all human faults; There is no exaggeration in saying that you have been created in the best guise according to what you wished.

Umm-e-Ma'abadؓ, a Bedouin lady, whom the Messenger of Allah ﷺ had met in the course of his journey to Medina, gave her first impressions of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ to her husband. She stated: "I saw a man, pure and clean, with a handsome face and fine figure. He was not marred by a skinny body, nor was he overly small in the head and neck. He was graceful and elegant, with intensely black eyes and thick eyelashes. There was huskiness in his voice, and his nose was long. His beard was thick and his eyebrows were finely arched and joined together. Silent, he was grave and dignified, and when he spoke, glory rose up and overcame him. Far from him he was the most beautiful of men and close-up, he was the most glorious; and close-up, he was the most beautiful and the loveliest."

His speech was soft-spoken, sweet of speech and eloquent and clear, but not trifling. His voice was a string of cascading pearls, to the

point and measured so that none got bored over the length of his speech; no eye challenged him due to his brevity. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ was the greatest of the Arabs in oratory and beauty of speech. He is reported to have said: 'I am the greatest orator among the Arabs.' When he laughed, it was as if his blessed mouth gave off rays like that of soft lightning. If he came out of his apartments in the darkness of the night with a smile on his face, glittering light emitted from his blessed face with an aura of light around it like the full moon in the misty night. Narrates Ka'ab b. Malik ؓ, "When the Messenger of Allah ﷺ was pleased his face would light up like a section of the Moon." When he came out in the Sun, a speck of cloud appeared miraculously and hovered above to provide him with a shade. A lady Companion who had performed Pilgrimage with the Messenger of Allah ﷺ was asked to describe the countenance of the Holy Prophet ﷺ on which she said: "His face was like a full moon! I saw neither before nor after him anyone like him."

His step was quick, elastic and firm, 'as one who steps down from a high place'; in turning he turned his whole body; and his whole gait and

presence were full of dignity. Narrated Hassan رضي الله عنه the grandson of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ: When he walked, he lifted his legs with vigour, leaned, slightly forward and placed his feet softly on the ground. He walked at a quick pace and took a rather long step. He did not take small steps. When he walked it seemed as if he was descending to a lower place. When he looked at something, he turned his whole body towards it. He always looked down. His blessed glance was focused more to the ground than towards the sky. His noble habit was to look at something with a slight glance. He greeted first to whomsoever he met."

A lady companion Qaylah bint Makhramah رضي الله عنها stated: "I saw the Messenger of Allah ﷺ in the mosque (in a very humble posture) sitting; but due to his awe-inspiring personality, I started trembling." He was extremely polite and affectionate, yet none would dare speak loudly in his assembly as Allah has prohibited the Believers to speak loudly in front of him fearing which all the good deeds will go waste.

He seldom laughed, but whenever he

smiled his smile was winning. A fond beholder of him could not but utter: 'You would have said, a sun rising'. A companion said about him: I saw him at full moon, first I looked at the moon and then at his face; he was brighter and more beautiful than the moon. He commanded such respect from his followers that none could stare at him; all of them used to bow their heads in extreme obedience and respect.

His commanding personality, capti-vating smile, imposing voice, polite talk, fluency of speech, graceful dignity of his gestures, down-to-earth courage, lofty ideas and high ideals, his endurance and above all, his trustfulness, his righteousness, all had endeared him to everyone he came into contact with. Anyone who saw him seeing him would be consumed with awe. His companions gathered around him and they would bow down their heads and would not dare stare at him. They looked like lifeless birds perched around him so that sometimes pigeons would sit on their heads. The wise respected him in accordance with their status. He greatly honored his relatives but would not, however, treat them better than those more

deserving. He treated his servants well. Whatever he wore or ate he would give them to wear and eat. Anas b. Malik رضي الله عنه, one of his servants, states: Ten years was I around the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم but he never said as much as *uh* "uff" (minor dressing-down) to me. He was generous, compassionate, merciful and forgiving, brave and mild. In eating and dressing he contented himself with the poorest degree and refrained from lavishness.

His Dress:

His dress generally consisted of a shirt, a pair of trousers, a sheet thrown round his shoulders with a turban on his head. On rare occasions, he would put on costly robes presented to him by foreign emissaries in the later part of his life. His blanket or shawl had several holes. He had very few spare clothes, but he was spotlessly clean. He wanted others also to wear simple but clean clothes. Once he saw a man sitting on dirty clothes and remarked: "Wash these clothes, this man wash them." On another occasion he enquired of a person in dirty clothes whether he had any income. Upon getting a reply in the affirmative, he observed: "When Allah has

blessed you with His bounty, your appearance should reflect it." He used to observe: "Cleanliness is a part of faith."

Although he liked white colour of his dress, yet he did wear other colours also. Recapitulating his memories of the days when the trench was being dug for the defence of Medina during the Ghazwa of Khandaq, Al-Bara' bin Azib رضي الله عنه stated: "I have never seen someone with long hair and red clothing more handsome than Rasulallah صلى الله عليه وسلم. His hair reached his shoulders." Narrated Ubaid bin Khalid رضي الله عنه: I was once going in one of the streets of Madina. I heard a person from behind saying: 'Wear your trousers higher because it avoids physical and spiritual impurities.' When I turned to see who was talking I saw that it was the Messenger of Allah صلى الله عليه وسلم.

His Food

The Beloved of Allah صلى الله عليه وسلم led the most austere life and liked simple food. His favourite nutrition was dates and bread made of barley. Generally he liked dried dates – he liked Anbar, Barni and Ajwa dates the most. Of the fresh dates

he liked to have them with cucumbers. He liked cold and sweet water. The Holy Prophet ﷺ said; besides milk there is nothing else that serves the purpose of both milk and water. Narrated A'isha رضي الله عنها: "The drink most liked by the Rasulallah ﷺ was that which was sweet and cold."

He never condemned the food. He used to eat what he liked and did not eat what he did not like, but he did not like the hot foods. Meat was his favourite curry; he loved the meat of the forequarter. He ate camel beef and sheep/goat mutton and also liked the meat of hunted birds. Salma bin Akwa رضي الله عنها used to go on hunting in the far-flung areas of Wadi Aqeeq; he sometimes presented the Messenger of Allah ﷺ the meat of hunted birds, rabbits and sometimes fresh fish. Among foods, he liked mutton, broth, pumpkins, sweet things, honey, dates, milk, cream, melons, grapes and cucumbers. He ate watermelon with fresh dates. He was fond of honey and olive oil.

He prescribed manners for eating and drinking. Anything that he took for drinking or eating, he would start with the name of Allah pronouncing Bismillah and concluded it with

praising Allah. He always ate and drank using his right hand.

His Sublime and Sweet Manners

The Holy Quran says about his sublime character:

By the grace of Allah, you are gentle towards the people; if you had been stern and ill-tempered, they would have dispersed from round about you.

Talking about himself the Beloved ﷺ has said: Allah ﷻ has sent me as an Apostle that I may demonstrate perfection of character, refinement of manners and lofty behaviour.

The best proof of his sterling character and absolute sincerity is to be found in the fact that his first followers were those who knew him best. No weakness of character could escape their eyes. But none of them could ever find any fault with him. Not only that they stood with him through thick and thin and obeyed him like slaves but

always testified to his sublime character. Even his worst enemies could not raise a finger on his character. The Holy Quran describes his character in these words: 'Verily you are on the highest citadel of the best of manners'. He was kind, compassionate, caring, generous and meek, but at the same time he was strong, brave, eloquent, wise and insightful. He was a great planner, organizer, leader, thinker, visionary, and above all was a man of action with staunch and unflinching faith, trust in and devotion to Allah.

He would stand up in the middle of the night to offer his prayers. He would pray for so long that his feet would swell! When his wives would ask as to why he worshipped Allah so long, his only response was: "Shall I not be a grateful servant of the Lord?" Umar رضي الله عنه reported that sometimes the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم did not even have a date to satisfy his hunger! Similarly, Anas رضي الله عنه reported that once when the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم woke up from his sleep, the marks of the bed (which was made out of date palm leaves) which he used to sleep, were etched on his forehead. Abdullah رضي الله عنه said to him: "May my father and mother be ransomed for you! Why did

you not let us prepare something (softer) for you from which you could protect yourself?" He smiled and replied: "I have nothing to do with this world. I am in this world like a rider who stops under the shade of the tree for a while and, after taking rest, resumes his journey again, leaving the tree behind."

The Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم used to say: 'Verily, I have been ordained to teach the best of the morals'. Sa'ad b. Hisham رضي الله عنه asked Sayyeda Aisha رضي الله عنها about the Prophet's manners. She answered that his manners were mirror of the Holy Quran. She later clarified that a tree is recognized by the taste of its fruits. Similarly a man is known by his manners and knowledge. From the Qur'an you can know about the nature and manners of the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم. The Noble Qur'an has designated him *Rahmat al-lil-'Alameen* (the Blessing and the Mercy for the entire universe), and the history testifies that he was truly a symbol of Divine mercy.

Says Ali b. Abi Talib رضي الله عنه: "He was never vulgar nor did he ever condone vulgarity, and he was not one to shout in the market place. He did not repay evil with evil; rather, he would forgive

and overlook. He never in his life struck anything with his hand except when he was fighting in the name of Allah. He never struck a servant nor a maid, and I never saw him taking revenge for an injustice done to him, except if the prohibitions of Allah were transgressed; for if the prohibitions of Allah were transgressed he was among the strongest of them in anger. It never happened that he was given a choice between two matters but he did not choose the simpler of the two. If he entered into his home he was a man like any other; cleaning his own garment, milking his own goat, and serving himself.”

He would not rise nor sit down without praise to Allah ﷻ. If he visited a gathering he would sit wherever the group ended (and not at their head) and he encouraged the same. He would give all those sitting with him their just due [to the extent that] they would each feel that none was more important to him than them. If someone were to sit with him or come in search of a favor he would be patient with them until they (the guest) would be the one to leave.

Whoever came to him with a request was never turned away except with that which they had asked for or with a kind word. His cheerfulness and good manners encompassed them all such that he became like a father to them and they all became equal in rights. His gatherings were those of knowledge, humbleness, patience, and integrity. In them there would be no raising of voices nor any lack of respect and reverence. In spite of all this respect and reverence paid him, he was never arrogant. He would sit with the humblest of persons saying that righteousness was the criterion of one's superiority over another. He invariably invited people – be they rich or poor, servants or the poorest believers, to partake with him of his scanty meals.

When he shook hands with anyone he would not withdraw his hands till the other person withdrew his. Similarly, he did not turn his back or face from anyone till that man turned his back or face to the other side. And he was never seen to bow forward his knees in front of one with whom he was sitting. He used to call his companions by their surnames with honor and he used to give

surname to those who had none.

Gifted with prophetic knowledge, the divine light and mighty capabilities of wisdom he had a refined delicacy of feelings. To his followers he was most indulgent and scarcely ever rebuked his servant. In the words of the Quran: he is Comforter and Merciful to the Believers. To his family he was most affectionate; and he loved all children – not only his own grandkids but all the children that ever came to him.

He visited the sick, followed every bier he met: accepted even a slave's invitation to meals and mended his own clothes and shoes. Sayyeda Aisha narrated: "He always joined in household work and would at times mend his clothes, repair his shoes and sweep the floor. He would milk, feed his animals and do the household work." He would not hesitate to do the work of others, particularly of orphans and widows. Once when there was no male in the house of a companion who had been on the battlefield on a *Sarya*, he used to go to the well daily and milk his cattle for the family.

He did not like that anybody should stand in his honour, but he would himself stand up when any dignitary came to him. He had stood up to receive the respectable lady, Halima the wet-nurse who had reared him in infancy, and had spread his own sheet for her. His foster-brother was also given similar treatment. He did not hate the poor for their poverty nor fear the kings for their mighty power. He used to call the people, high or low towards the Creator. Allah ﷻ bestowed upon him all the qualities and good administration.

He accepted sports and pastimes as lawful, played with his wives and held races with them. He even sent his wives in the company of his slaves to *Wadi Aqeeq* for enjoying outdoor atmosphere. He liked to play with his grandsons and the children of his companions ﷺ and used to kiss them and hug them to his blessed chest. While saying prayers, if he heard a child cry, he would hasten to conclude, so as to allow the mother to go and console her child, for he knew how mothers suffer when they hear their children cry.

He treated the slaves and the servants with kindness. *Abu Dharr* رضي الله عنه heard the Prophet ﷺ declare: These servants are your brothers, placed under your authority by Allah ﷻ. Whosoever is master over his brother must give him the same food as he eats and the similar apparel as he wears. That is why when slavery was in vogue and was considered an important part of socio-economic fabric of the society, the Messenger of Allah ﷺ encouraged granting of freedom to slaves and gave them the same rights as their masters.

Under the Quranic injunctions, freeing of the slaves was declared to be the best action of a man. These incentives made his Companions buy slaves in thousands and free them in the cause of Allah ﷻ. *Abdul Rahman bin Auf* رضي الله عنه is said to have bought seventy thousand slaves at various times and set them free. It was the blessings of the teachings of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ that later on when Islamic empire spread from east to west, we see that slave dynasties ruled for a long time the vast empires stretching from the farthest reaches of India to the African Sahara. He ordered his followers to respect the servants and labourers

and instructed them to pay their dues before the drying of the sweat of their labour from their foreheads. He stood up for the rights of the neglected and the downtrodden and showed the utmost respect even to ordinary men and women. He enforced the Quranic principal: Verily the most honoured amongst you in the eyes of Allah is he who is most god-fearing!

Summing up the narrations of various Ahadith, Imam Ghazali says: "The Prophet was the most patient among men, the bravest, the best judge, and he who pardoned most... He was the most charitable man. He did not pass a night hoarding a single dirham... Whenever any excess money came to him, he did not then get anyone to accept it... he did not return home till he gave it to the poor and the needy. He did not store up for more than a year the provision of his family members... Allah ﷻ was pleased to give him. He used to give one fifth of what easily came to him out of gold and wheat. What remained in excess, he used to give in charity. He used to give away in charity to him who begged of him of anything, even out of his stored up provisions.

He is known by various names:

In view of his multi-faceted virtues, qualities and roles, the Prophet of Islam ﷺ has been addressed by various names all of which reflect one or another of his attributes. The name Muhammad ﷺ means "Praiseworthy" which occurs four times in the Holy Quran. The Holy Quran addresses him in the second person not by his name but by the appellations and designations such as Prophet (*Nabi* ﷺ), Messenger ﷺ (*Rasul* ﷺ), Servant of God (*Abd* ﷺ), Harbinger of Good News (*Bashir* and *Mubasshir* ﷺ), Warner (*Nazir* ﷺ), Reminder (*Mudhakkir* ﷺ), One who calls unto Allah (*Da'i* ﷺ), Light personified (*Noor* ﷺ), the Light-giving Lamp (*Sirajan Muneer* ﷺ). Allah ﷻ sometimes addressed him by appellations pointing to his state at the time of the revelation; thus he is referred to as the Enwrapped One (*al-Muzammil* ﷺ) as at the time of this revelation he was covering himself with a shawl; and the Wrapped one (*al-Muddaththir* ﷺ) as he was wrapping himself with a quilt. The Quran mentions many Prophets but singles out our beloved Prophet Muhammad ﷺ as the "Last of

the Prophets (*Khatam-an-Nabiyyeen* ﷺ)" The Quran also names Muhammad ﷺ as Ahmad ﷺ (the most praiseworthy).

The Prophet ﷺ is reported to have said: "I have various names: I am *Muhammad*, and I am *Ahmad*, and I am *Al-Mahi* with whom Allah ﷻ obliterates disbelief, and I am *Al-Hashir* at whose feet people will be gathered (on the day of Judgment), and I am *Al-'Aqib* the Last One". The most famous among these names are: *Muhammad* ﷺ (the Most Praised One), *Ahmad* ﷺ (Most Praiseworthy), *Hamid* ﷺ (the Giver of Praise and Thanks), *Fatih* ﷺ (the Conqueror), *Ra'uf* ﷺ (the Compassionate), *Rahim* ﷺ (the Merciful), *Mujtaba* ﷺ (the Chosen One), *Mustafa* ﷺ (the Selected One), *Murtada* ﷺ (the Well-pleasing in the sight of Allah), *Siraj al-Muneer* ﷺ (the Shining Lamp that enlightens others), *Karim* ﷺ (the Noble), *Hakim* ﷺ (the Wise), *Sayyid* ﷺ (the Chief), *Ajwad* ﷺ (the Most Generous), *Adil* ﷺ (the Just), and *Khatam Ar-Rusul* ﷺ (the Last and the Final Messenger). May peace and blessings of Allah ﷻ be upon him!

His Successes and Achievements:

How aptly it has been observed in the Encyclopaedia Britannica: 'Of all the religious personalities of the world, Muhammad was the most successful'. The fact of the matter is that there exists no yardstick to measure the degree of the success of the Prophet ﷺ in its entirety. The Chief of the Prophets, the most obeyed Messenger, the recipient of Divine Revelation, the most revered law giver, the most honest and truthful person, a seasoned statesman, a commander *par excellence*, the most effective educator and opinion leader, the most kind and sympathizer, the bravest and most steadfast in the face of odds and obstacles, the most generous and merciful, the best benefactor for mankind, and in short, the best ideal in human conduct and behaviour, whose words and deeds have become prime ideal and perfect exemplar for the human beings for leading their lives: such is Muhammad ar-Rasul Allah ﷺ, our beloved Prophet ﷺ.

In a short span of 23 years, he brought the Divine Message, restored the Religion in its pristine pure form, showed the straight path,

established a single uni-directional Qibla, ordered a way of life, set up a way of worship, introduced a law, led the humanity from darkness to light, and laid down a complete code of life the like of which had never existed. He purified the House of God of false deities and established the worship of One True God. 'Never has a people been led more rapidly to civilization, such as it was, than were the Arabs through Islam'.

He purified the souls of his followers to be in perfect communion with the Creator. He transformed the unlettered nomads into great educators, brave and strong generals, able administrators and the best dispensers of justice. In a span of ten years at Medina, the Arabian Peninsula came under his control. Here he set up the model Islamic state. The revelation – Allah's commandments which he received over a period of 23 years were revealed in the form of the Quran. Its verses should not be confused with his own sayings which are known as *Ahadith* (traditions: singular *Hadith*). Together, both these form the prime source, the bedrock and basis of the Islamic law followed by the Muslims everywhere.

فَمَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ



مُحَمَّدٍ

VERILY I
HAVE BEEN
SENT AS A
TEACHER



His Family Life

His Marriages:

Every wife of the Prophet ﷺ is revered as an *Umm-al-Mo'amineen* (the Mother of the believers). Rasulallah ﷺ contracted eleven marriages in his life time, ten out of which were done when he was between fifty to sixty years of age. He did not marry any lady after the age of sixty following the revelation under which the number of wives was limited to four to the general Muslims. Since times immemorial polygamy had been in vogue and had been sanctioned by all religions; there used to be no limit on the number of wives in any revealed religion. Islam is the only religion that imposed a limit on the number of wives and laid down a strict code of conduct for family life. The marriages were contracted mostly for humanitarian reasons – he never did it as a social aggrandizement. The women were either widows of Muslims who were heroes fallen in battles and

had been left without a protector, or belonging to important families or clans whom it was necessary to honor and strengthen alliances with. If we go by numbers, nine out of the eleven *Ummehat al-Mo'mineen* were Qureshites. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ did not marry a single Ansariah, as there was no dearth of Ansari youth to marry them. But for any Qureshite lady who was also an Emigrant, there were no matches among the Ansaris – as most of them hesitated to marry any lady from the family of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ out of sheer respect and reverence for his *Dhi al-Qurba* (near relatives). The Emigrants had mostly brought their families with them, leaving their hearths and homes in Makkah. Their financial position was weak and as such could not afford to have more burden in the form of a third wife or two. This was another factor which prevented the Messenger of Allah ﷺ himself had to be pushed forward with a view to providing succor to the Qureshite widows.

Up to the age of fifty he had only one wife, Sayyedah Khadija al Kubra ﷺ. After her death the mantle of responsibilities on his shoulders was too heavy to allow him to take care of his kids all by himself and at the same time keep on

preaching under very odd circumstances. Therefore, he married Sayyedah Sauda رضي الله عنها who had emigrated to Abyssinia where her husband had died and she returned to Makkah as a widow. In order to support her and, at the same time, to have somebody in his home to take care of his children, he married her. After some time when he was still at Makkah, under a divine message he contracted a marriage with Hzt. A'isha رضي الله عنها who was then six years old. That marriage was consummated only after five years when he had settled at Medina. She was the only wife of the Prophet ﷺ who was a virgin. All the others were either widows or divorcees.

Some of his wives had been previously widowed twice or thrice. Sayyedah Khadija رضي الله عنها was widowed twice before marrying Rasulallah ﷺ. The battle of Uhud resulted in seventy fatalities leaving behind as many widows and a large number of orphaned children who needed care and security. In order to encourage the widows to marry, the Prophet ﷺ came forward to marry two widows one after another: first Zainab bint Jahsh رضي الله عنها, who died within three months of the marriage, and after that he married another

widow, Umm Salmah رضي الله عنها.

From among the martyrs, Abdullah bin Jahsh رضي الله عنه and Abu Salmah رضي الله عنه were Prophet's cousins. First he married the widow of Abdullah bin Jahsh رضي الله عنه (Zainab bint Khuzaimah رضي الله عنها) who had been widowed thrice. She was first married to Tufail bin Harith and on his death she married his younger brother Ubaida bin Harith رضي الله عنه, who was martyred in the Battle of Badr. Both of these martyrs were the first cousins of the Prophet ﷺ. After that she married Abdullah bin Jahsh رضي الله عنه (another cousin of the Prophet ﷺ who laid his life in the Battle of Uhud). So the Prophet ﷺ married her after the Uhud battle but she died within three months of her marriage. After that he married Sayyedah Umm Salmah رضي الله عنها whose husband Abu Salmah رضي الله عنه was not only Prophet's cousin but was also his foster-brother. After the death of Sayyedah Zainab bint Khuzaima رضي الله عنها Rasulallah ﷺ married Umm Salmah رضي الله عنها as she was finding it hard to support her children. She had a son, namely Salmah, and a daughter named Zainab رضي الله عنها, both of whom were then brought up by the Prophet ﷺ. In all these four cases, the ladies were above fifty years of age and were emigrants (*Muhajirat*) with

little chance of finding a spouse from amongst the young *Ansars* as they had already provided succor to more than fifty Ansari widows as a result of the Battle of Uhud. Rasulallah ﷺ provided them support and security and took up all their responsibilities on his shoulders.

Similarly, there was a large number of prisoners of war from various battles. Out of these, two captives – Sayyeda Juwairiyah ؓ and Sayyedah Safiyyah ؓ – were set free by the Prophet ﷺ and were married by him. Both were daughters of the chiefs of their tribes and were not willing to wed except a person of the status of a chief.

By his personal precept, Rasulallah ﷺ had to set examples for emulation by his followers to cope with serious crises and fallouts of battles, exigencies and critical circumstances. He decreed: The best among you is he who is the best with his wives and I am the best amongst you in this regard. With the example of his personal life, the Holy Prophet ﷺ encouraged a peaceful family life where love, harmony and compassion would dominate the behavior among spouses. A

summary of all his marriages is given below in chronological order:

1. Umm al-Mo'mineen Sayyedah Khadija bint Khwailad ؓ: He married Khadija ؓ when he was 25 and she was older by 15 years. In spite of wide disparity between the ages of the two there was complete harmony and mutual affection between the couple. She was the first person to embrace Islam and all through her life she stood by him as the most steadfast supporter under extremely telling circumstances. When she died Rasulallah ﷺ was about 50 and had four daughters and two sons from her. Except Ibrahim ؑ, all his children were born to her. From her previous husband she had a son named Hind who was brought up by the Prophet ﷺ under his personal care. He always remembered her with the sweetest appreciation. He always appreciated her contribution to the cause of Islam. On entering Islam, she put all her wealth and resources at the disposal of the Prophet ﷺ for the cause of Islam.

2. Umm al-Mo'mineen Sayyedah Saudan bint Zama'ah ؓ: She had migrated to Abyssinia along with her husband, Sakran ؓ, who died there

and she returned to Makkah a widow. The Prophet ﷺ married her in the 10th year of his Prophethood after the death of Khadija ﷺ. The Muslims were a numbered few and were under severe persecution. As she had returned from Habasha as a widow, she was more prone to persecution at the hands of the Makkans. She needed somebody to protect her from their evil designs, and who could be a better protector for her than the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. She provided the much needed succour to Sayyeda Fatima al-Zahra'a ﷺ in the absence of her mother Khadija ﷺ.

4. Umm al-Mo'mineen Sayyedah A'isha ﷺ bint Abu Bakr ﷺ: She was the only virgin lady married by the Prophet ﷺ, the rest were either widows or divorcees. The *Khutba* of the marriage took place at Makkah while the consummation of the marriage took place in Medinah in 2 AH.

5. Umm al-Mo'mineen Sayyedah Hafsah ﷺ: She was the daughter of Umar bin al-Khattab ﷺ. She was married to Abyssinia with her first husband and returned to Medinah. Her husband died of the injuries sustained during the Battle of Uhud. The

Prophet ﷺ married her in 3 AH.

5. Umm al-Mo'mineen Sayyedah Zainab bint Khuzaimah ﷺ: She was first married to Tufail bin Harith and then to Ubaida bin Harith ﷺ: both were Prophet's cousins. Ubaida bin Harith ﷺ was martyred in Badr. Then she was married to 'Abdullah bin Jahsh ﷺ who was also Prophet's cousin. He too was martyred in the battle of Uhud. The Prophet ﷺ married her in 3 AH. She lived only three months after the marriage.

6. Umm al-Mo'mineen Sayyedah Umm Salamah ﷺ: Her real name was Hind bint Abu Umayyah. She was first married to Abu Salamah ﷺ (Abd bin Al-Asad) who was Prophet's cousin and a foster brother. She emigrated twice: first to Abyssinia with her husband and then to Medina. Abu Salamah ﷺ died of the injuries that he had suffered in the battle of Uhud leaving behind four orphans. The Prophet ﷺ married her in 4 AH.

7. Umm al-Mo'mineen Sayyedah Zainab bint Jahsh ﷺ: She was a cousin of the Prophet ﷺ

from his aunt. The Prophet ﷺ married her off to Zaid bin Haritha ؓ, but the couple could not carry on well. Zainab ؓ was a Quraishi lady while Zaid ؓ was a freed slave which resulted in estrangement between the two. In spite of efforts by the Prophet ﷺ, their marriage did not succeed and ended in a divorce. The Prophet ﷺ married her in 5 AH.

8. Umm al-Mo'mineen Sayyedah Juwairiyah bint Harith ؓ: She came to Medinah as a captive after the battle of *Banu Mustaliq*. The Prophet ﷺ paid for her freedom. After she was set free he married her. As a result of this, all the prisoners of war from Bani Mustaliq (about 2,500 persons) were set free and all the tribe entered the fold of Islam. The marriage took place in 6 AH.

9. Umm al-Mo'mineen Sayyedah Umm Habibah ؓ: She was daughter of Abu Sufian ؓ. Her real name was Ramlah. She embraced Islam when her father was a bitter foe of Islam and was fighting against the Prophet ﷺ. She faced many hardships for the cause of Islam. She emigrated to

Abyssinia with her husband where her husband renounced Islam leaving her by herself but she stood firm in the face of all hardships. The Prophet ﷺ married her in 7 AH.

10. Umm al-Mo'mineen Sayyedah Safiyyah ؓ: She was daughter of Huyyee bin Akhtab who was one of the descendants of Prophet Harun (peace be upon him). She had been twice married earlier. She became a captive in the battle of Khyber in which her second husband was also killed. The Prophet ﷺ freed and married her in 7th AH.

11. Umm al-Mo'mineen Sayyedah Maria bint Harith ؓ: She was twice married. One of her sisters was married to Abbas bin Abdulmanaf ؓ, Hamza ؓ, one to Ja'afar bin Abi Talib ؓ, another was the mother of Khalid bin Walid ؓ. On the instance of Abbas ؓ, the uncle of the Prophet ﷺ, she was married to the Prophet ﷺ in Makkah after he performed Umrah.

12. Umm al-Mo'mineen Sayyedah Maryam Qibtia ؓ: She was sent as a present to the Prophet ﷺ by Maqauqas the Ruler of Egypt as a

slave-girl. She gave birth to the third son of the Prophet ﷺ, namely Ibrahim ﷺ, who like his other half-brothers had also passed away in his infancy.

His Sons:

Except Ibrahim ﷺ, his other sons – Qasim ﷺ, Tahir ﷺ and Abdullah ﷺ – were from Umm al-Mo'mineen Khadijatul Kubra ﷺ. Ibrahim ﷺ was from Sayyedah Maria Qibtia ﷺ. All his sons had died in their childhood.

His Daughters:

He had four daughters: Zainab ﷺ, Ruqayya ﷺ, Umm Kulthum and Fatimah ﷺ. All the four were married. Ruqayya ﷺ was married to Umayyah ibn Affan ﷺ and after she died, Umm Kulthum ﷺ was also married to him. Except for Umm Kulthum az-Zahraa ﷺ, who was married to Ali ibn Abi Talib ﷺ, none of the other three were my inheritors. As the scope of this article is limited, no light can be shed on the lives of each of these pious ladies.

He led the most exemplary family life. He said: Treat your families as best as you can; I am the best as I give all my wives the best treatment. While at home, he did his own household chores and helped his families housework, such as preparing food, sewing clothes and repairing shoes. He is also said to have had accustomed his wives to dialogue; he listened to their advice, and the wives debated and even argued with him. In the words of Rev. Bosworth Smith: If ever a man ruled by a right divine, it was Muhammad, for 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.

His love for the children:

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ ordered to protect the children's rights which had been ignored all along the ancient history, especially in matters of inheritance. In the pre-Islamic days in Arabia the children had no rights of inheritance whatsoever. The only ones who had the right to inherit were those who could fight and gain spoils and were able to ride perfectly. The daughters were the worst hit in this regard. It was a common practice to bury baby girls alive instead of bringing them up and rearing them as respectable members of the family. This practice was severely banned and declared 'a murder' according to the canons of the Sharia law. Parents, or in their absence, the families were given the duty of taking care of the children and protecting their rights.

He was especially fond of children and used to get into the spirit of child like games in their company. He would have fun with the children who had come back from Abyssinia and tried to speak with them in Abyssinian dialect with them. It was his practice to give lifts on his

camel to children when he returned from journeys. He would pick up children in his arms, play with them, and kiss them. A companion, recalling his childhood, said, "In my childhood I used to fell dates by throwing stones at palm trees. Somebody took me to the Prophet ﷺ who advised me to pick up the dates lying on the ground but not to fell them with stones. He then patted me and blessed me."

Rasulallah ﷺ was very kind to children. Anas bin Malik ؓ narrated: "I have never seen anyone act more kindly towards children than Allah's Messenger ﷺ. His last son Ibrahim being suckled by a wet-nurse living in the neighbourhood of Medinah. The Prophet ﷺ would go, accompanied by us, and visit the house which was usually full of smoke. There was a furnace in that house below which lived a companion who was a blacksmith by profession. He would take him into his arms, kiss him, and then come back."

A tradition states that whenever he returned from a journey he used to let the children, who would assemble around his ride to

اَللّٰهُمَّ صَلِّ وَسَلِّمْ عَلٰى اَبْنائِكَ اِيْمَانًا

Complements by Some of the Orientalists

The holy Prophet ﷺ had been through ups and downs all his blessed life, being always at odds with non-believers, adversaries, and idol worshippers. In the beginning, his own kith and kin were set against him. Through all these phases, he maintained high standard of his sublime character. He manifested utmost dedication and commitment to his mission. When he said good bye to his Companions ﷺ, he left the borders of the Islamic State stretching from the borders of the Byzantine Empire in Syria in the north to the shores of the Arabian Sea in the south. He was acknowledged as a sole Lord of Arabia at that time, but his entire belongings consisted of a pair of garments, a coarse woolen shawl, a rough bedstead, some pairs of sandals, a pillow stuffed with tissues of bark of date, a walking stick (staff) a handful of barley, a hide-skin and a water pail. There was not

a single golden Dinar or even a silver Dirham that he left behind for his heirs. When departing, he had not enough supplies for his family members and Bilal رضي الله عنه had to mortgage his shield for a few kilograms of barley to stave off starvation. Contentment and austerity remained a special hallmark of his life.

Being at home or traveling abroad, trading, counseling, preaching under severe and telling circumstances and suffering personal physical attacks and injuries, delivering speeches at market fairs and crowds, fighting in the way of Allah, conquering the cities, and finally establishing himself as a master of the Arabian Peninsula, he maintained the unity of his sublime character and no one, even his staunchest enemies could detect in him an iota of vengeance. No fluctuation was ever seen in his sublime character.

He did not leave behind gold and silver but what he left is his rich legacy of righteousness, his teachings and ways of worship of One True God. In his renowned ranking: *The 100: A Ranking of the Most Influential Persons in*

History. Michael H. Hart says: "My choice of Muhammad (ﷺ) to lead the list of the world's most influential persons may surprise some readers and may be questioned by others, but he was the only man in history who was supremely successful on both the religious and secular level." Similarly, Lamertine says: "Philosopher, orator, apostle, legislator, warrior, conqueror of ideas, restorer of rational dogmas, of a cult without images; the founder of twenty terrestrial empires and of one spiritual empire, that is Muhammad (ﷺ). As regards all standards by which human greatness may be measured, we may well ask, is there any man greater than he?"

In the words of Rev. Bosworth Smith, "In the shepherd of the desert, in the Syrian trader, in the solitary of Mount Hira, in the reformer in the wilderness of one, in the exile of Medina, in the acknowledged conqueror, in the equal of the Persian Darios and the Greek Heraclius, we may see a substantial unity, I doubt whether there is another man, whose external conditions have changed so much, ever himself changed less to the core. When the accidents are changed, the man seems to me to be the same in all". He

further goes on to say: If ever any man had the right to say that he ruled by the right divine, it was Mohammed, for he had all the power without its instruments and without its supports. He cared not for the dressings of power. The simplicity of his private life was in keeping with his public life...In Mohammadanism everything is different here. Instead of the shadowy and the mysterious, we have history....We know of the external history of Muhammad....while for his internal history after his mission had been proclaimed, we have a book absolutely unique in its origin, in its preservation....on the substantial authority of which no one has ever been able to cast a serious doubt.

Another orientalist has this to say: Mohammad has been a world-force, a mighty power for the uplift of many peoples. Read the old records, and you will glimpse the grace and beauty of his life. A king and a spiritual leader, he yet mends his clothes, visits the sick, loves little children in the streets, lives on simple food sometimes taking only dates and water, milks his cattle, accepts invitations of slaves, mixes with

the people as their comrade. 'I sit at meals as a servant,' he says, 'for I am really a servant.'

De Lacy Johnston, by no standard a friend of Islam, could not help saying: "The child was indeed born to such a marvelous destiny, his achievements in the sixty-three years of his allotted span of life were so great, his influence on all after-ages has been so profound and widespread, the personal devotion of hundreds of millions of men, who have in the past thirteen centuries looked on him as all but divine, so intense, that no wonders of legend can surprise us, and we note them as evidence of the deep veneration which the highest human power will always command from men. Yet, as his followers call their religion – after his own example – not by the Teacher's name, but Islam, "self-surrender" to God Almighty.

Professor Ramakrishna Rao pays his tributes to the Holy Prophet ﷺ in these words: "The personality of Muhammad (ﷺ), it is most difficult to get into the whole truth of it. Only a glimpse of it I can catch. What a dramatic succession of picturesque scenes. There is

Muhammad the Prophet. There is Muhammad the Warrior; Muhammad the Businessman; Muhammad the Statesman; Muhammad the Orator; Muhammad the Reformer; Muhammad the Refuge of Orphans; Muhammad the Protector of Slaves; Muhammad the Emancipator of Women; Muhammad the Judge; Muhammad the Saint. All in all these magnificent roles, in all these departments of human activities, he is alike a hero."

The great Russian philosopher and writer Leo Tolstoy had this to say about Holy Prophet Muhammad ﷺ: "The religion of Muhammad had always been standing higher than Christianity. He does not consider himself a human being and never makes himself God. Muslims worship nothing except Muhammad is His Messenger. There is no secret and mystery in it.

In closing, I would like to quote Carlyle from his work "On Heroes, Hero-Worship, and the Heroic in History". Summing up his views about the Messenger of Allah ﷺ and his achievements, and those made by his followers in a short span of a century after him, Carlyle

concludes: To the Arab Nation it was a birth from darkness into light; Arabia first became alive by means of it; a poor shepherd people roaming unnoticed in its deserts since the creation of the world; a Hero Prophet was sent down to them with a word they could believe: see the unnoticed becomes world-notable; the small has grown world-great; within one century afterwards, Arabia is at Grenada

on this hand, at Delhi on that: – glancing in valour and splendor, and the light of genius, Arabia shines through long ages over a great section of the world. Belief is great, life-giving. The history of a nation becomes fruitful, soul-elevating, great, as soon as it believes. These Arabs, the man Mohammed, and that one century, – is it not as if a spark had fallen, one spark, on a world of what seemed black unnoticeable sand; but, lo, the sand proves explosive powder, blazes heaven-high

I close this chapter with the words of Sir George Bernard Shaw:

I believe that if a man like him were to assume the dictatorship of the modern world he would succeed in solving its problems in a way that would bring it the much needed peace and happiness: I have prophesied about the faith of Muhammad that it would be acceptable to the Europe of tomorrow as it is beginning to be acceptable to the Europe of today.

مَنْ يَطِيعِ الرَّسُولَ فَقَدْ

أَطَاعَ اللَّهَ
(سورة النساء)

He who obeys The Messenger of Allah, obeys Allah

قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم

مَنْ أَطَاعَنِي
دَخَلَ الْجَنَّةَ

He who obeys me shall enter the paradise



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